LEARNING SEQUENCE

*Activity description*

Learning intentions

Explain to students that this activity is about exploring the qualities and skills needed to build positive, respectful and enjoyable relationships. By the end of the activity they will have examined the qualities and skills most important for ensuring a healthy and respectful relationship.

Pre-assessment activity: Where are they at?

Draw two columns on the board, one headed Healthy Relationships, and the other headed Unhealthy Relationships and ask students to brainstorm the characteristics of each. Record them on the board under the relevant headings for discussion later. Answers might include:

Healthy relationships

1. Having fun together
2. Mutual commitment and honesty
3. Being able to spend time with your friends and on your own
4. Sharing responsibilities
5. Being kind
6. Respecting differences
7. Treating each other equally
8. Using each other’s strengths

Unhealthy relationships

1. Being scared, frightened, anxious or tense when a partner is around
2. Disagreeing or arguing a lot
3. Frequently breaking honesty, commitment or trust boundaries
4. Difficulty in communicating
5. A partner is constantly checking up on you
6. Feeling manipulated
7. Being isolated by a partner who doesn’t want you to see your friends and family
8. A partner starting to abuse you physically, sexually, emotionally, socially or financially

Criteria for success: What to look for?

Can students:

1. describe the qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships?
2. identify feelings associated with being in a healthy or unhealthy relationship?

*Exploring the concept*

Read through the information about Healthy relationships and What should I look for in a partner.

Set up the Relationship continuum in the classroom by allocating one side of the room as *Most Important* and the other side as *Least Important*. Explain to students that they are going to examine what makes a healthy relationship. They will do this by ranking the skills and qualities that can build positive, respectful and enjoyable relationships along a continuum from most important in a relationship to least important in a relationship.

Distribute one of the *Skills and qualities cards* from the *Relationship Continuum handout* to each student and ask them to place their card along the continuum to indicate the level of importance they believe that skill or quality has in creating a positive, respectful and enjoyable relationship.

Once all of the students have placed their cards, ask students to look along the continuum and identify any cards that they would like to move further up or down the continuum. Ask students to explain why they believe that skill or quality is more or less important. Once they have provided their explanation ask the class whether they agree with moving the card. Continue this process until the class is satisfied with the order and placement of cards on the continuum.

Ask the class whether they think cultural context would alter the placement of any of the skills and qualities along the continuum. Ask students to give examples and provide explanations for their responses.

Discuss with students whether the ranking of these qualities and skills would be the same for non-intimate relationships such as peer friendships, parent -child relationships, or the relationships between members of the school community. How would the rankings change and why?**220**

Adjustment strategies

Content/Process: Students can be given blank cards and brainstorm their own qualities and skills for positive relationships and then place them in order on the continuum.

Process: Students complete ordering on the continuum individually and then present their ranking in small groups and arrive at a combined ranking.

*Putting it into practice*

Check for understanding

Emphasise to students that a relationship should make them feel good about themselves, feel good about the other person, and feel good about the relationship. When a relationship is unhealthy the feelings they have about themselves, their partner or being part of the relationship will not usually be positive.

Now explain to students that they are going to examine some situations that can often occur in relationships, and they will be identifying the skills and qualities from the previous activity that are either evident or diminished in the situation and exploring how this would make each of the parties feel about themselves, each other and the relationship.

Read out the following situations and discuss which skills or qualities are evident or missing, and how each party might feel about the situation:

1. A partner cheated on you
2. A friend or partner lied to you
3. A friend or partner was spreading gossip about you
4. A friend or partner supported you through a family problem
5. A friend or partner helped you deal with a difficult situation at school
6. A friend or partner broke a promise they made to you
7. A friend or partner told you a secret that shocked you

Discuss whether there are any situations that might occur in a relationship that are irreparable – once they occur the relationship is over and cannot be maintained. Ask students to identify the types of situations that cause a break down in a relationship. Reflecting on the skills and qualities continuum are there any that the group wishes to move given their new thinking about causes of relationship breakdown. Discuss which ones and why.

*Teacher note: It is important not to assume that all violent or abusive behaviour is perpetrated by males on females.* The research suggests that 1 in 3 victims of family violence are males. *When discussing violence it should be made clear no violence is acceptable regardless of the who the perpetrators or victims are.*

Criteria for success: What to look for?

Can students:

1. provide a valid description of how a person would feel in each of the situations?
2. identify the skills and qualities that are effected within each of the situations?
3. reflect on the important skills and qualities that maintain a healthy, positive and respectful relationship?

*Handouts*

Relationship continuum handout

*Resources*

Relationships: the good, the bad and the ugly

Love: The good, the bad and the ugly website

My Education Student Resources

My Education – Year 11 – Exploring values module