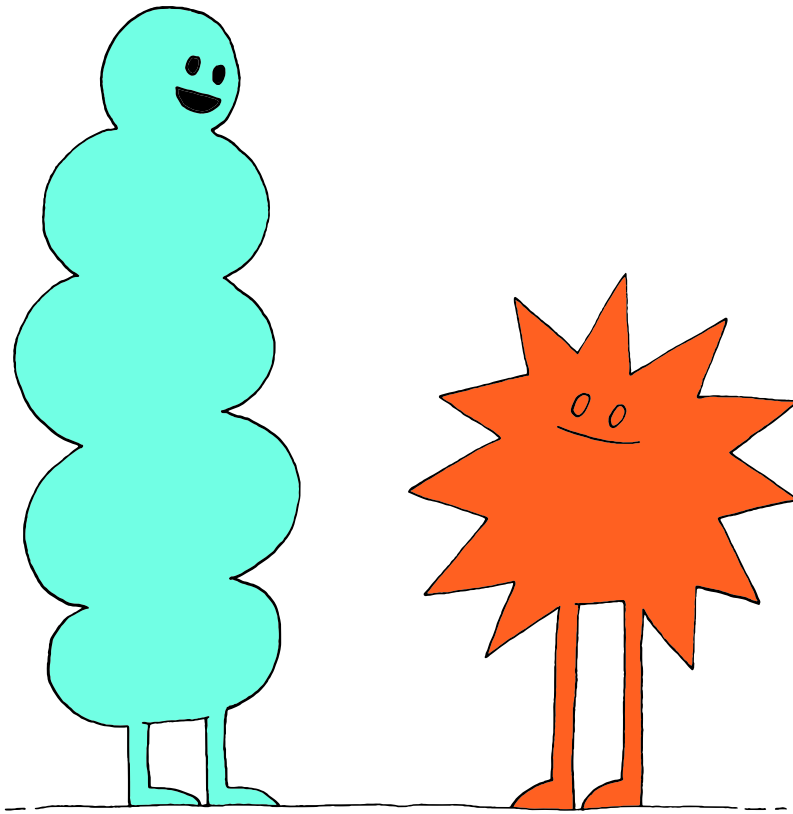


# Understanding Healthy Relationships



**GRADES 7 AND 8**

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**Lesson Package**

THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE

A person is seen from behind, sitting on a swing set. The swing is suspended by a chain and is in motion. The background is a bright sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare and silhouetting the person and the swing set. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and some clouds.

# WELL~ BEING CANADA

**Well-being Canada is an educational program that uses evidence-based tools, resources and everyday actions to nurture and promote positive well-being in students of all ages.**

**This resource offers valuable and essential tools to help middle school students navigate uncertain times and embrace their expanding futures, enabling them to take proactive steps towards improved well-being.**

**Understanding Healthy Relationships is a collection of five lessons for students in grades 7 and 8 that focuses on helping them create and maintain positive relationships in their lives. Healthy relationships are at the core of developing and maintaining mental health, building caring environments and increasing well-being.**

## **Setting Students Up for Success: In School, the Workplace and Life**

Well-being is thoughts, emotions, actions and experiences. When we have well-being, we are happy, healthy, socially connected and purposeful.

Our goal is to support students and set them up with skills, knowledge and learnings that will help them be successful in their future but also while helping others around them and making a positive impact.

### **Future Ready:**

By focusing on their futures and building skills to prepare them, students can shift their focus away from the chaotic external world toward a well-organized, customized plan that empowers them to prepare for the future that motivates them.

### **Social-Emotional Learning:**

Social-emotional learning principles involve helping students develop the skills to manage their emotions, resolve conflicts and make responsible decisions.

### **Global Mindset:**

The ability to operate comfortably across borders, cultures and languages is invaluable. Our programming promotes global mindedness and cultural competency amongst student populations during their formative years.

### **Active Citizenship:**

Students act on their growing knowledge by connecting with others in their communities, thereby generating interest, further research and engagement in local and national causes.



# Learning Skills Legend

Look out for these icons in the lessons as skills your students can develop throughout their learning.



ARGUMENT  
FORMATION



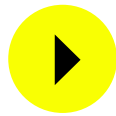
INFORMATION  
LITERACY



LEADERSHIP  
SKILLS



ORGANIZATION  
SKILLS



ACTION  
PLANNING



RESEARCH AND  
WRITING



CRITICAL  
THINKING



REFLECTION  
SKILLS

## Understanding Healthy Relationships Overview

When students engage with their learning, the achievement gap shrinks and the academic success of learning increases. This classroom resource provides teachers with the tools and resources to explore the fundamentals of healthy relationship and the effects that relationships have on our lives. Students will explore implications of unhealthy relationship habits and compare these to positive habits aimed at increasing levels of self-awareness and confidence in relationships. Students will use reflective exercises to understand the application of these skills and strategies to their lives.

### Objectives:

- Understanding Healthy Relationships is designed to empower students to take an active role in creating and maintaining healthy relationships by engaging in learning that addresses the core issues surrounding unhealthy relationships.
- Create a connection with different communication styles through personal reflection and understanding relationship types.
- Inspire local, school-wide action by directing experiential learning projects connected to healthy relationships and personal well-being in a positive

way (e.g., joining forces with local and national organizations, such as **love is respect**, that support healthy relationship development and work against different forms of relationship abuse).

### Assessment for Learning:

You know your students best—their learning styles and preferences, skill levels and knowledge. You are in the best position to anticipate the habits of mind that will make this classroom resource successful. Ensure a commitment to respectful behaviour that is reflective of cultural appreciation and sensitivity.

We are mindful that students in your class are at different reading levels, with some designated as English Language Learners. Be sensitive to students' needs and continue to provide necessary accommodations for students who require additional assistance and support.

The teaching strategies include think-pair-share, collaborative group work, class discussion and independent reflection. Strategies to assess learning include written reflection, exit tickets, student-generated discussion and a culminating writing task.

## Subjects:

English Language Arts, Health and Physical Education,  
Social Studies

## Skills Learned:



ARGUMENT  
FORMATION



INFORMATION  
LITERACY



LEADERSHIP  
SKILLS



ORGANIZATION  
SKILLS



CRITICAL  
THINKING



ACTION  
PLANNING



REFLECTION  
SKILLS

## Essential Questions:

- How can we recognize healthy relationships?
- How can we effectively communicate our wants and needs in a relationship?
- How do we develop healthy relationships?

## Materials:

Chart paper, markers, projector

### Word Bank

**Abusive Relationship**—a relationship that is extremely disrespectful and degrading in which at least one individual feels threatened and fearful of another individual. These relationships lack boundaries, trust and communication.

**Financial Abuse**—when the finances in a relationship—or a person’s potential to earn or have money—are controlled by one person. Examples of financial abuse include: withholding basic needs, using money to control behaviour, reckless spending and withholding money.

**Healthy Relationship**—a relationship built on trust, honesty and quality communication that includes both boundaries and privacy, and where individuals are safe and free from fear.

**Relationship Boundaries**—guidelines for both partners to know each other’s wants, goals, fears and limits.

**Unhealthy Relationship**—a relationship in which at least one individual lacks trust in the other person and, as a result, there is blame and/or guilt in the relationship.

Abusive Relationship, Financial Abuse, Healthy Relationship and Unhealthy Relationship are sourced from [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org).

The definition for Relationship Boundaries is sourced from [www.loveisrespect.org/healthy-relationships/setting-boundaries/](http://www.loveisrespect.org/healthy-relationships/setting-boundaries/).

## Resources:

Appendix: Classroom Observation Forms

Blackline Master 1: Understanding Healthy Relationship  
Characteristics

Blackline Master 2: Core Values

Blackline Master 3: When Boundaries Are Crossed

Blackline Master 4: The 5 Ws

Blackline Master 5: Healthy Relationship Grid

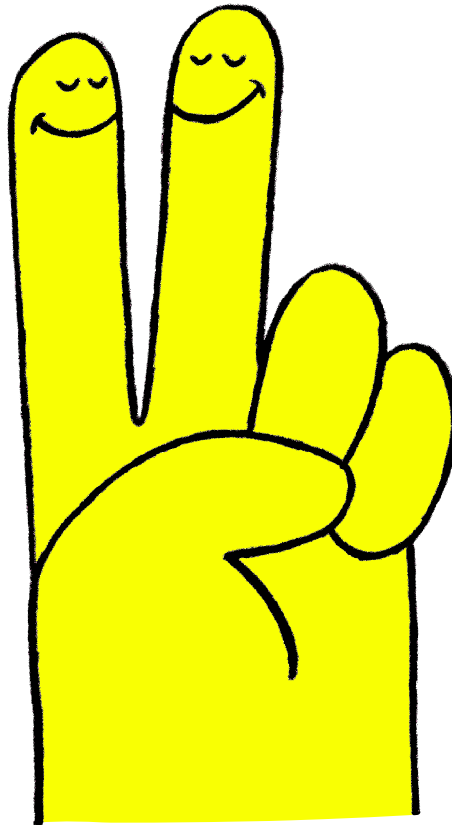
## Warning on Sensitive Material

**Educator's Note:** Please advise students that this curriculum is being presented in class so that they may gain better understanding on developing safe and healthy relationships. This curriculum contains material and discussions about unhealthy relationships that students may find uncomfortable, triggering of their own experiences, create uncomfortable thoughts or emotions.

It is advised for the educator to provide this sensitive material warning before proceeding with

the curriculum. The educator can explore and set ground rules with their class that helps create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity, including an open and safe space for exchange of ideas. Should students need support, please provide resources available in your school, online and community that can assist with their needs. Educators are encouraged to inform students that they are available for any clarification and support, including the best way they can be approached.

# The Many Forms of Relationships



## LESSON 1

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## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to the different types of relationships, what to expect and how to interact.

### Skills Learned:



ORGANIZATION  
SKILLS



ACTION  
PLANNING



REFLECTION  
SKILLS

### Curriculum Connections:

#### Oral Communication

- Listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes
- Use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

#### Writing

- Generate, gather and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience

### Estimated Time:

120 minutes

### Learning Goals:

Students will:

- Apply their knowledge of the characteristics of healthy relationships to discussions of clear expectations



**Educator's Note:** Inform students that they will learn about diverse types of relationships in these lessons, such as friends, family, teachers and mentors.

1. Make a list of positive relationship characteristics, each on a separate cue card, such as respect, shared goals, shared beliefs, shared experiences, humour and affection, and place them around the room. Ask small groups of students to move around to each station and to take note of what that relationship characteristic looks like, sounds like and feels like.
2. Ask each group to discuss and define the following fundamental relationship qualities: mutual respect, admiration for one another, trust in turning towards each other, balance of power, team problem solving, and safe and open communication.
3. As a class discuss each quality and its meaning by highlighting the key points identified below. After completing the class discussion, ask each student to rank the order of importance of each quality to them.

## Definitions of Relationship Qualities:

**Mutual Respect:** Seeing both individuals as valuable and contributors of the relationship, understanding each other with effort and patience, keeping each other in mind when making decisions, understanding and being considerate of each other's wants and needs, etc.

**Admiration:** Respecting each other's interests, strengths and uniqueness, allowing room for growth and support, expressing your admiration, respecting how the other person interacts with their loved ones and their community, respecting what they stand for, etc.

**Trust in Turning Towards Each Other:** Understanding that disagreements or misunderstandings are natural

in every relationship, seeking clarification and a goal to understand each other better, feeling safe and respected in sharing one's feelings and thoughts, etc.

**Balance of Power:** Having a fair and shared sense of support, feeling safe and comfortable in making good decisions together, being able to discuss any imbalances, feeling safe to end a relationship as a compassionate choice, being able to have healthy financial discussions, etc.

**Team Problem Solving:** Understanding that every relationship has challenges, working together to find solutions to challenges, finding ways to better understand each other's emotions, feelings and thoughts, finding solutions that both individuals feel comfortable and safe with, being able to rely on each other when facing a challenge, etc.

**Safe and Open Communication:** Understanding and continuously developing our communication skills, feeling safe in expressing thoughts, feelings and emotions to one another, being respected when communicating, actively listening, being nonjudgmental, etc.

4.

### Recommended Assessment for Learning



Give students one to two minutes to write down as many names as they can of people they know. Next, have students categorize the names into groups: classmates, friends, family, mentors and teachers. Once students have completed this task, ask them to compare these different relationships (e.g., how are they similar, how are they different?).

5. Highlight that we have relationships with many people. At this age, students have relationships with their parents, siblings, teachers, coaches and friends. Some students may be involved in a romantic relationship.

6. Ask students to form small groups. Invite groups to discuss how they think relationships change over time. What factors may change relationships after middle school, high school and graduation? Show students, "WatchWellCast's Guide to Maintaining Friendships," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9ulSfCGMUs>, which explores tips on how to maintain friendships. After watching the video, provide each student with a sticky note.
7. Ask them to consider a person whom they are friends with. How was this friendship created? Has the friendship changed overtime? How so? And lastly, what can maintain or strengthen this friendship? Ask students why they enter relationships—including friendships and romantic relationships—and write these answers on the front board, (E.g., companionship, friendship, affection, inspiration, support, fun.) Next, ask them about the relationships we don't choose, such as those with our family and teachers. What makes a relationship that you choose different than a family relationship, is there a difference? Invite students to share their thoughts with the class.
- Educator's Note:** It may help to reinforce that having relationships with other people is important. Connections with people, especially peers or people who are the same age can provide support, encouragement, companionship and more.
8. Explain to students that having healthy relationships can have a positive impact on our lives, and that through experiencing positive relationships, we can hopefully recognize what it means to be a good friend. Ask students to give a reason why healthy relationships are beneficial and important, whether
- it's with a friend, family member or teacher. Highlight the following reasons on why healthy relationships are important: it can provide comfort and joy in difficult or happy moments, it can help develop our social skills, it can provide us with important and honest feedback, it can help develop skills towards having a romantic relationship, and studies have shown that healthy relationships can improve our well-being and longevity.
9. Ensure students understand that clear expectations are key to a healthy relationship. On the front board, create a T-Chart with the headings Friends and Strangers. Ask students to compare the standards and expectations in their relationships with those that they have with strangers. What key differences were identified between a friend and a stranger? How does a person's behavior change when in the presence of a friend versus a stranger?
10. Remind students that each person is different and will have different wants, needs and expectations from relationships. As they reflect on their relationship expectations, it's important to keep a few questions in mind:
- What characteristics or personal traits can you bring to a friendship?
  - What characteristics or personal traits are you looking for in a friend?
  - What characteristics would you like to avoid in a friend or a relationship?
- Educator's Note:** This is a sensitive subject, some students may choose to reveal or withhold personal stories during their group's discussion. Make it clear to the class that they should only share information they feel comfortable sharing with the whole class.

11. A healthy relationship should be an equal partnership. This means that both people in a relationship work to keep the relationship positive and healthy. Help students understand by describing the following three scenarios to them, and asking whether they think the relationship in each is fair and balanced.
  - Darnell and Molly hang out after school most days. They usually spend time at Darnell's home. Molly often suggests different activities or hanging out with her friends. Darnell says that he prefers Molly to hang out at his place, so that they can only play video games on his latest gaming device.
  - Alice and Ayesha like going to the movies. When they go to the movies together, they take turns selecting what to watch. Ayesha does not like certain movies due to her beliefs and Alice is respectful and understanding of Ayesha's preferences.
  - Pablo and Zhang Wei have been dating for two months. Zhang Wei thinks it's fine that Pablo still hangs out with her close friends. However, Zhang Wei becomes visibly upset and ignores Pablo for days when she sees Pablo wearing lipstick to school.



## Extension

There are many factors in our lives that contribute to the health of our relationships. Have students break into groups and brainstorm different kinds of experiences that can affect their relationships. (e.g., childhood events, marriage, divorce, financial stressors, heartache, reunions and births). Ask students how relationships with family and friends make them happy and helps them through difficult times.

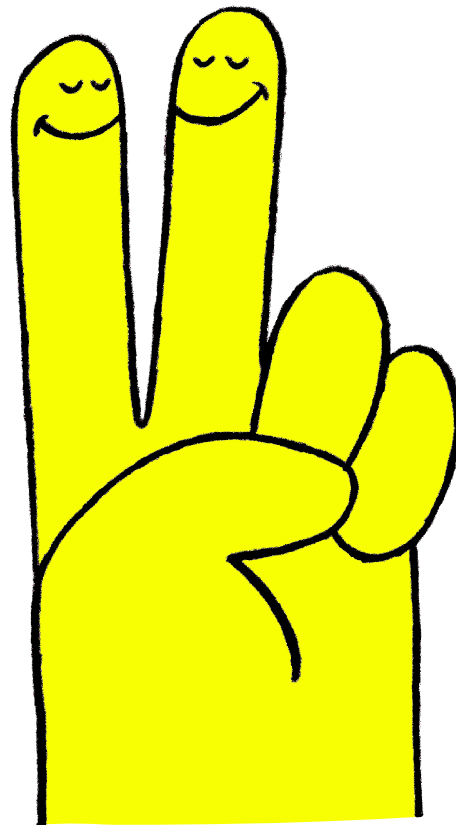
12. Provide each student with **Blackline Master 1: Understanding Healthy Relationship Characteristics** and debrief their work. Ask small groups to share their insights and examples of the types of relationship characteristics.

13.

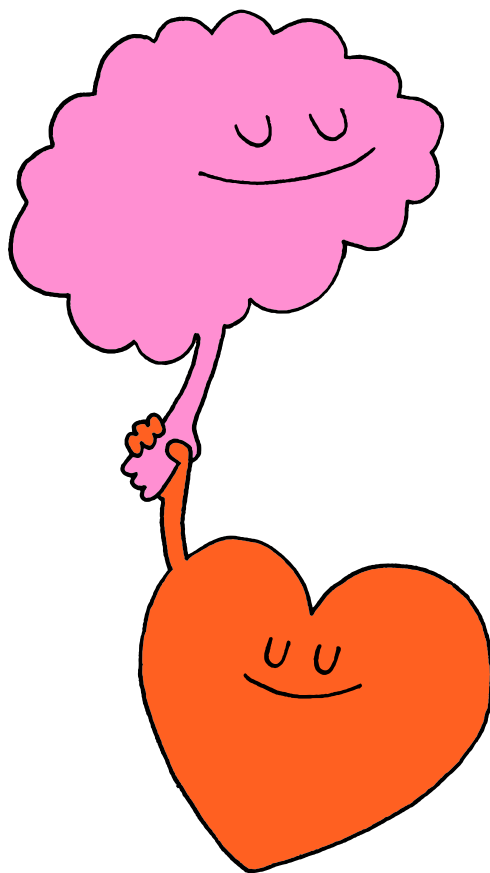
## Recommended Assessment of Learning



Remind students you need to understand what your needs are before you can assess whether they are being met or not. On an exit ticket, ask students to respond to the question: What do you need or want in a relationship? Why? Encourage them to take their reflections to the next level by addressing how they will know when their needs and wants are being met.

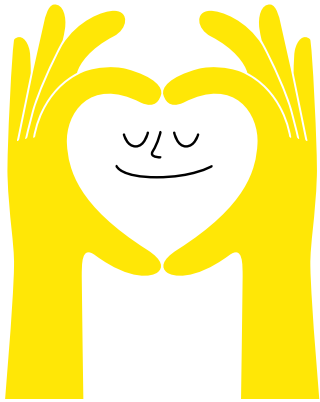


# Communicating Core Values



## LESSON 2

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## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to learn how to communicate with others, learn what one values and understand difficult relationships.

### Skills Learned:



ARGUMENT  
FORMATION



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



LEADERSHIP  
SKILLS

### Curriculum Connections:

#### Writing

- Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience
- Use editing, proofreading and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively

#### Reading

- Recognize a variety of text forms, text features, and stylistic elements and demonstrate understanding of how they help communicate meaning

#### Media Literacy

- Create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions and techniques

### Estimated Time:

90 minutes

### Learning Goals:

Students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for themselves in connection to personal finances

1. Explain to students that strong communication skills require a high level of self-awareness. Understanding our personal communication styles will help create and maintain positive relationships.

2.

### Recommended Assessment of Learning



Ask students: "What does it mean to be a good communicator?"

3. Explain to students that there are four styles of communication: *passive*, *passive-aggressive*, *aggressive* and *assertive*. Inform students that ineffective communication styles are passive, passive-aggressive and aggressive. Discuss as a class what each ineffective communication sounds like.

Explain to students that passive phrases provide limited information, are often used to avoid conflict and are not expressive. Passive phrases sound like, "I don't care, you can choose," "whatever you like" and "it doesn't matter what I say or think."

Passive-aggressive phrases cause confusion and misunderstanding, as they often appear to be passive or "appear to be understanding" at the surface but carry suppressed anger or resentment below. Passive-aggressive phrases sound like, "I am fine but don't be surprised if I don't speak to you for weeks," "we can do this your way, but it won't work because you don't know what you are talking about" and "why are you always over reacting, I am just trying to help."

Aggressive phrases can be disrespectful, loud, controlling, judgmental and opinionated. Aggressive phrases sounds like, "I am never wrong, so listen carefully," "why are you so stupid, your opinion doesn't matter" and "fine, I'll get my way no matter what you do, just watch me."

Explain to students that using open and clear communication to express their own needs, ideas, feelings and values, while also considering the needs or wants of others is called assertive communication. An assertive communicator seeks to understand, clarify and problem solve. Assertive phrases sound like, "I would appreciate it if you would...," "how can we work this out?" and "we both feel a certain way but let's respectfully figure out a solution."

4. Discuss with students that while the way we communicate in relationships is important, what we communicate to others also has an impact on our relationships and interactions. It is also important to note that how we act and communicate with others stands as a reflection of our personal core values.
5. Ask students: *what do you value?* For example: core values such as honesty, loyalty, humour, trust, respect, security, intelligence, acceptance, accessibility and dependability. Provide each student with **Blackline Master 2: Core Values** and ask them to define each core value in their own words and then use the dictionary to confirm or update their understanding.
6. Circulate around the room, take note of the most popular core values and write them on the front board. Next, distribute sticky notes in three different colours and instruct students to write down their top three core values with different colours representing their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices. Ask students to put up their core value sticky notes on the front board. You should see a great deal of variation in student responses. Following this activity, have a discussion with students about personal differences and what might lead individuals to hold certain core values over others.

7. As a class, review the responses from the first activity in which students considered how they communicated their wants and needs. In small groups, invite students to create a short role-play demonstrating how they communicate their core values to a friend, family member, school teacher or a significant other. Ask students to select one relationship scenario to create the role-play and encourage them to consider the words and body language that demonstrate their values and perspective.

8.

### Recommended Assessment of Learning



Ask students to use an exit ticket to reflect on their top core values by asking themselves the question, "If I could satisfy only one core value, which one would I choose and why?" Encourage students to incorporate examples from personal experiences to enhance their point and strengthen their position.



**Educator's Note:** The following activities will discuss relationship violence and forms of abuse. Explain to students that they should not feel forced to share or feel unsafe or vulnerable at any time. Should they need support, encourage them to reach out to you as their teacher at any time if they feel uncomfortable or want to share an experience.

Inform students that members of the public and professionals who work with children under the age of 18 are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. By reporting a suspected case of abuse the **Children's Aid Societies** provides support, resources and safety to child to ensuring further harm does not occur.

Abuse can be emotional, physical and/or sexual by a caregiver, any adult, an adult in a position of authority such as a coach, tutor, teacher, etc., or a peer a minor may be dating. Before you share anything with the class or with a teacher, consider the following things: 1. Will the information I share

compel my teacher to act as a mandatory reporter? 2. Will the information I share support a productive conversation or will it out someone else or put them in danger? 3. Will the information I share be said in a way that protects confidentiality of yourself or your friend by not naming names.

If you need support or information from your teacher, you can start a conversation with, "A friend of mine," or "Someone I know" or "Hypothetically, what if...," in order to make an informed decision.

If a student needs immediate assistance regarding abuse, they can contact their local **Children's Aid Society** or call a local crisis hotline such as **Kids Help Phone**.

For more information on understanding abuse please access the following link: <https://www.loveisrespect.org/healthy-relationships/>

1.

### Recommended Assessment for Learning



Provide each student with an entry note and ask them to respond to the following question: What is relationship violence? After students have responded, invite them to create small groups and share their responses. Have them then create a group definition of relationship violence. Ask one member from each group to write the response on the front board. Discuss what types of violence have been identified and create a list on the front board.

2. Show students the video "Teen Dating Violence PSA" [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSJmTrxO16M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSJmTrxO16M) (3:22). Ask students, did the video change their perspective on the forms of relationship violence? Would they change or update the types identified in their definition? Ask students to consider, why can relationship violence occur in any type of relationship, whether it be a friend, romantic relationship or family relationship?



3.

### Recommended Assessment as Learning

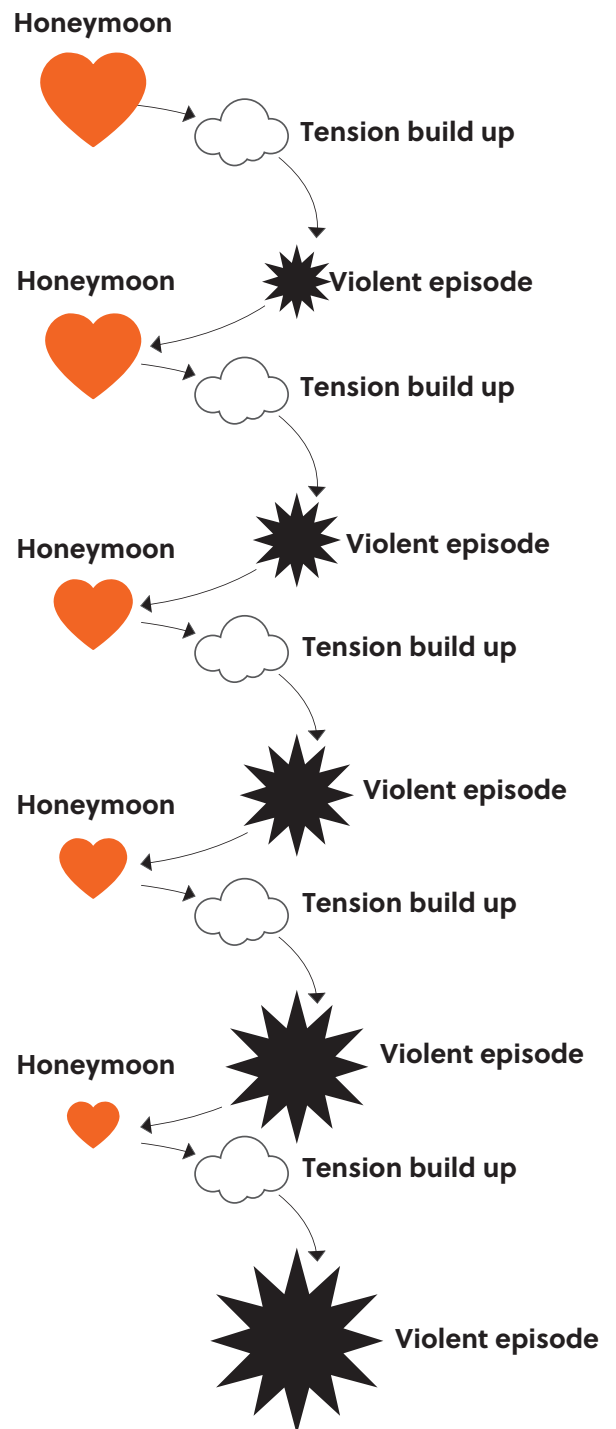


As a class, ask students to consider, how are a person's core values disregarded by the person they are in a relationship with when emotional, mental or physical violence occurs. Loveisrespect.org provides a list of warning signs that showcase examples of an unhealthy relationship, specifically in a dating relationship [www.loveisrespect.org/dating-basics-for-healthy-relationships/](http://www.loveisrespect.org/dating-basics-for-healthy-relationships/). In small groups, create an infographic raising awareness about the common warning signs of an unhealthy relationship and also provide examples of how these can affect any type of relationship. The infographic can be created using PowerPoint, Venngage or Bristol Board.

4. As a class, ask students to brainstorm the short- and long-term impacts of relationship violence. Explore some of the consequences of relationship abuse from the following websites: <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-violence/intimate-partner-violence.html> <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/teen-dating-violence/consequences>

As a class, explore what does the cycle of relationship violence look like? Draw or show diagram A: The Cycle of Violence Over Time to discuss the cycles of abuse by exploring the three phases involved: **tension build-up**, **violent episode** and **honeymoon**. Tension build up occurs when the abuser picks fights, displays anger and/or causes harm leading to a violent episode of abuse. This results in the abuser to then minimize what occurred, be in denial and/or blame the abused individual. Eventually, the abuser expresses remorse and gives false promises, known

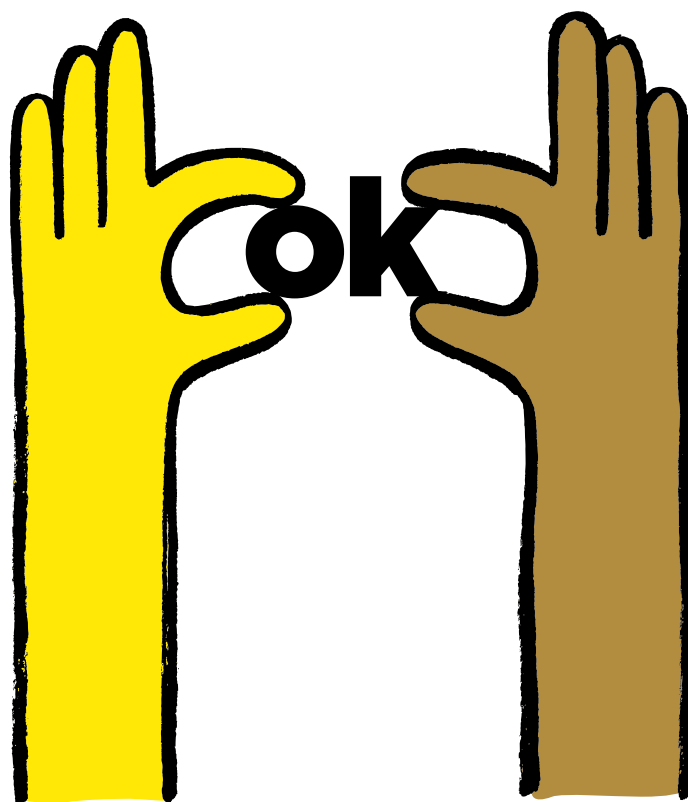
Diagram A: The Cycle of Violence Over Time



- as the honeymoon phase. Inform students that the cycle of relationship violence can occur over a long or short period of time, violence typically gets worse and eventually the honeymoon or denial phase will disappear.
5. After students have completed their infographic, post these around the school and on the school website to raise awareness about the issue of relationship violence and how it can affect all types of relationships.
  6. Remind students that having a safety plan to escape an abusive relationship can be a practical way of being prepared and accessing the right supports. Students can access a safety plan worksheet with **Blackline Master 6: Safety Plan**. Encourage students to research and complete the resource section of the safety plan. Students can share any resources with their class.



# Setting Up Healthy Boundaries



## LESSON 3

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## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to understand what personal boundaries are and how to establish them.

### Skills Learned:



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



ORGANIZATION  
SKILLS



ARGUMENT  
FORMATION



ACTION  
PLANNING

### Curriculum Connections:

#### Oral Communication

- Listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes
- Use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

#### Writing

- Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience
- Use editing, proofreading and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression and present their work effectively

### Estimated Time:

75 minutes

### Learning Goals:

Students will:

- Understand what is meant by a “healthy” boundary and the positive impact this understanding can have on a relationship

1.

### Recommended Assessment of Learning



Draw a large heart or circle on the front board. In pairs, ask students to think about the characteristics of healthy relationships that were previously explored. Encourage students to volunteer to write their answers on the front board in a list, within the diagram. Next, ask students to think of the characteristics of unhealthy relationships and have volunteers write their answers on the outside of the heart or circle. Using the inside and outside of this shape, ask students what this activity represents. The goal is for one or more of the students to connect the perimeter of the shape with the concept of personal boundaries.

2. A boundary is a divide that exists between two people. Ask students to think of situations where people create boundaries.
3. Explain that when people establish boundaries they are reaffirming what is important to them. Boundaries act as a set of standards for interactions and relationships people want to have in their lives.
4. Explain that there are three key areas linked to boundaries:
  - Material—lending or giving money and items
  - Time or relational—when you are available and for whom you are available
  - Physical (personal space)
5. Discuss with students that setting and communicating personal boundaries is a way to better ensure we feel heard and respected within our relationships. Boundaries and respect for differences help strengthen relationships. Issues can arise when one person in a relationship is not willing to respect the other person's boundaries. Everyone's boundaries will be different.

6. Invite students to form groups of three. Ask them to brainstorm the benefits of healthy boundaries. Next, have students explore the benefits of boundary-setting by searching for online resources and by sharing individual experiences at their discretion.
7. In groups, ask students to discuss why it might be difficult for a person to establish boundaries. Responses may range from "it takes honesty and maturity to stand up for what you believe in," to "I feel guilty for creating boundaries and I am unwilling to hurt another person's feelings."
8. In the same groups, ask students to create short videos about how to effectively establish boundaries and why it is important in all relationships that boundaries are established early and upheld. Provide each group with a time to develop a script for their video and invite them to present this script for feedback before filming the video.
9. After the script has been approved for content, provide each group with a camera to film their short video. Provide each group with the time and resources required to ensure that the video presents the concepts and is able to effectively deliver the message.

10.

### Recommended Assessment as Learning



After students have filmed their video, invite them to share it with the class and school. Ask students to write a short description with the video that discusses why boundaries are important for all relationships and how the message.

**Educator’s Note:** If students have difficulty approaching these questions, it might be helpful to note that it takes courage and honesty with yourself and others to acknowledge your true boundaries. To share your expectations and limits, you need to trust the other person enough to feel safe sharing your feelings about your boundaries. There are times

when an individual might feel guilty for standing up for what they believe in or may be afraid to hurt someone’s feelings. Reiterate to students that a respect for their personal boundaries outweighs the risk of hurting another person’s feelings, and is a better solution in the long run that will often lead to more authentic and longer-lasting relationships.

11. Let students know that they are their own best advocate and, if they feel that a boundary is crossed, they have the right to speak up. A continued lack of respect for one’s boundaries is a form of abuse. Emotional, physical and financial abuse can have lifelong consequences. These situations seldom resolve on their own, and so it is up to us to voice our opinions when we feel that our boundaries are not respected. Use the case study **Blackline Master 3: When Boundaries Are Crossed** to explore what boundaries are in relationships.

12.

### Recommended Assessment of Learning



Review the case study “When Boundaries are Crossed” with students. While in their small groups, ask students to explore how the failure to set boundaries can lead to misunderstandings between individuals in relationships and may cause conflicts. Encourage students to use examples from the case study to support their opinions.

**Educator’s Note:** Abuse, in all its forms, is linked to the disregard of personal boundaries. It does not matter if the boundaries are explicitly discussed within the context of a relationship or exist in the mind of an individual, abuse occurs when there is a violation of one or more of a person’s boundaries. You may want to take this time to tell students that no one deserves to be abused.

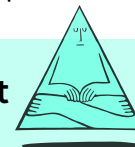
13. The following steps can be applied to situations in which a person feels that boundary violation, or abuse, is present.

- Recognize that there are many forms of abuse: verbal, emotional, physical, psychological, sexual, financial, intimidation or threats, isolation and cyberbullying.
- Don’t blame yourself. Verbal abuse is real. It is important to remember that, you didn’t create a reason for the abuse, regardless of how you communicated with your partner.
- If you have a friend exhibiting abusive behaviours, suggest them to seek appropriate help and/or to reflect or research the impact of their actions.
- If you are a victim, you are not responsible for “fixing” your partner.
- Ending a relationship is hard. In some cases, you might feel that you want to go back to the relationship. It is your decision but there are a couple of things to remember; abusive patterns won’t change unless a person gets help, and even still, the behaviour might not stop.

**Educator's Note:** Highlight local and national resources for people in abusive relationships. A well-known supportive network is **love is respect**. It is anonymous and operates 24/7 text or talk with victims and survivors.

14. Students can practice establishing boundaries by writing a list of “non-negotiables.” These are students’ boundaries. During this self-reflective exercise, encourage students to think about how they would respond if one of their non-negotiables is broken. For example, if an individual would not tolerate emotionally abusive language of any kind, they can choose to approach the person who offended them to explain which one of their personal boundaries, or non-negotiables, was infringed upon and how that made them feel. Note: this is a personal process and the individual must feel safe from any harm or abuse occurring when confronting the issue.
15. Explain to students that follow-through is the most important part of setting and respecting personal boundaries.
- Sam walks into the school gymnasium and a friend playfully tackles him to the ground. Sam doesn’t like surprises and he was hurt by the tackle.
  - Sam tells a friend about troubles at home. This friend posts something on Sam’s Facebook wall that mentions these troubles. Sam feels embarrassed with this type of public sharing.
  - Sam must take a make-up test after school, but still wants to meet his friends for pizza. Sam gives them \$10.00 for a share of pizza, knowing that it will only be \$5.00. When Sam arrives and asks for change, his friends say they were running short and needed to use all of the money he gave them.
16. Model what the process of establishing boundaries looks and sounds like. Use an assertive communication style, such as “I” statements to establish boundaries.
- I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_ .  
Please \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - I am willing to \_\_\_\_\_ .  
Please do not \_\_\_\_\_ .
17. E.g., I feel frustrated when you text me while I am spending time with my sister. Please wait until you know I am free to respond. I am willing to tell you when I will be available to talk. Please do not continue to text me after I have said that I am busy.
- 18.

### Recommended Assessment of Learning



Review the case study “When Boundaries are Crossed” with students. While in their small groups, ask students to explore how the failure to set boundaries can lead to misunderstandings between individuals in relationships and may cause conflicts. Encourage students to use examples from the case study to support their opinions.

### Enrichment Activity:

Invite students to link their work on values, to the concept of boundaries. Ask students to draw parallels between the core value they reflected on and the boundaries discussed in this lesson. Invite students to write a short reflective response that answers the following question: How do my personal boundaries reflect my core values?



**Educator's Note:** Inform students that just as our personal boundaries set the basic guidelines of how you want to be treated, Canada has an educational amendment that creates a boundary to protect students. Bill 13 (or the Accepting Schools Act) is a federal educational amendment that ensures all students receive their right to education free from discrimination. As a class brainstorm the definition of discrimination and examples of it.

Explain to students that they cannot be disciplined for making a report in good faith even if they were engaging in something that would be considered against school policy. This is to ensure that all

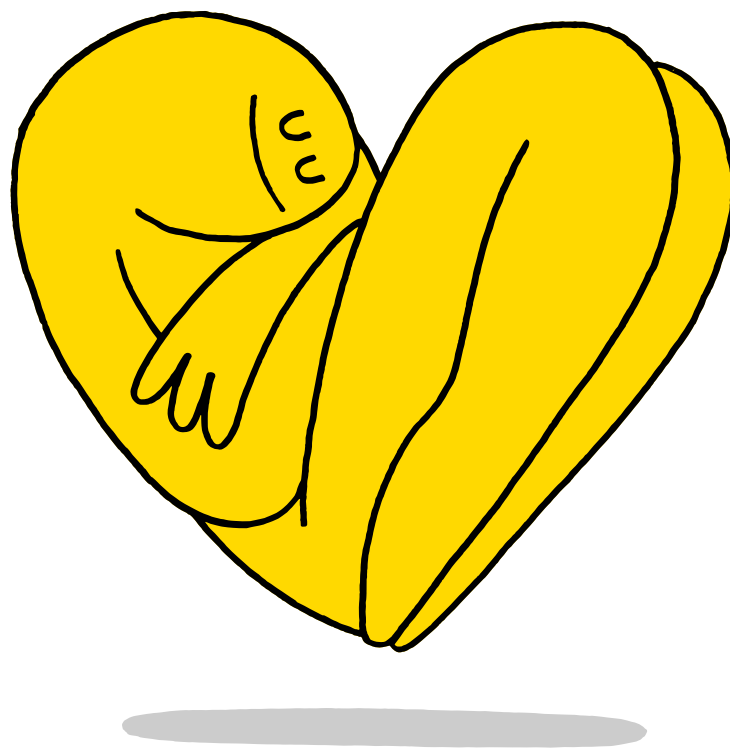
students can report any discrimination and promote a safe school by looking out for one another. There should be no fear of consequences or retaliation when reporting any discriminating incident(s).

Explain to students that the priority of the Accepting Schools Act is student safety and after reporting an incident steps are taken to ensure confidentiality, protection, providing resources and careful investigation. As a class research and share your school's student rights information, compliance officer's contact details, local advocacy centres, community resources, 24/7 hotline numbers and local and provincial school board contact information.





# Dealing With Rejection



## LESSON 4

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## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explore rejection and learn the different roles in relationships and their impact.

### Skills Learned:



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



CRITICAL  
THINKING



ORGANIZATION  
SKILLS

### Curriculum Connections:

#### Writing

- Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience
- Use editing, proofreading, publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression and present their work effectively

### Estimated Time:

75 minutes

### Learning Goals:

Students will:

- Identify roles and responsibilities within important relationships in their lives

**Educator’s Note:** The concept of rejection can be difficult and, at times, a painful subject to discuss at any age, but it can be a formative experience in middle school. The following steps include ways of exploring rejection through scenarios and personal stories.

1. Inform students that one of the most challenging situations that people experience is rejection. Rejection, or the feeling of rejection, can happen at any age and can affect our mood, our energy and sometimes our self-esteem. For these reasons, it’s important to develop a mindset that allows us to respond to rejection in a healthy manner.
2. Explain to students that they will be participating in a role-playing activity that deals with the subject of rejection or being left out. Ask students to provide some examples of “rejection” that may occur in school, in after-school activities or in clubs. Write some of these examples on the front board.

3.

### Recommended Assessment of Learning



Divide the class into groups of three to four students. Using **Blackline Master 4: The 5 Ws** (who is involved, what is the issue, when did this happen, where did this happen, why do the characters feel the way they do, how can this issue be resolved) as a planning guide, have each group design a scene that focuses on rejection or the act of being rejected. Guide students’ thinking toward situations in which a person is rejected by one of their friends or their peer groups.

4. Inform students that the scene should be three to five minutes long and should include projected feelings and dialogue between individuals. Explain to students that each of their scenes should showcase the needs and wants of the characters and demonstrate how each character feels about the interaction. Each scene should have a beginning, a middle and an end and must include rejection by another peer, whether that is an outward “no” or one that is demonstrated through body language and non-verbal cues.

**Educator’s Note:** Because this is an exercise that involves role play, explain to students that feelings can be conveyed through words, facial expressions and body language. Sometimes a person’s actions or inactions can hurt just as much as, sometimes more than, words. For example, not being invited to another person’s birthday party is a form of rejection, or ignoring a close friend at recess.

5. Invite students to act out their scenes in front of peers and have them take notes on what stood out to them.
6. After each scene is performed, invite feedback from the student groups. Include students who may not have directly taken part in the acting. Ask students: How did each character feel and why? How might you reconstruct this scene so that it reflects acceptance and inclusion rather than rejection? What could have been done differently to provide a more positive outcome?

7.

### Recommended Assessment of Learning



Ask students to respond to one of the two following prompts:

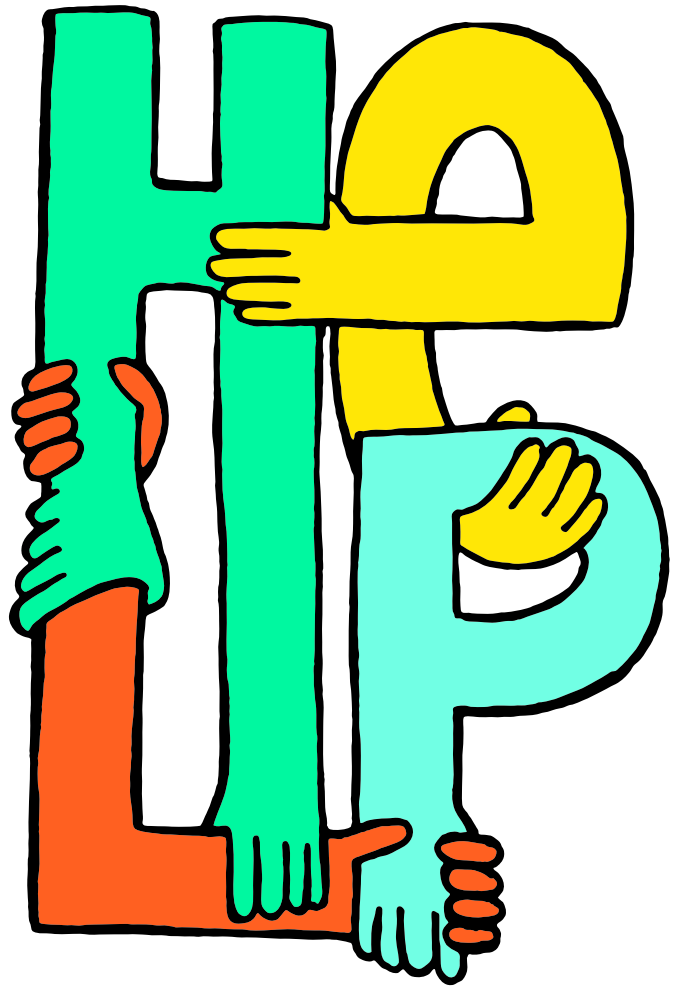
- Describe what happened in your group's scene. Include the point of view of your character, whether it be a main character or a bystander.
- What happened to your character? How did you feel about the outcome of the situation? How could it be handled differently to ensure that people's feelings were not hurt? What actions could your character take?

**Educator's Note:** Because rejection is a sensitive subject, it's important to reinforce the fact that rejection happens to everyone. For some, feeling rejected is the opposite of feeling accepted. It is not an indicator of a person's value, importance or how much someone likes you. More likely, it means that there is an instance where things did not work out. If you feel comfortable doing so, share a personal story where you experienced rejection and how you overcame it.

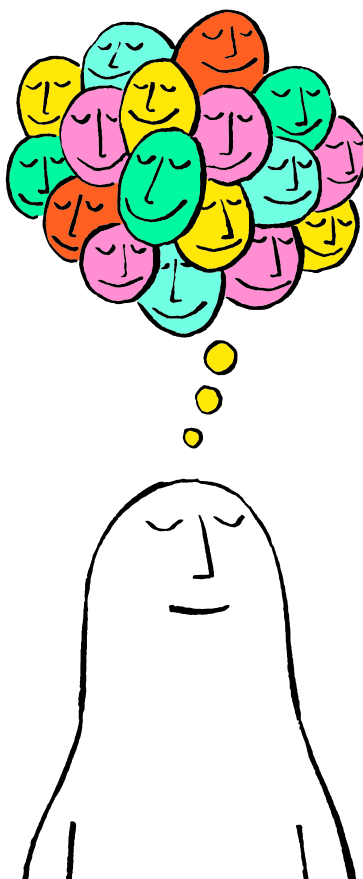
### Extension



Now that students have experience exploring what rejection means to them, ask: Why should we confront rather than avoid situations that might lead to rejection? The key point for students to recognize is that avoiding situations that might result in rejection might prevent you from chasing and achieving your dreams. As Wayne Gretzky said, "You miss 100 per cent of the shots you don't take."

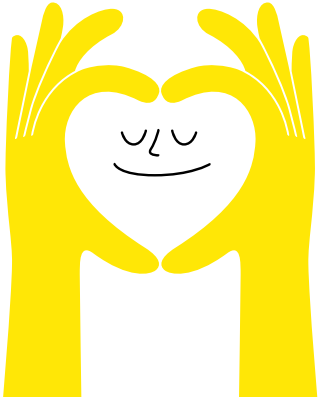


# Understanding Healthy Relationships



## LESSON 5

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## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to understand relationships, their impact, their approach and their value.

### Skills Learned:



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



CRITICAL  
THINKING



ORGANIZATION  
SKILLS

### Curriculum Connections:

#### Writing

- Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience
- Use editing, proofreading and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively

### Estimated Time:

75 minutes

### Learning Goals:

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of their approach to healthy relationships

1. Ask students to consider how their needs within relationships may change over the course of their lives. For example, how has their relationship changed with their parents, siblings or close friends over the years?
2. Explain to students that they will build upon their work from previous lessons to create a written response that addresses who they are as an individual, and what roles they hope to play in the different relationships in their lives.
3. Distribute **Blackline Master 5: Healthy Relationship Grid**. Ask students to fill in the template with words and phrases that apply to them. Once the chart is completed with as much detail as they feel comfortable sharing, ask them to elaborate on the points in paragraph format, adding details where necessary. Suggest that students keep the reflection somewhere safe so that they can add to it in the future.
4. Invite students to share their work with individuals who they have relationships with and they feel comfortable sharing with.
  - Invite students to share their insights with their current partners, close friends and family members.
  - Encourage students to assess their behaviour and approach to healthy relationships on a regular basis.
  - Students should ask themselves whether they are living up to their own expectations of themselves as documented in the exercise.
5. Ask the class to reflect on what effect the lessons had on how they engage in more meaningful and authentic relationships.
  - How have your partners, friends and family reacted to your learning?
  - Do you think these exercises and assignments will influence the way you behave in your relationships?
  - How can work that involves self-assessment strengthen relationships?
6. Encourage students to use these exercises with friends and family. Ask them to challenge others to complete one or all of the lessons in this package.

**Educator's Note:** Before progressing with the culminating activity, it may be helpful to review previous lessons with students. Note that individual experiences and reactions to different people and situations shape who they will become in the future. By now, students have uncovered needs and wants in a relationship (Lesson 1), identified some of their core values (Lesson 2), set clear boundary goals within relationships (Lesson 3) and learned strategies for dealing with rejection (Lesson 4). Students are now ready to put what they've learned about healthy relationships into a reflective response that will stand as a commitment to their health and well-being in the relationships they have now, and those they will have in the future.

### Extension



Invite students to create a PSA (Public Service Announcement) that focuses on healthy relationships. Encourage students to include elements of their learning from these lessons to create projects that are authentic and speak to their peers and school community.

## Action Plan

1. Ask students, why is it important to be aware of how to establish and maintain a healthy relationship? Why is it important to understand the signs of an unhealthy relationship? Invite them to consider how can they share this knowledge with the people in their communities. Why is awareness important?
2. Ask students to brainstorm how they can help people in their family and community raise awareness about healthy relationships. Create a list on the front board about actions students can take to raise awareness with their families, in their school and in the community.

## Example Actions:

Create a short film that discusses what a healthy relationship is and the warning signs that can lead to an unhealthy or abusive relationship. Share this film as a public service announcement throughout the school and also on the school website to raise awareness.

Organize an awareness-raising assembly about the diverse types of relationships and the characteristics of a healthy relationship.

Invite a guest speaker who can highlight what constitutes healthy and unhealthy relationships and create a safe environment for questions.

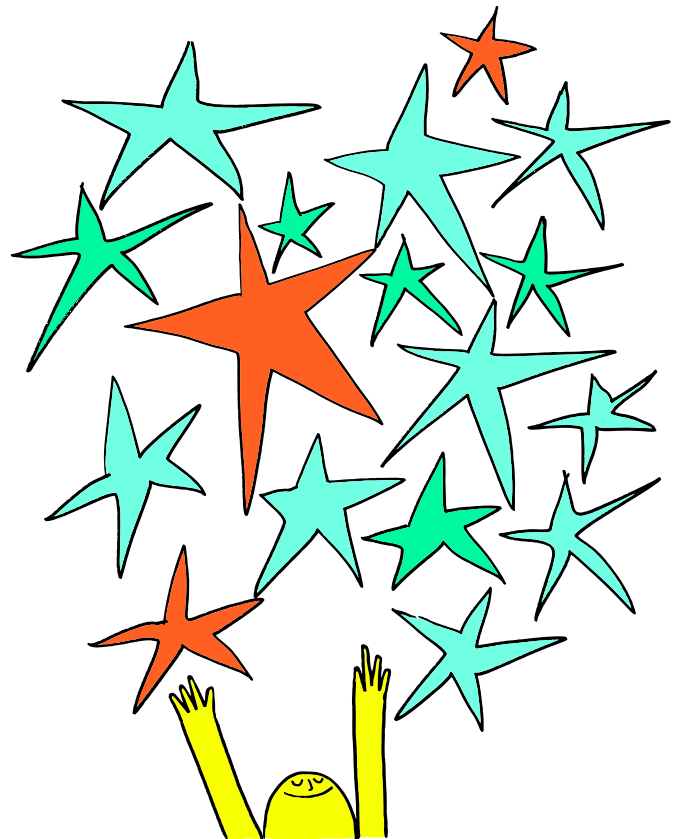
Create a safe space at school for students to share experiences and ask for help.

## Take Action

3. As a class, school or local community, choose an action to raise awareness about healthy relationships or another cause selected by the students.

## Reflect and Celebrate

4. Encourage students to share what they have learned and the actions they took with students from another class, school or in the community. Challenge them to think about how they can continue to raise awareness about the importance of healthy relationships for everyone.
5. Students can also share their learning using a classroom or school social media account.





**Classroom Observation Form 1**

**Lesson/Activity:**


**Classroom Observation Form 2**

**Lesson/Activity:**

Learning Outcomes Student Names			

**Classroom Observation Form 3**

**Lesson/Activity:**

Observations	Questions/Concerns	Next Steps

## **Blackline Master 1: Understanding Healthy Relationship Characteristics**

1. What characteristics do you bring to your relationship?

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2. What characteristics are you looking for in a friend?

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3. What characteristics are you not looking for in a relationship? Explain.

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## **Blackline Master 2: Core Values**

The following list is a sample of core values many individuals feel are important in relationships. Define each word using a dictionary, then challenge yourself to define the core value in your own words.

### **Honesty**

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Loyalty**

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Humour**

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Respect**

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Trust**

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Security**

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

## Blackline Master 2: Core Values (cont)

The following list is a sample of core values many individuals feel are important in relationships. Define each word using a dictionary, then challenge yourself to define the core value in your own words.

### Intelligence

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### Acceptance

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### Availability

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

### Dependability

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

My Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

## Blackline Master 3: When Boundaries Are Crossed

Anthony considers himself a private person. Although he has many friends, he only shares confidential information, such as who he has a crush on or what’s going on at home, with his closest friends who he has known since first grade and whom he trusts. Because of this history, it was hard when Anthony found out that one of his closest friends, Julia, guessed his Snapchat password and logged into his account. Anthony found out about this violation of privacy when someone commented that he was “online” during a basketball game. He traced the activity to Julia, because she asked him about information he had only been sharing with one other friend on a private Snapchat. When he confronted Julia she said, “Look, I heard you were telling people that we were not even that close anymore, and I was angry. Lucky for you, I didn’t find anything. Can we just move on?”

1. After reading the passage, what do you think about the interaction that occurred? Should Anthony stop being friends with Julia?

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2. Here are some other questions to think about:

- What was Julia’s reaction to Anthony discovering she had hacked into his account?
- Why do you think Julia did not say much to Anthony when she heard the rumours?
- How could this situation be handled differently?

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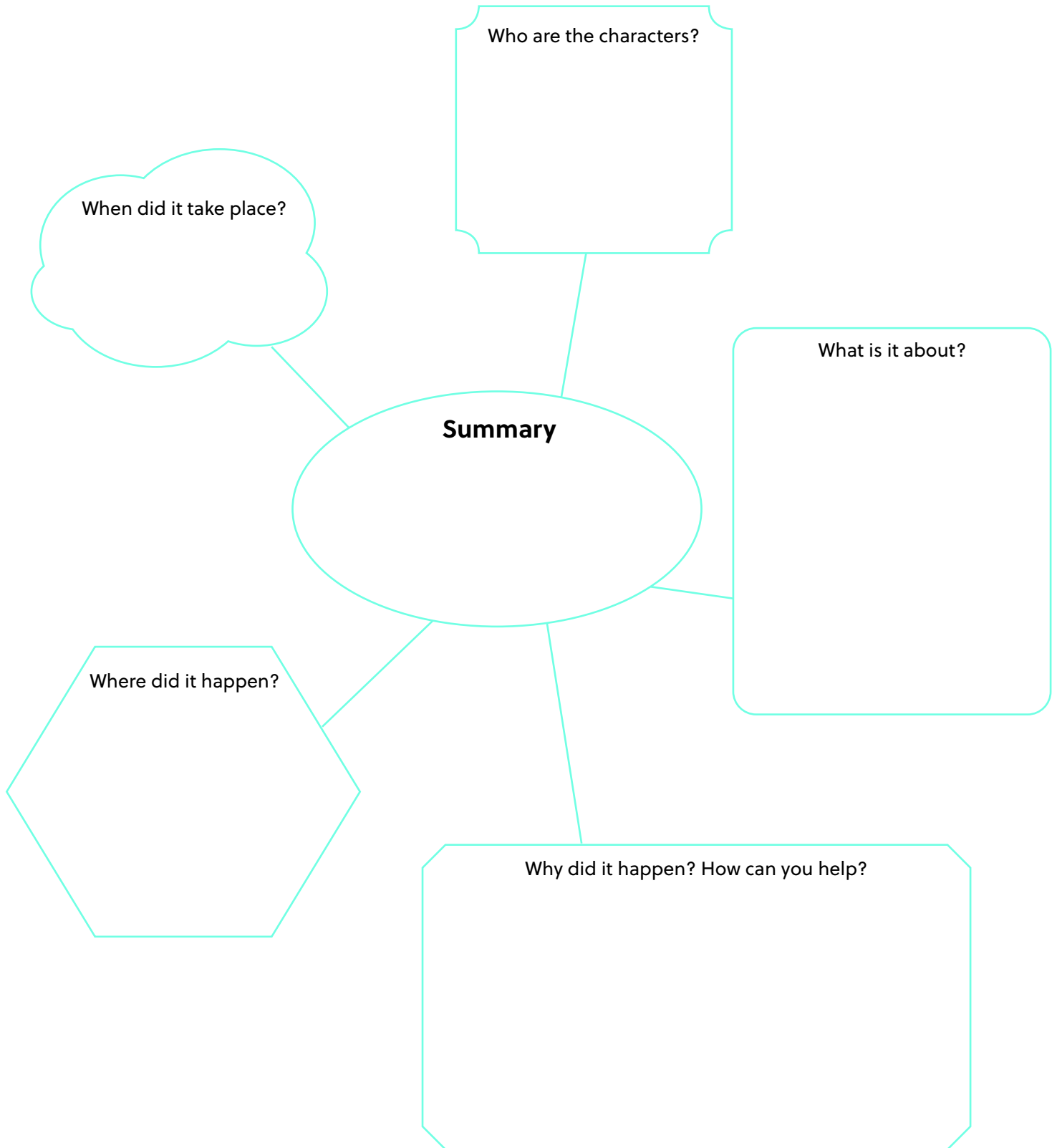
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## Blackline Master 4: The 5 Ws





## Blackline Master 5: Healthy Relationship Grid

Complete this chart, with information for others who are in or may become involved in relationships with you. You may write it in paragraph or point-form. Keep it somewhere safe so you can add to it and reflect upon it in the future.

<b>I Am</b>	<b>I Am Not</b>
<b>I Want</b>	<b>I Do Not Want</b>
<b>I Will</b>	<b>I Will Not</b>

## **Blackline Master 6: Safety Plan**

This safety plan belongs to \_\_\_\_\_

My reasons to end this relationship are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My strengths are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My reasons to survive and overcome this challenge are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

People who love and care for me are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Advice to myself when facing an emergency is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Self-care tools are \_\_\_\_\_

Write down any coping strategies or tools you can use to reduce emotional distress and help you respond calmly to the situation.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Blackline Master 6: Safety Plan (cont)**

### **Toxic Relationship**

Current risks of this toxic relationship are \_\_\_\_\_

Future risks of this toxic relationship are \_\_\_\_\_

Strategies tried in the past are \_\_\_\_\_

Lessons or realizations from these experiences are \_\_\_\_\_

### **Safety**

Create a code word to tell friends and/or family when immediate support is required.

My code word is \_\_\_\_\_

Make sure you share this code word with your trusted friends and family.

### **Safe Places**

Write down places that you can go to for support and safety.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Safe People**

Friends or family members I can reach out to: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email/social media name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email/social media name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email/social media name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Blackline Master 6: Safety Plan (cont)

### My Emergency Bag

Pack an emergency bag(s) with essential items that are safely accessible during an emergency.

Items that can be packed:

- Clothing and shoes
- Hygiene items
- Cash
- Prepaid credit cards
- Valid transportation tokens, tickets or pass
- Clothing and shoes
- Hygiene items
- Cell phone/computer
- Charging cables
- Driver's licence, passport or identification card
- Keys
- Contact numbers and information
- Medication, eye glasses or contact lenses
- Snacks of non-perishable food
- Water bottle
- Evidence of abuse
- Other items that are important

### Resources I can connect with

Immediate help – 911

Local police number \_\_\_\_\_

Counselling resources \_\_\_\_\_

Crisis hotlines \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Aid Society contact \_\_\_\_\_

## **Blackline Master 6: Safety Plan (cont)**

### **My Evidence**

- Keep a record of the incidents by journalling the abuse; include time, date and detailed description of what occurred. This information is vital for police officers to take the next steps of protecting you.
- Take screen shots or pictures of any proof. For example, injuries, messages, calls, etc.

### **Remember to:**

- Change any passwords to your email, phone, computer or social media accounts.
- Create a different route home or to a safe place that you don't commonly take.
- Check your digital devices for any unknown tracking apps or software.
- Turn off phone GPS and place it on airplane mode, if needed.
- In case of any sexual assault, seek immediate medical attention and preserve any evidence.

### **My Personal Quote**

Find a quote that empowers you and gives you strength.

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**WELL~  
BEING  
CANADA**



[wellbeing-canada.ca](http://wellbeing-canada.ca)