 Stairs to inclusivity – Stage 4

Suggested duration: 2 x 45 minutes

The content within this teaching and learning activity has been mapped to Stage 4 PDHPE outcomes and as such is designed to be used with students in year 7 or 8.

It aims to introduce students to the “Stairs to inclusivity” to promote consideration and reflection on where certain attitudes, behaviours or actions fit on a sliding scale and the impact these can have on self and others. Students will be introduced to terms such as tolerance, acceptance, respect, mutual understanding and celebration. The activity explores positive actions that can promote inclusivity, and encourages students to move beyond the notion of tolerance and acceptance by recognising behaviours that are inclusive.

It is important that teachers are familiar with and have a strong understanding of the stairs to inclusivity terms and definitions before implementing this activity. Teachers may have differing definitions of the key terms.

PDHPE outcomes

PD4-2 examines and demonstrates the role help- seeking strategies and behaviours play in supporting themselves and others

PD4-3 investigates effective strategies to promote inclusivity, equality and respectful relationships

PD4-6 recognises how contextual factors influence attitudes and behaviours and proposes strategies to enhance health, safety, wellbeing and participation in physical activity

PD4-9 demonstrates self- management skills to effectively manage complex situations

PD4-10 applies and refines interpersonal skills to assist themselves and others to interact respectfully and promote inclusion in a variety of groups

What do we want students to know, understand or be able to do?

* Identify people and places that make young people feel connected.
* Understand the meanings of the terms connected and inclusive.
* Assess a range of behaviours to determine what reflects a caring and respectful relationship.
* Recognise the use of power in relation to the terms tolerance and acceptance.
* Identify behaviours to determine those which are most inclusive and display a positive use of power.

PDHPE content

| Key Inquiry Questions | Content |
| --- | --- |
| What skills and strategies can be used to promote inclusivity, equality and respectful relationships? | * explain how a sense of belonging and connection to our communities can enhance health, safety and wellbeing   + identify individuals, groups, places or activities to which they feel a strong sense of belonging and explain how these help them to feel supported and connected S I * investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others’ health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS074) I   + examine how culture and relationships with family and peers can influence people’s attitudes, behaviours, decisions and actions in different situations S   + analyse how behaviours, actions, and responses to situations can change depending on who they are with S * explore skills and strategies needed to communicate and engage in relationships in respectful ways   + practise being respectful, sympathetic and empathetic to different viewpoints and plan alternative ways to respond to others S I * discuss the impact of power in relationships and identify and develop skills to challenge the abuse of power   + discuss the influence of family, media and peer attitudes to power in relationships   + explore how external influences impact power in relationships in both a positive and negative way, eg intolerance, help-seeking, social support, advocacy on one’s behalf, upstander behaviour S   + describe forms of bullying, harassment, abuse, neglect, discrimination and violence and how they impact health, safety and wellbeing   + devise help-seeking strategies that address imbalance of power in relationships, eg contacting the police and other external organisations, staying at a family/friends place S   + develop skills to challenge the abuse of power S I |
| What positive actions contribute to the health, safety, wellbeing and participation in physical activity levels of the wider community? | * plan and implement inclusive strategies to promote health and wellbeing and to connect with their communities   + describe the skills, strengths and strategies required to contribute to inclusive communities and implement strategies to challenge prejudicial and discriminatory views of diversity within the community S I |
| Why is connection, inclusion and empowerment important for the health, safety, wellbeing and physical activity levels of the wider community? | * examine influences on peoples’ behaviours, decisions and actions (ACPPS074)   + discuss the influence of contextual factors on individual decisions and actions   + apply ethical and inclusive strategies to promote the health and wellbeing of themselves and others, eg peer support, helping others, active participation, demonstrating inclusive behaviours towards people with disabilities S I M |

PDHPE skills focus

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| --- | --- |
| Skill domain and skills | Evidence of learning - what do we want students to be able to do? |
| Interpersonal skills   * communication * collaboration, inclusion and relationship building * empathy building * leadership and advocacy | * Communicate clearly with others * Share thoughts and emotions appropriate to the situation * Actively listen to others * Understand the needs and circumstances of others and express that understanding * Value an individual’s or group’s worth * Adopt a variety of roles such as group member to support and encourage others * Relate to others experiences and circumstances * Show compassion * Encourage people to look out for themselves * Encourage and guide others in a positive way * Contend the negative attitudes and behaviours of others |
| Self-management skills   * decision making and problem solving * help seeking | * Locate relevant and reliable information and services * Seek help where required * Justify why a particular option has been chosen over others * Locate support services * Find out where to go or how to access support services/networks |

Assumed knowledge and understanding

To participate in this activity, it is assumed that students will have a sound understanding of the following Stage 3 and Stage 4 PDHPE content:

* Interpersonal relationships
* Challenging discrimination
* Types and nature of relationships
* Caring and respectful relationships

Required resources and materials for preparation

* stairs to inclusivity set of cards – 1 set per group
* stairs to inclusivity discussion notes – teacher only
* stairs to inclusivity visual layout – 1 per student (A4)

Teaching notes

Young people who have a feeling of connectedness with parents, family and school have lower levels of smoking, drinking, other drug use, suicidal thinking, risky sexual behaviour and exposure to violence. To enhance their ability to manage these challenges, students identify the people and places that make them feel connected and they engage in group based learning experiences where they can build connections and practice their communication skills.

Considerations when selecting activities

* Preview and evaluate all strategies, resources and teaching and learning approaches in full before use with students to determine suitability for student learning needs, stage of development and local school context.
* Consider the age, maturity, cultural background, sexuality, gender, sex, health and other characteristics of students in your care.
* Apply professional judgements to all strategies, teaching and learning approaches and resources including audiovisual materials (e.g. videos, media clips and YouTube), interactive web-based content (e.g. games, quizzes and websites) and texts.
* Seek endorsement by the school principal before use of materials in NSW government schools.
* Select the activities most suitable for your students.
* Individual students within the group have differing needs and backgrounds. Modify or extend some aspects of suggested activities accordingly.
* Consider and tailor lessons to cater for differing cultural perceptions of what should be taught at a certain age.
* Undertake a comprehensive step by step process to assess any physical or psychological risks associated with an activity before following using a variety of teaching strategies.
* Enable students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting.
* Recognise that some students may find it difficult to contribute to class discussions and may say little in group activities. Don’t assume they are not engaged in the activities but rather provide all students with the opportunity to contribute in less public ways.
* Be guided by the department's [Sexuality and sexual health education in NSW government schools fact sheet](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/83181e69-4daf-4308-a7dd-d05f11af5cbd/1/sexuality-ed-nsw.pdf) when planning and implementing any sexuality or sexual health education lesson.
* Access more information about child protection education on the department’s [PDHPE curriculum website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/child-protection-and-respectful-relationships-education).
* Use the [resource review flowchart](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/083acd3a-daca-4307-9afe-bc6c888f694a/1/final-resource-flowchart-html5.zip/index.html) to decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of PDHPE/ Crossroads may be viewed as sensitive or controversial, such as learning about abuse, child protection, drugs, respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and violence. Inform parents and carers, prior to the occasion, of the specific details of the PDHPE or Crossroads program, so that parents and caregivers have time to exercise their rights of withdrawing their child from a particular session. In this regard, a parents or caregiver’s wish must be respected.

Establishing how parents and caregivers will be informed about programs and involved in consultation is a school-based decision. Where parents and caregivers indicate they wish to withdraw their child from a program it is useful to negotiate which parts of the PDHPE program they are concerned about. Sample information letters are available on the [PDHPE curriculum website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/curriculum/pdhpe/general-information/parents-and-carers).

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

There are a number of strategies that can be used to create a supportive learning environment which enables students to feel safe to learn and ask questions. They include:

* making students aware at the beginning of PDHPE lessons that disclosing personal information that indicates they may be at risk of harm will be reported to the school principal in all instances. This includes personal disclosures related to instances of abuse, drug use, neglect or sexual activity under the legal age of consent.
* being aware that some parts of PDHPE can be confronting and sensitive for some students.
* enabling students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting to protect them from making harmful disclosures. Equally, it is important to be prepared for issues that arise as a result of a student making a public disclosure in the classroom.

It is recommended that staff use a question box to allow for students to ask difficult questions anonymously through the unit. The question box provides staff with information on student prior and post knowledge by assessing the questions which arise through the question box. Students should be provided with a piece of paper at the beginning of each lesson which they can write their question on and submit. All students should submit a piece of paper, even if it is blank to ensure anonymity.

More information on creating a safe and supportive learning environment can be found on the [PDHPE curriculum website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/curriculum/pdhpe/general-information/learning-environment).

Learning experiences

**Activity 1 – what make me feel connected (30 minutes)**

1. Individually under the three headings - school, home, community - students list the people and places to which they feel a strong sense of belonging or connection.
2. Students share their ideas with a partner and record on paper as a combined list.
3. Pairs share their lists with the class or small group to create a group list under the heading - People and places that make young people feel connected. Students may add additional ideas to the class list as they come to mind.
4. Students contribute to class discussion about how they think people or places help themselves or others to feel connected. Some or all of the following questions could be used for discussion:
   1. What does it mean to feel connected?
   2. What is it about the person/s or place that would make young people feel safe?
   3. How does the person/s or place support young people to feel comfortable to be themselves?
   4. What are the qualities of the person/s or place that would make young people feel included?
   5. Why is it important for young people to feel connected?
5. Introduce the term ‘inclusive’ by discussing the following questions:
   1. What do you think the term inclusive means? Does it mean different things to different people?
   2. Does feeling connected mean the same as feeling included? Why or why not?
   3. What other words can you think of that could relate to the term ‘inclusive’?
   4. What are some words that mean the opposite of ‘inclusive’?
6. Examine the Oxford dictionaries definition of the term ‘inclusive’. The Oxford dictionary defines inclusive as;

not excluding any section of society or any party involved in something

(Of language) deliberately avoiding usages that could be seen as excluding a particular social group.

1. Encourage students as a class to redesign the Oxford Dictionary definition of the term ‘inclusive’ by exploring what the word means to them. Record student’s ideas and prompt students to develop a class definition that reflects respect, understanding, and appreciation for others rather than just focusing on ‘not excluding’.

**Activity 2 – stairs to inclusivity (30 minutes)**

1. Individually, in pairs or small groups, students are allocated a card from the stairs to inclusivity cards. Cards include both a word and a definition of the word.
2. In groups, students consider the word and definition and move them into an order, showing what they believe to be the least inclusive practice (most negative) to the most inclusive practice (most positive). Students place the cards on the wall or floor, like a set of stairs or ladder, showing where they think each word fits in a step or progression from least inclusive (at the bottom) to most inclusive (at the top).
3. Allow a few minutes for groups to discuss and agree on the order of the cards. Observe group discussions, noting the key words or conflicting opinions amongst the group. Refer to the stairs to inclusivity discussion notes for what to take note of for further discussion with the class.
4. Once groups have decided on an order, facilitate class discussion using the following questions:
   1. What thoughts or discussions did you have when deciding where to place the cards? (If participants are reluctant to volunteer thoughts, choose a word that was the centre of discussion between students and ask everyone why this was the case).
   2. Are there any words and/or definitions that you were unsure of or that are still not clear?
   3. Did people in your group have different ideas or opinions on the meanings of some words? Where have these meanings come from?
   4. Which words caused more discussion than others? Were certain words harder to place or agree on the order than others, if so which ones and why?
5. Handout the stairs to inclusivity visual layout to show the suggested order and pose the following questions:
   1. Are there any surprises in the order of the stairs? If so, what surprises you?
   2. Are there any stairs that you think could be removed? If so, why?
6. As a group, brainstorm examples of actions or behaviours within the school or community that would fit under each of the stairs to inclusivity.

Extension activity:

1. If the breadth of examples from the class is limited, extend the brainstorm activity to a graffiti walk.
   1. Place a Y chart on each of the stairs to inclusivity words.
   2. Students move around to each word and write down examples of what each stair to inclusivity might look like, sound like and/or feel like.
   3. It is important to remind the class to show respect for others during this activity and to not use personal names when writing down examples.
2. Place each of the Stairs to inclusivity on the board and split them into 3 categories with tolerance and acceptance in the middle category with no heading and the other 2 groups with the headings least inclusive (hatred/violence, prejudice, discrimination and dislike) and most inclusive (respect, mutual understanding and celebration). Note the extent to which students were able to think of examples for each of the stairs to inclusivity. The following questions could be used for class discussion;
   1. Which stairs to inclusivity terms did the class find easier to brainstorm examples for? Why do you think this is?
   2. Are there examples we have listed under any of the terms that you think might not fit on that stair to inclusivity? Why do you think this?
   3. Which of the stairs to inclusivity do you think reflect a positive use of power?
   4. Looking at the examples the class have come up with for tolerance and acceptance, which category would you now place these two words under –the least inclusive or most inclusive? (If these two words are placed in the inclusive category, teachers should prompt students to consider the use of power within the definitions of the words and review the examples. The placement of these examples may need to be re-considered or the perceptions of tolerance and acceptance may need to be further explored).
   5. When we examine all of the examples under ‘feels like’, what stands out as being different about the examples under the two categories – least inclusive and most inclusive? Why do you think this is?
   6. If the examples under least inclusive outweigh the examples under most inclusive then pose the following question:

* How could we change this situation so that the examples under the most inclusive words outweigh the examples under the least inclusive words? What could students, teachers, parents and carers, the media and/or the wider community do to support this?

1. If the examples under most inclusive outweigh the examples under least inclusive then pose the following question;
   1. What is it about our school or community that has allowed us to think of so many examples under the most inclusive words? What are the students, teachers, parents and carers, the school, the media, and/or the community doing well?

**Activity 3 – promoting inclusive behaviours (30 minutes)**

1. Revisit student’s prior knowledge of what makes a caring and respectful relationship. Focus on the behaviours expected in a caring and respectful relationship.
   1. Examine the examples under each of the Stairs to inclusivity and identify the behaviours within them that accurately reflect caring and respectful relationships amongst individuals and/or within groups.
   2. Assess the behaviours under each of the Stairs to inclusivity to determine which stairs would make young people feel the most connected.
   3. As a class, discuss why it is important to feel connected and for everyone to show respect, mutual understanding and celebration of each other? What are the benefits?
2. In small groups explore the [image gallery](http://register4.bullyingnoway.gov.au/Pages/gallery.aspx) on the [Bullying no way website](http://bullyingnoway.gov.au/), or something similar, to explore visual examples of what various individuals and school communities have done to promote or encourage inclusive behaviours. Students or teachers may like to explore the [school events page](https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/NationalDay/ForSchools/SchoolEvents) of the website for more specific details of school events and/or strategies.
3. As a class, brainstorm a range of strategies/projects, which they could put into action, based on the following focus question:
   1. How could we use the Stairs to inclusivity to encourage or promote inclusive behaviours like respect, mutual understanding and celebration in our school and/or wider community?

Extension activity

As a class, in small groups or individually, students could select one of the strategies/projects and develop a plan for action within the school or wider community.

Their plan could be a step by step procedure of what they would need to do to make it happen or it could be in the form of a proposal for support, funding and/or implementation which could be put forward to the School Principal, Student Representative Council (SRC), Parent and Citizens Committee (P&C) or a community organisation.

For example, the Propeller Project funds projects for social change – students could explore the [Propeller Project website](https://www.propellerproject.com.au/) for inspiration to start their own project to promote the Stairs to inclusivity message or encourage people to move beyond tolerance.

Stairs to inclusivity cards

Celebration

To nurture and treat a person or group with genuine sincerity or delight.

To value a person or group’s worth and be an advocate for their rights.

Mutual Understanding

To appreciate and support the rights of a person or group and combat the negative attitudes and behaviours of others.

Respect

To value the diversity in a person or group and challenge your own personal beliefs and attitudes.

Acceptance

To acknowledge difference but feel the need to approve or give permission for it to occur. (Someone who accepts difference is still placing themselves in a position of power, implying there is something that requires ‘acceptance’).

Tolerance

To put up with difference that you disagree.

To allow difference to exist or occur without interference.

Dislike

To withhold approval from a person or group.

To have a feeling of distaste towards a person or group.

Discrimination

To treat a person or group differently, usually in an unfair manner, because of your personal attitudes and beliefs.

Prejudice

To treat a person or group differently, usually in an unfair manner, because of a preconceived opinion.

To make a prejudgement or form an opinion without knowledge of the facts.

To express bias against a person or group based on stereotypical views.

Hate/Violence

To feel intense dislike, towards a person or group, so strong that it results in negative behaviours and actions towards the person or group.

Stairs to inclusivity - Discussion notes

The definition of inclusive

[Oxford dictionary](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/inclusive) defines inclusive as;

not excluding any section of society or any party involved in something (of language) deliberately avoiding usages that could be seen as excluding a particular social group.

Prejudice and discrimination

* These cards are often a focus of discussion amongst groups.
* Prejudice and discrimination are often interchangeable, because prejudice can be seen as a ‘form’ of discrimination.
* Prejudice is based on letting others ideas or values influence our own actions.
* Discrimination assumes that people have levels of knowledge or understanding on which they make judgements. Being educated on an issue is considered a step forward. This is not to say that discrimination is a good thing, it’s not, but it is a step forward from prejudice.
* It could be considered that dislike; tolerance and acceptance are all ‘forms’ of discrimination.
* Ultimately if we teach people to be informed and educated they will move past discrimination and a number of other steps in one go.

Mutual understanding and respect

* Groups often place these cards on the stairs in the opposite order.
* Respect involves challenging your own personal beliefs and attitudes.
* Mutual understanding involves combatting the negative attitudes and behaviours of others.
* It is often more difficult, for young people in particular, to combat the attitudes of others than it is to challenge their own.
* Students can challenge their own beliefs anonymously without making it public knowledge, whereas when they combat the attitudes of others they have to publicly speak up or take action.
* You cannot have mutual understanding without respect.
* Something to teach students is the idea of “first seek to understand and then to be understood.’

Tolerance and acceptance

* Students may overlook the definitions for these two terms.
* It is important to make the group aware that both tolerance and acceptance bring with them a sense of power or control over diversity and the need to give permission for difference to exist.
* Emphasise with students that we need to move beyond tolerance and reconsider how we use these two terms in our everyday language.

Stairs to inclusivity – Visual layout

