

Emotion detectives: Roleplay to explore technology and emotion



This lesson can take up to 30 minutes. It can be broken down into smaller groups, or shorter lessons.

Ages 4-6

The lesson has been designed for learners aged 4-6. The “checkpoints” offer differentiation strategies to scale learning as required.

About this lesson

- Overview	pg 2
- Learning intentions & success criteria	pg 2
Educator lesson notes	pg 3
Lesson instructions	pg 4
Resources	pg 6
Aligned curriculum	pg 12

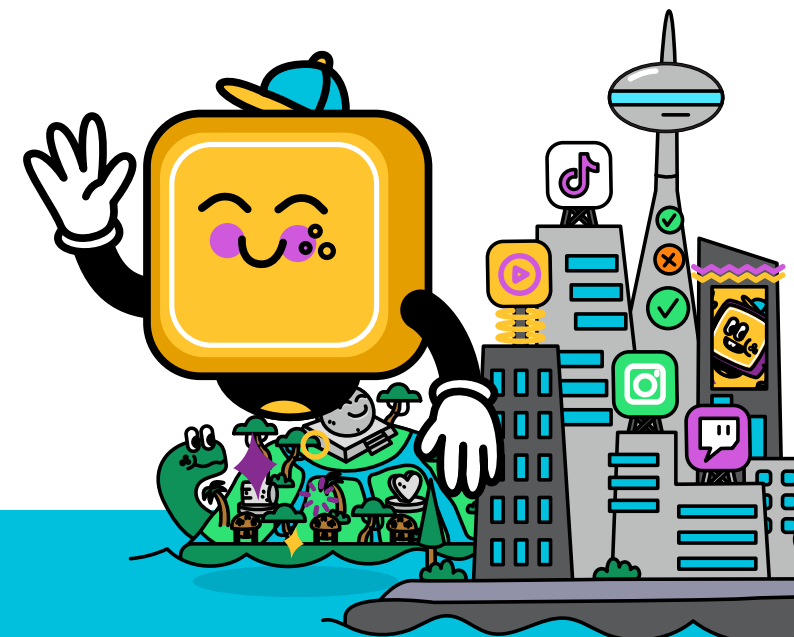


This lesson is part of the eSmart Digital Licence program

By completing just four engaging lessons, including this one, your class can earn their eSmart Digital Licences—signalling their understanding of safe and responsible online behaviour. Start now and guide your learners toward becoming confident and positive digital citizens.



Learn more about the program
be.esmart.org.au/dl/overview



Overview

In this roleplay lesson, learners will create and act out scenes to explore how certain patterns of technology usage can affect their feelings and emotions.

By understanding how technology impacts their well-being and feelings, learners will begin to recognise the physical and emotional signs of device overuse, and learn the skills necessary to develop more mindful online habits.

For further guidance on fostering emotional intelligence in relation to the Compulsion risk area, please refer to the Educator tips on p. 3.

Setup

- ☐ Project the lesson slides onto a central screen. These can be found in this lesson plan pack, or downloaded as a PowerPoint in the Resources section of the lesson page.
- ☐ A space that is big enough for small groups/pairs to collaborate.
- ☐ Provide a digital version of the presentation for learners using assistive technology.
- ☐ (Optional) Soft toys, drawing materials/playdough, for learners who require alternative means of expression.
- ☐ (Optional) A quiet space for students who may feel overwhelmed by loud noises or crowds, which may occur during group play.

Learning intentions & success criteria

Learners will:

- Understand that using technology can affect feelings and emotions.
- Identify a simple plan for shifting feelings and emotions while using devices.

These intentions are evidenced when learners can:

- ☐ Identify at least one of the emotions that we can feel when using devices.
- ☐ Suggest one way that emotions or feelings can be shifted through an action or change in behaviour.

Educators will:

- Facilitate student understanding of the relationship between technology use, emotions, and feelings.
- Help students recognise the importance of managing screen time and encourage thoughtful technology use.

These intentions are evidenced when educators can:

- ☐ Support the use of appropriate emotional vocabulary when learners discuss feelings in relation to technology use.
- ☐ Guide learners to identify and share one or more strategies for managing screen time thoughtfully in response to changing feelings and emotions.

Supporting Emotional Intelligence (EI)

The lesson: Key messages

- Emotions are like big waves that come and go.
- Everyone feels difficult emotions sometimes, like anger, sadness, or frustration. It's okay to feel this way; it's part of being human.
- We can feel good emotions and also really big difficult ones when we are using devices. It's important to notice our feelings and stop or ask for help when we need to.

This lesson aims to develop Emotional Intelligence (EI) which is the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and to influence the emotions of others. EI supports essential skills for forming healthy device habits, such as:

- Self-Awareness: Recognising how emotions like frustration, tiredness, or anxiety affect thoughts and behaviour during device use.
- Self-Management: Managing emotions and controlling impulsive behaviours. For example, a frustrated student might learn to take a break and ask for help when facing challenges in a game.
- Social Awareness: Understanding others' emotions and recognising when device usage is inappropriate.

Tips for managing emotions and feelings when using devices

When developing solutions for device usage or issues that they might face online, encourage learners to:

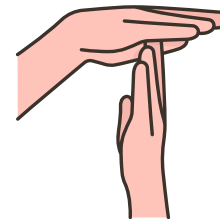


Surround themselves with supportive people

"Who makes you feel good and safe? Can you talk to them about how you're feeling?"

Remember their strengths

"Think about what you're good at. How can you use your talents to solve this problem?"



Pause and reflect

"Take a moment to think about how you're feeling. Can you tell me why you feel this way?"

Create a safe space offline

"Where do you feel safe and happy? Where can you spend time, if being online gets stressful?"



Focus on the big picture (maintain perspective)

"Is this a big problem or a small problem? What could you do to feel better?"

Be kind to themselves

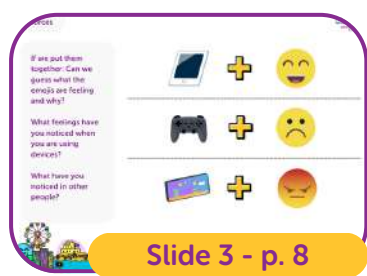
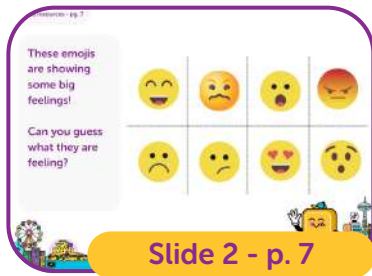
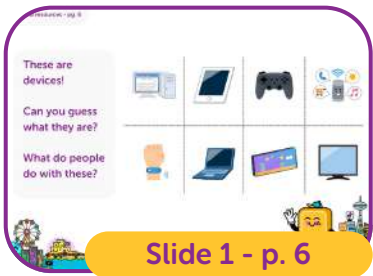
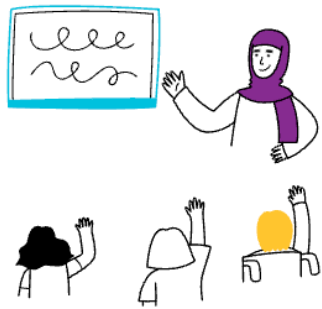
"Speak to yourself like a friend. What kind words can you say?"

1

Introduce the lesson

Guessing game: Identify devices, emotions, and feelings

- Use the question prompts and images provided on the slides to guess the devices, emotions, and feelings that are presented.
- Imagine scenarios where the feelings and emotions of characters are impacted by the particular use of devices in both positive and negative ways.



Checkpoint: Make it work for everyone

Differentiate the lesson by assessing the discussion and modify instruction as appropriate.

Modify based on whether learners can:

- Identify devices.
- Identify emotions.
- Connect that device use can impact emotions.

Option: Scaffold further

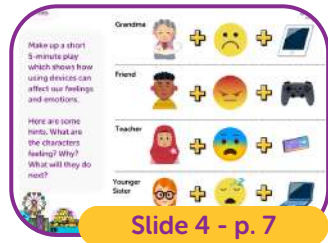
If necessary, provide learners with the following scenarios. Ask them to match to the appropriate images on Slide 3 and discuss responses.

- Mum asks you to get off the phone to do your homework (Anger).
- Your brother won't let you have a turn on the games console (Sadness).
- You have got a new game on the tablet you share with your family (Happiness/Excitement).

2

Main activity

Choose one activity depending on the needs of your learners. Visual and question prompts are included on Slide 4 (p. 7) to inspire scenarios or soft play.



Structured roleplay

Learners split into pairs/groups to create a short 3-5 minute scenario.



Soft toy play

Learners split into pairs/groups and use soft toys to act out scenarios involving devices.



In both instances, the aim is to create stories about what their characters/toys are doing with devices and how they feel. After ten minutes, invite learners to act out or discuss their scenarios with the whole group.

Checkpoint: Check understanding

Observe activity participation. Modify instruction before moving on if learners struggle to:

- Stay on task; too much free play, or completely off topic.
- Don't understand the link between devices and emotions/feelings.

Options:

- Return to Slide 4 and discuss possible scenarios as a whole group.
- Assign example scenarios to each pair/group.
- Use drawing/other creative forms to express what an example scenario might make a character feel.

3

Exit pass

In-class discussion or set as homework.

- Each student should identify a plan (or, a strategy) for shifting difficult feelings when using devices.
 - Child-friendly prompts and examples are provided on Slide 5.
- Learners can report this plan back to the group via discussion, write in workbooks, or draw a picture to help explain.



Checkpoint: Learning intentions & success criteria

Assess the "Exit pass" to ensure learners have met the following success criteria:

- Identify at least one of the emotions that we can feel when using devices.
- Suggest one way that emotions or feelings can be shifted through an action or change in behaviour.

Next steps:

If some learners didn't meet the criteria, conduct the brief "Top-up" activity in the following section.

Important Note:

If this lesson is part of the eSmart Digital Licence, you'll need to ensure that all learners have met the success criteria before accessing the Digital Licences.

4

(Optional) Top-up or extend the lesson

Top-up the lesson

For learners who need more help meeting the learning intentions & success criteria.

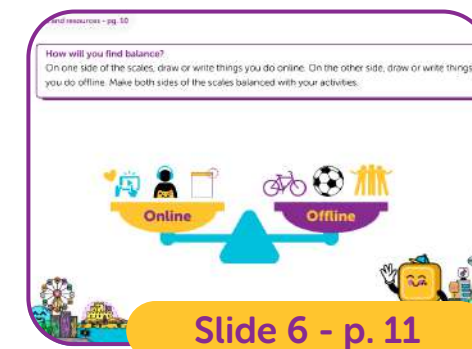


Review Slide 5 (p. 10) in greater detail with the learners who are having difficulty. Provide examples and ask learners to come up with a strategy for shifting difficult feelings while using devices. These could include:

- A friend is frustrated because they keep failing the level on a game.
- Your brother won't play with you because he is watching TV.
- You get a text message from a friend, but Dad wants you to put the phone down.

Extend the lesson

For learners who have met the learning intentions & success criteria, and need a bit more of a challenge.



Acknowledge that we can feel a wide range of emotions in every day life, and it's important to balance our activities so that we don't become bogged down in the difficult ones.

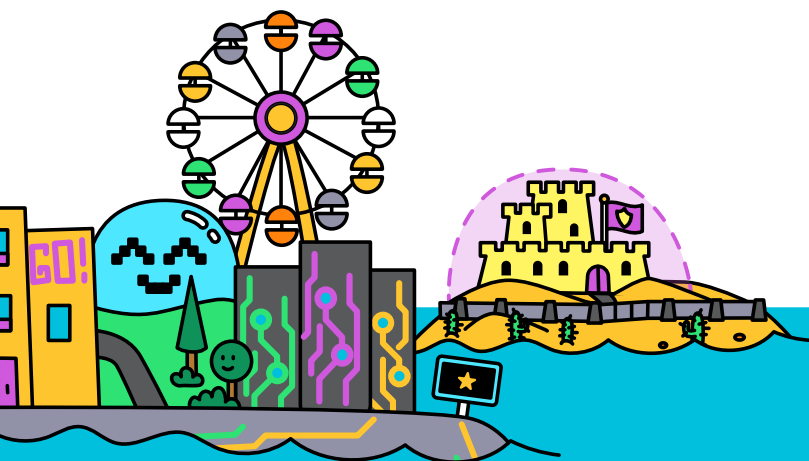
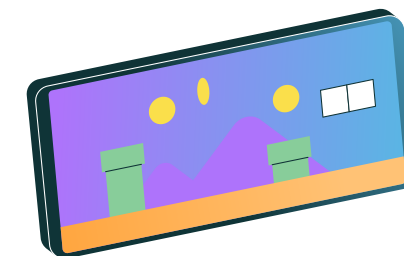
Use Slide 6 (p. 11) either printed off, or replicated in workbooks, for learners to balance their online activities with offline ones.

These are devices!

Can you guess
what they are?

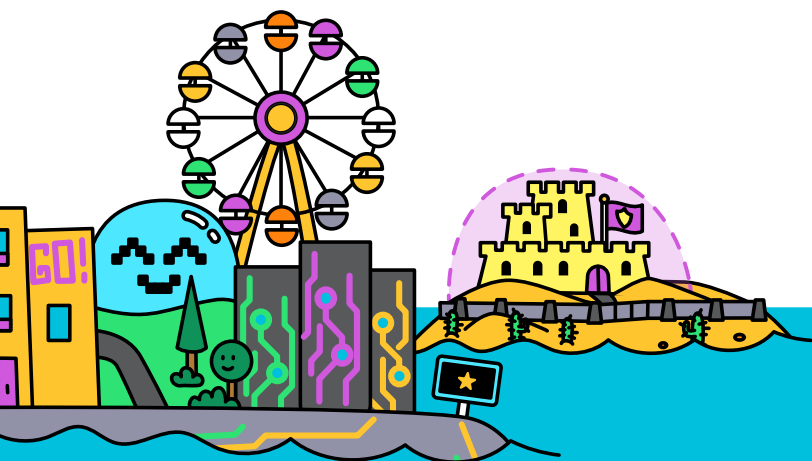
What do people do
with these?

How can they make
people feel?



These emojis
are showing
some big
emotions and
feelings!

Can you guess
what they are?



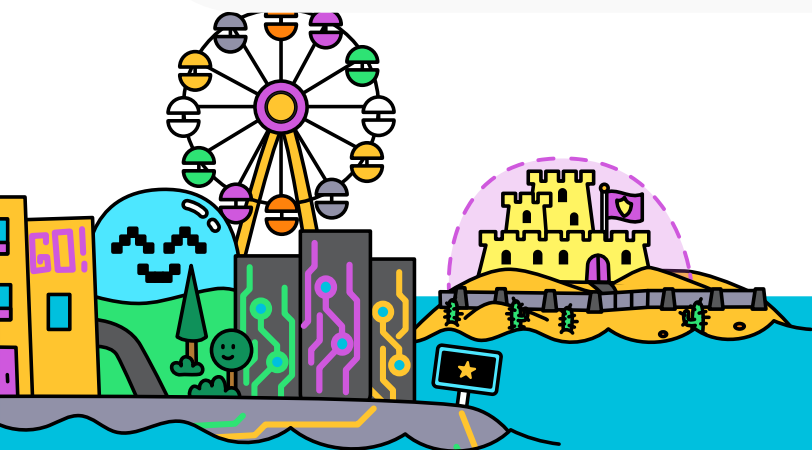
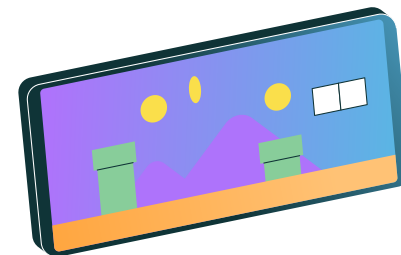
If we put them
together: Can we
guess what the
emojis are feeling
and why?



What feelings have
you noticed when
you are using
devices?



What have you
noticed in other
people?



Make up a short
5-minute play
which shows how
using devices can
affect our feelings
and emotions.

Here are some
hints. What are
the characters
feeling? Why?
What will they do
next?

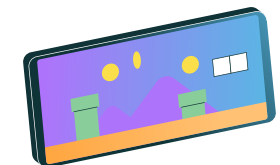
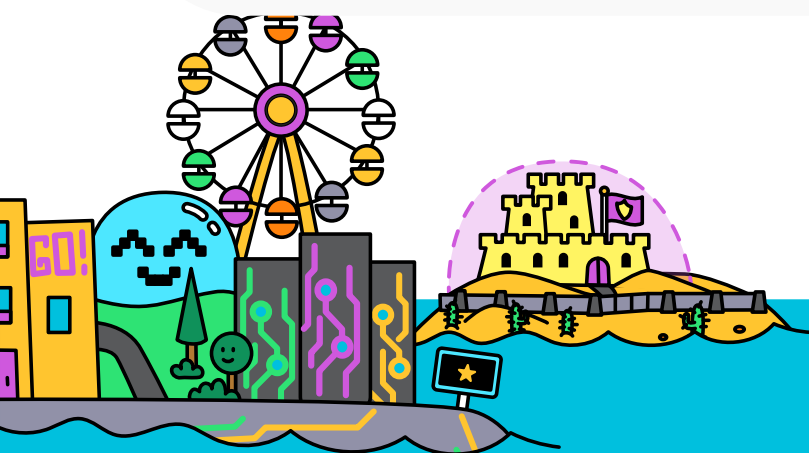
Grandma



Friend



Teacher

Younger
Sister



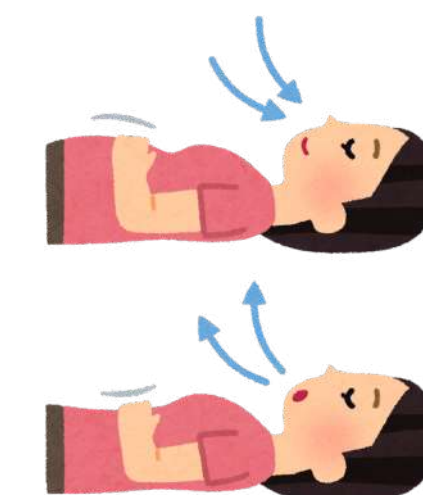
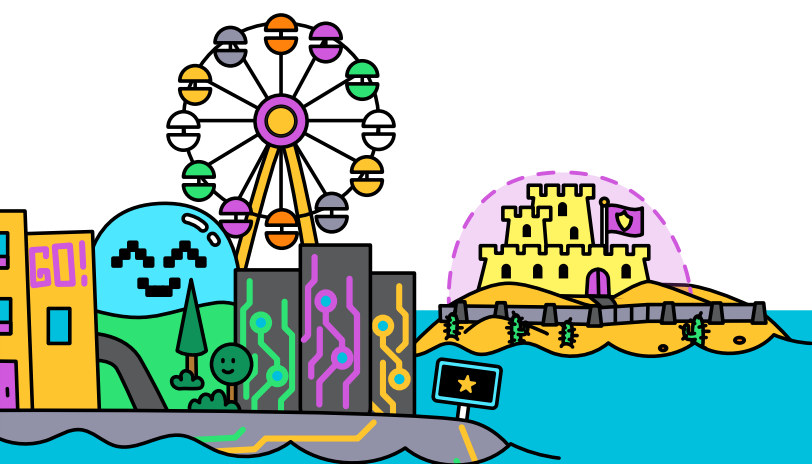
Ninja Whiskers says...

Everyone feels difficult emotions sometimes, like anger, sadness, or frustration. It's okay to feel this way; it's part of being human.

What are some tips for shifting big emotions?

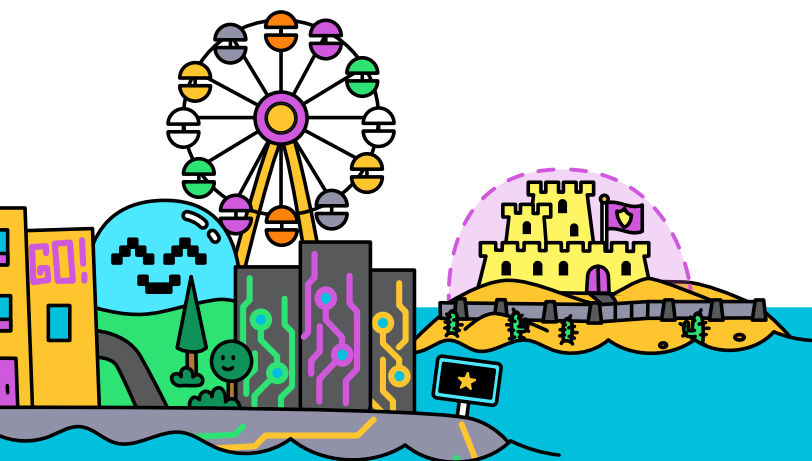
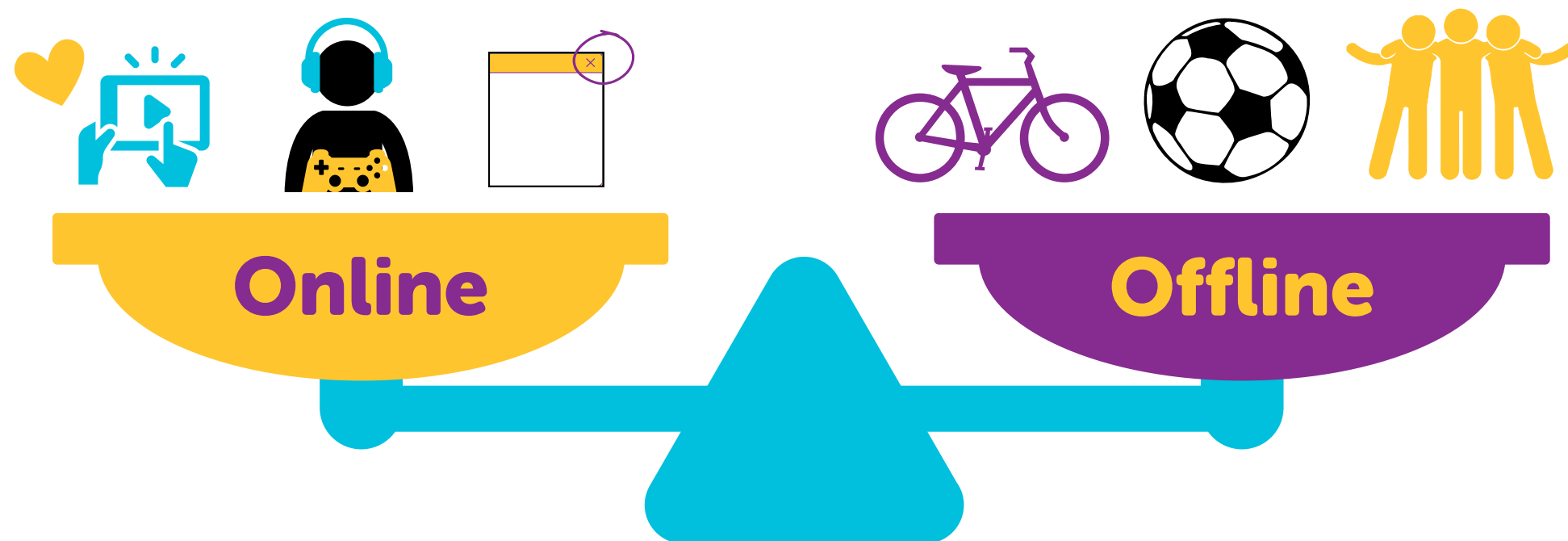
Match each of these clues to a picture:

- Tell a friend.
- Play a sport outside.
- Move your body - dance!
- Go to a safe place that isn't online.
- Share how you feel with a trusted adult.
- Breathe deeply.



How will you find balance?

On one side of the scales, draw or write things you do online. On the other side, draw or write things you do offline. Make both sides of the scales balanced with your activities.



Australian Curriculum (Version 9.0)



Personal & Social Capabilities

Digital Technologies

Drama

Health & Physical Education

Foundation: Personal and Social Capabilities

Emotional awareness:

Level 1a: Identify a range of emotions across different situations.

Level 1: Identify their own emotional responses.

Emotional regulation:

Level 1a: Recognise how emotions influence the way we feel and act.

Foundation: Drama

AC9ADRFD01: Use play, imagination, arts knowledge, processes, and/or skills to discover possibilities and develop ideas.

AC9ADRFP01: Share their art works with audiences.

Foundation: Health and Physical Education

AC9HPFP0: Investigate who they are and the people in their world.

AC9HPFP03: Express and describe emotions they experience.

Foundation: Digital Technologies

AC9TDIFK01: Recognise and explore digital systems (hardware and software) for a purpose.

Year One: Personal and Social Capabilities

Emotional awareness:

Level 2: Describe the emotional responses of themselves and others.

Emotional regulation:

Level 2: Describe ways to moderate emotions in familiar contexts.

Year One: Drama

AC9ADR2C01: Create and co-create fictional situations based on imagination and/or experience.

AC9ADR2P01: Share their drama in informal settings.

Year One: Health and Physical Education

AC9HP2P02: Identify and explore skills and strategies to develop respectful relationships.

AC9HP2P03: Identify how different situations influence emotional responses.

Year One: Digital Technologies

AC9TDI2K01: Identify and explore digital systems and their components for a purpose.

My Time, Our Place



Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity.

Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy, and respect.

This is evident when children:

Identify the role of people in their lives and how they use technology and support children to use technology in appropriate ways.

Outcome 3: Children and young people have a strong sense of wellbeing.

Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing, particularly when they are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health, and personal safety.

This is evident when children:

Identify emotions and feelings in relation to digital device usage and attempt to explain why such feelings might arise.

CASEL Framework



Self-awareness

Social-awareness

Self-awareness:

The abilities to understand one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behaviour across contexts.

Social-awareness:

The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathise with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts.