Healthy relationships are fundamental to our sense of belonging and well-being

The Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience will help learners understand how healthy relationships are a vital component of maintaining a healthy body and mind. They contribute to our sense of belonging and emotional well-being. They create stability and make us feel included, allowing us to thrive. If we feel lonely or isolated, we run the risk of suffering with poor mental and physical health.

Throughout our lives we are likely to experience and develop a diverse range of personal relationships. Each of these relationships elicits responses that help us to grow and to learn about ourselves and others. Understanding how healthy relationships are formed, developed and maintained enables us to develop the skills and attitudes which allow us to create healthy relationships of our own. These relationships often support us through difficult and stressful situations and help us to become healthy, confident individuals. Knowing how to be safe in our relationships and when and how to seek support for ourselves and others is fundamental to health and well-being.
Progression Steps

Progression Step 4 (age 14)

Achievement outcomes

I have developed an understanding of the expectations and requirements of healthy behaviours in a range of relationships.

I have developed an understanding that there is an interaction between my relationships with other people and my identity.

I can form and maintain purposeful relationships with a wider circle of people.
I can empathise with other people’s feelings and adapt my behaviour in response to this. I can respect other people’s points of view and use this to help resolve conflict.

I can identify where my safety or the safety of someone else is threatened in a relationship and know how to respond to this.

I have developed an understanding of the value of compassion, respect and equity in developing healthy relationships.
I can communicate my needs and feelings and respect those of others in different types of relationships.
I can exercise my own rights and respect those of others.
I can recognise that rights can be infringed and can identify this. I can apply my knowledge of rights to my relationships.

Progression Step 5 (age 16)

Achievement outcomes
I have developed an understanding of the complex nature of relationships in a range of contexts and how they are influenced by a range of factors.
I have developed an understanding of how people’s relationships inform their identity and how their identity informs their relationships.
I can make meaningful connections with others and value my relationships with others in a range of contexts.
I can form, maintain and develop relationships.
I can recognise the characteristics of healthy relationships and can respond appropriately to unhealthy or harmful characteristics or behaviours.
I can build relationships based on compassion, positive communication, respect and equity. I can advocate the rights of myself and others.
Experiences, knowledge and skills

Learners need to experience:

- Opportunities to form and develop relationships in different contexts and develop meaningful connections with other living things
- Opportunities to participate in team activities and collaborate with others, taking on a variety of roles
- Opportunities to explore a wider range of relationships beyond the personal, everyday experience including reading fiction and non-fiction, film, television, gaming and the virtual world
- Opportunities to explore and critically evaluate different approaches to resolving conflict.

Learners need to know:

- Relationships are fundamental to well-being and can have both a positive and negative impact on it
- There are a wide range of relationship types (including friendship, parental, familial, teacher/learner, romantic, spiritual, virtual, sexual and professional) – when these are healthy, they can support and benefit us
- How to access support and information to foster healthy relationships and ensure personal safety
- While there are similar types of relationships, each relationship is unique and will vary from person to person
- The importance of respect and equity, and of recognising one another’s rights in terms of developing healthy and safe relationships
- The importance of privacy and consent
- How to recognise and protect themselves from unwanted sexual attention in relationships
- What may constitute an unhealthy or abusive relationship.

Learners need to be able to:

- Communicate their needs and feelings
- Seek support when required
- form, develop and maintain healthy relationships in a range of contexts
- recognise and respect the views, values and rights of others in order to develop and maintain relationships
- recognise and respond to the needs and feelings of others, demonstrating empathy and compassion
- use problem-solving, cooperation and negotiation to sustain relationships
- identify and respond constructively and appropriately to conflict in relationships
- recognise unwanted attention and respond appropriately
- recognise unhealthy or harmful relationships and seek help to respond to these.