

Year Nine and Ten

Respectful Relationships

Key Focus for Year 9–10 Teachers:

Students in Years 9 and 10 are developing greater independence and awareness of the world around them. The Respectful Relationships curriculum encourages them to reflect on identity, understand power dynamics, build healthy relationships, and explore what respectful behaviour looks like in diverse contexts, including digital spaces.

Core learning objectives:

1. Emotional literacy

- Deepen emotional awareness, recognising complex emotional experiences and their impact.
- Understand how beliefs and thoughts influence emotional responses.
- Develop empathy by recognising others' emotions in various situations.

2. Personal strengths

- Support students to explore their evolving identity and personal values.
- Use strength based reflection to build resilience, confidence, and leadership.
- Please encourage students to identify how their strengths contribute to group success.

3. Positive coping

- Promote healthy ways of managing setbacks, stress, and mental health challenges.
- Discuss realistic self-care, boundaries, and emotional regulation techniques.
- Encourage students to evaluate which strategies are healthy and which are unhelpful.

4. Problem solving

- Teach logical decision-making frameworks.
- Encourage students to consider long-term consequences, personal values, and ethical outcomes.
- Explore complex, real-life issues (e.g. social justice, consent, group dynamics).

5. Stress management

- Identify personal stress triggers and patterns.
- Explore how lifestyle choices, relationships, and academic pressure affect stress levels.
- Practice daily habits that support long-term well-being.

6. Gender and identity

- Critically examine gender norms, stereotypes, and societal expectations.
- Discuss intersectionality and how identity is shaped by multiple factors (culture, gender, ability, etc.).
- Promote respectful conversations and support inclusive environments.

7. Positive relationships

- Analyse the qualities of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships, including power imbalances.
- Explore the impact of respect, consent, communication, and trust in all relationships.
- Teach assertiveness, conflict resolution, and digital relationship etiquette.

8. Help seeking

- Reduce stigma and normalise accessing support.
- Encourage help seeking for self and peers in relation to emotional well-being, relationships, or safety.
- Identify local and national support networks (school counsellors, helplines, mental health services).



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Tips for teaching at years 9 - 10 level:

- **Create safe discussion spaces:** Encourage open dialogue about complex issues like identity, relationships, and consent.
- **Use media and real world examples:** Explore how messages about gender, relationships, and self worth are portrayed and internalised.
- **Encourage critical thinking:** Let students respectfully question assumptions, societal norms, and peer behaviours.
- **Support agency and leadership:** Give students ownership in setting goals and taking action for respectful change in their communities.
- **Foster self reflection:** Journals, surveys, and group reflections help students track their emotional growth and decision-making.

Years 9 - 10 is all about:

- Understanding complex emotions and identity
- Owning strengths and coping positively
- Navigating respectful relationships with integrity
- Challenging stereotypes and social injustice
- Being proactive in seeking and offering support

