



Relationships: The Basics Teaching Ideas

Learning Objective

To understand why we have relationships and to identify the features of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships.

Success Criteria

- To know what is meant by the term 'relationship'.
- To identify what healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships might look like.
- To understand the effects of an unhealthy relationship.
- To identify ways of maintaining a healthy relationship.

Resources

- Lesson PowerPoint
- Glossary
- Q&A
- What Does a Relationship Need? Worksheet
- Features of a Relationship Worksheet
- Healthy, Unhealthy and Abusive Behaviours Table
- Relationships Scenarios
- Relationships Jigsaw
- Teaching Ideas

Context and Prior Knowledge

This lesson provides a foundation and starting point for the teaching of relationships. The pack considers what a relationship is, features of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships, as well as identifying how relationships can be maintained. We suggest teaching this topic at KS3.

You could use this lesson pack by:

- completing it as a whole lesson (60-75 minutes), working through all of the activities.
- selecting one of the **Main Activities**, for example as a form time session (20-30 minutes).

Why?

Understanding what a relationship is and being able to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships helps promote self-esteem as well as emotional health and wellbeing. It helps us to form and maintain worthwhile relationships that are based on respect for ourselves and for others, at home, at school and in the wider community.

Framework Objectives

Pupils should know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Learning Agreement and Question Box

The slide reminds students about the learning agreement that you have established as a class. You may wish to highlight some statements that particularly apply to this lesson, for example, being sensitive towards other people's feelings and speaking for yourself. The next slide reminds students about the question box as an option for asking questions which they may not wish to share with the class. **Question Cards** and a **Question Box Label** are included in the lesson pack if you wish to use these. The questions in the box could be answered at the end of the lesson or at the start of the next lesson.

Starter

Allow students a couple of minutes to independently write down as many different relationships as they can think of. If you would prefer to shorten this task, you could simply ask students to offer suggestions (if they feel comfortable). Avoid giving any further information until the activity has been completed. This activity may highlight students' interpretations of what is meant by a relationship, for example, they may just think of a romantic relationship. Share with students that the dictionary definition of a relationship is the way in which two or more people are connected and behave towards each other. Some relationships can be romantic, but some involve family, friends and other groups of people.

Use the following slides to highlight key information about what is meant by a relationship. Encourage students to consider that one of the most important relationships is the relationship you have with yourself. Knowing yourself can help you to communicate your wants, needs and values more clearly in relationships. Similarly, knowing your limits can help you to make the right choices for you and feel confident about them.

Main Activities

Personal Response: What Does a Relationship Need?

This exercise is most effective when students write a quiet, personal reflection. The **What Does a Relationship Need? Worksheet** is available for you to print out and give to students. Students should note down/bullet point the things they consider most important in a relationship.

Invite students who are confident and willing to do so to share their views with the class. If you know the classroom climate is secure, you may wish to explore these statements:

- Which of these beliefs is most likely to lead to a healthy relationship?
- Are there any beliefs that might lead to an unhealthy relationship?

Encourage students to give reasons for their answers.

Features of a Relationship

This activity asks students to look at the six possible features of a relationship. The **Features of a Relationship Worksheet** can be printed out and given to students for them to complete this task. Working in pairs or small groups, ask students to give an example of how each of these features of a relationship might be either healthy or unhealthy in practice. Consider modelling an answer to encourage students in their discussions. For example, giving gifts can be a healthy thing to do to show someone

you appreciate and care about them. However, if gifts are given expecting something in return, or to make the other person in the relationship feel like they owe the gift-giver something, this can be unhealthy and might be interpreted as manipulation or blackmail. There is an answer sheet included with some ideas that students might suggest. Highlight that positive relationships involve negotiation so sometimes it is healthy to disagree. The way this is dealt with shows the healthiness of the relationship and the qualities of the people in it.

Healthy, Unhealthy and Abusive Relationships

The slides discuss some of the features healthy and unhealthy relationships, as well as the effects of these. They then go on to explain the basic difference between unhealthy and abusive relationships: unhealthy relationships involve behaviour that is not healthy or founded in mutual respect, whereas abusive relationships involve cruel or violent treatment, especially if this behaviour is regular or repeated. Emphasise to students that every relationship is different, and what is unhealthy or abusive is not always clear-cut. Following this, students are asked to fill out the **Healthy, Unhealthy and Abusive Behaviours Table** according to how certain features might differ in these contexts. The subsequent slides give a general idea of some behaviours that might be present in unhealthy and abusive relationships. Always be clear that these lists are not exhaustive, as well as ensuring that students understand what they can do and who they can talk to if they are worried about themselves or someone else. There is also some information on the slides about online relationships, including different ways to help maintain healthy digital relationships. Staying safe online is covered in more detail in another lesson.

Maintaining Healthy Relationships

Relationships can be hard work and require respect, communication and compromise. Use these slides to share with students the ways in which they can maintain healthy relationships. Relate back to the idea that one of the most important relationship is with yourself because knowing yourself can help to communicate your wants, needs and values more clearly.

Consent

Consent is a person's permission or agreement by choice to anything that involves them. For example, their body, personal space, time, money or belongings. It means agreeing to an action based on your knowledge of what that action involves and the possible consequences, with the option of saying no. It is imperative that the importance of non-sexual consent is highlighted; consent does not just relate to sexual behaviour.

Relationships Scenarios

The activity gives four scenarios about a relationship or situation. You may wish for students to work in pairs and discuss each scenario. Alternatively, you could give one scenario to a small group using the **Relationships Scenarios** handout provided. We have used the names Tiara, Viren, Jane, Karen, Keisha, Paul and Steve in this activity. You may wish to change the names on the slides and/or handout if they match the names of any of your students, to avoid embarrassment. Students should read the information and discuss whether each relationship is healthy or unhealthy. They should also consider if there is anything about the situation that concerns them and what the people involved should do next. There are some suggested answers that appear on the slide following each scenario, although students may have other valid ideas. Make sure to highlight any behaviour which could lead to abuse, especially in the scenarios of 'Tiara' and 'Paul'. Either could become isolated or increasingly controlled by their boyfriend/friend, and 'Paul' in particular could be in serious danger of being abused or exploited.

Plenary

Relationships Jigsaw

This activity is designed to draw the session together and encourage students to reflect on what they have discussed. The **Relationships Jigsaw** handout could be printed off and given to students to complete or laminated to be completed as a pair or small group.

Questions and Signposting

See the **Relationships: The Basics Q&A** for possible questions and suggested answers related to this topic.

There is a blank slide for you to signpost where students can find further help or information. For this topic, we would recommend including:

- Organisations that offer support around abuse (although in-depth teaching around abuse is covered in other lessons, it is important to sign-post students at the earliest opportunity). Some suggestions are [Childline](#) and [NSPCC](#).
- We would also strongly recommend including specific phone numbers for local and national helplines in case students are worried that a relationship is becoming unhealthy or abusive.
- Reliable sources of information for finding out more about relationships, e.g. [Brook UK](#).

Disclaimer

This resource is provided for informational and educational purposes only. Sensitive and/or upsetting topics may emotionally impact your students due to past experiences. You should consider whether this content is appropriate and ensure adequate support is available for anyone affected. This resource is not intended to encourage social media use and we cannot accept any responsibility for students that sign up to social media sites after using this resource.

This resource contains links to external websites. Please be aware that the inclusion of any link in this resource should not be taken as an endorsement of any kind by Twinkl of the linked website, or any association with its operators. You should also be aware that we have no control over the availability of the linked pages. If the link is not working, please let us know by contacting TwinklCares and we will try to fix it although we can assume no responsibility if this is the case. We are not responsible for the content of external sites.