 Positive connections – Stage 4

Suggested duration: 25-30 minutes

Prior learning: Students understand the meaning of resilience and how it affects our thoughts, feelings and actions.

Teachers and Executive should be familiar with the department's [Wellbeing Framework for Schools](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing/about/16531_Wellbeing-Framework-for-schools_Acessible.pdf) and [C2 MindMatters modules](https://www.mindmatters.edu.au/components/component-2) when planning and implementing any resilience or wellbeing education lesson.

PDHPE outcomes

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

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

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 or contexts

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

* Identify individuals, groups, places to which they feel a strong sense of belonging.
* Explain how relationships help them to feel supported and connected in various situations.
* Develop communication skills to engage in discussion with peers.
* Describe relationships which support themselves and others to build their resilience.
* Analyse how behaviours, actions and responses can change depending on who they are with.

PDHPE content

| Key inquiry questions | Syllabus content |
| --- | --- |
| What skills and strategies can be used to manage change, challenges and seek help? | * investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others' health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS074) I
	+ analyse how behaviours, actions, and responses to situations can change depending on who they are with S
* 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
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Skills focus

* Emotion and stress management – recognising emotions
* Strengthening personal identity – cultivating resilience
* Self-awareness – reflective practise
* Communication – verbal and nonverbal communication, listening, expressing feelings

Teaching notes

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.

The [resource review flowchart (PDF 276KB)](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/661c3ac3-a06c-4e60-bfed-9cbd5ba41a28/1/Resource%20Flowchart%20.pdf) helps you decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Materials should be reviewed in full and endorsed by the school principal before use in NSW government schools.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of PDHPE 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 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.

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).

Assumed knowledge and understanding

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

* What is a sense of belonging?
* Thoughts and feelings affect actions.
* Benefits of respectful relationships.

Learning experiences

1. Refer to the *Resilience Practices Handout* to highlight and introduce the learning intentions of the lesson – why are we learning about this, what are we learning about and what will we know, understand and be able to do.
	* Resilience practice #1 – connect to others
	* Resilience practice #3 – develop a sense of belonging
	* Resilience practice #7 – positive relationships
2. Write the focus question on the board and explain to the students that by the end of the lesson they will be required to write a self-reflection to the question – *What types of relationships help me to develop my resilience?*
3. Explain the process of a triangle chat.
	1. Students form groups of 3 where each person in the group has a different card, item or task to contribute to the discussion.
	2. Teacher moves students on to a new triangle chat based on levels of engagement, ensuring that each student has had an opportunity to share their thoughts.
4. Start the triangle chat by allowing students to choose the item they wish to start the activity with, e.g. situation card, a people card or a pack of blank response cards.
5. In the triangle chat, students discuss:
	1. the feelings and emotions that they think young people might experience in the situation
	2. the different ways that they think young people might react or respond to the situation.
* Students should be encouraged to consider both the situation and the people involved.
* The student with the response cards completes a response card for each triangle chat.
* After each triangle chat, the groups submit their response card and move on to form a new group.
* Students use a new response card each time a new group is formed.
* No names are required on the response cards, essentially this is an anonymous activity.
1. Teacher swaps groups until there are enough response cards submitted for at least one per student in the class. This make take about 3-4 swaps to achieve.
2. Once the triangle chats have been completed, revisit the meaning of resilience from previous lessons or student prior knowledge.

*Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, threat, significant sources of stress. Being resilient does not mean that a person doesn’t experience difficulty or distress. Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviours, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone. (Source:* [*www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx*](http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx) *)*

1. Allocate one completed response card to each student and ask them to independently consider if they believe the response shows resilience or not. Students post their card up on the board under one of two headings - *shows resilience* OR *lacks resilience*.
2. Students select 4 responses from the board (2 from each heading) and respond to the following questions. Allow students the choice in how they communicate their answers, e.g. verbally to the class, written response, online canvas board, partner discussion.
* How does the response show or lack resilience?
* Why do you think someone might respond in this way?
* How do you think the people involved influenced the type of response?
* In what ways do you think others contribute to a person’s resilience in different situations?
1. Students engage in [World Cafes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTiBLZJmd00) to discuss some or all of the following questions:
* What is it about the people around us that makes us feel supported?
* How do different relationships help us to feel supported or not?
* How does our response to situations change depending on who we are with?
* What can people do to make others feel a sense of belonging or connection?
* How do our thoughts, feelings and emotions affect our responses to different situations?
* What influences our feelings, emotions and actions in different situations?
* How does feeling connected to and supported by the people around us help to build our resilience?
1. Invite students to independently reflect on a situation, challenge or transition they have experienced in their life that was positive for them. Students identify who they were supported by and how their response showed resilience.
2. Extension: using the information from Resilience Practices #1, 3 and 7, students complete one or all of the following tasks. (Teachers could use Flipgrid or Padlet or another method for students to present their answers);
* Identify one person or place where you feel a sense of belonging or positive connection and explain why/how it supports you to be resilient.
* Describe three specific strategies/practices you can adopt to build on your own resilience.
* Name seven situations/challenges/transitions that require young people to show resilience, in the past, now or in the future and propose ways that you could support someone in two of the situations.

Example response card

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Situation the young person is experiencing | People around the young person | Possible responseConsider the thoughts, feelings and actions of the young person |
| * Celebrating own birthday
* Studying for exams
* Completing an assessment
* Competing in a sports event i.e. school cross country, grand final, or representative level
* Coming last in a sporting event/Losing a competition
* Being teased/put down at school
* Being threatened/bribed at school
* Being physically threatened/hit
* Experiencing cyberbullying
* Experiencing mean jokes about looks/sexuality on the bus
* Starting high school
* Receiving an award at school assembly
* Receiving an award from a community association/ social club i.e. sport, band, dance, music, cadets, scouts etc
 | * Best friend
* Small group of friends
* Parent/ Carer
* Classmates
* Favourite Teacher
* Classroom teacher
* Year adviser
* Older group of students
* Neighbours
* Sister/Brother
* Relative, i.e. Elder, Grandparent, Aunty/Uncle
* Stranger/Somebody not known
* Nobody
* Peers that are not friends
* Peers that bully others
 | Enter group response in the space below). |

Triangle chat cards

Situation cards

Studying for exams

Starting high school

Coming last in a sporting event/

Losing a competition

Competing in a sports event i.e. school cross country, grand final, or representative level

Experiencing cyberbullying

Being teased/ put down at school

Completing an assessment

Being threatened/ bribed at school

Being physically threatened/hit

Celebrating own birthday

Experiencing mean jokes about looks/sexuality on the bus

Receiving an award from a community association/ social club i.e. sport, band, dance, music, cadets, scouts etc

Receiving an award at school assembly

People cards

Best friend

Parent/Carer

Small group of friends

Nobody

Classmates

Favourite teacher

Year adviser

Classroom teacher

Older group of students

Neighbours

Stranger/Somebody not known

Relative i.e Elder, Grandparent, Aunty/Uncle Sister/Brother

Peers that bully others

Peers that are not friends

Practising the art of resilience

Adapted from Source: Growing Happy, Healthy Young Minds: Generation Next, Ramesh Manocha, 2017, pg283-291

The following resilience practices are small acts that all of us can incorporate in to our everyday lives to build resilience.

Use this as a check list to where you are at in building your own resilience and supporting the resilience of others. For each practice, consider and record whether you:

1. would like to improve on this
2. can already do this
3. can help others to do this.

Resilience practice #1 – Connect to others

The quality of our relationships powerfully determines the quality of our lives. People like people who like them. Take on the practice of telling people that you like and appreciate them. Find places and people who value what you have to offer. Deepening our relationships with family, friends and new people builds resilience.

On the flip side – stay away from people and places who do not seem to appreciate you or what you have to offer. Don’t bother to blame them, you don’t need everyone to like you or the things you like.

Resilience practice #2 – Connect to yourself

Self-awareness means taking the time to get to know yourself – the faults, the flaws as much as the strengths. Take time each day to give yourself a check-up by asking:

* How am I feeling today?
* What am I enjoying?
* What is bothering me?
* What can I do to change things?
* What do I have control of?

While sitting quietly reflect on situations in your life or process these events through writing, painting, dancing or singing about the challenges you have or are facing. We all need to regularly de-traumatise ourselves – trauma often comes from times when we have felt overwhelmed, scared or anxious and didn’t process what was happening well enough to understand it. Looking inwards and reflecting on life helps guide us about what we really want and value. Find your spark or something that excites you or that you are passionate about and do it.

Resilience practice #3 – Develop your sense of belonging

Our sense of belonging is a powerful creator of resilience. Think about where you have a sense of belonging. For many of us there are people and there are places in which we feel we belong e.g. family, friends, kinship, teams, clubs, beaches, farms, country. Develop and strengthen the connection you have with your people and your places.

Resilience practice #4 – Magnify the good

We are what we notice. By consciously deciding to pay attention to the good things that occur to us, we increase the balance of good to bad days. One way of doing this is to be grateful of the small things that happen each day. This doesn’t mean to blind yourself of the bad things, it is possible to notice the good and the bad in the world and make the choice to use the magnifying glass on goodness.

Resilience practice #5 – Be where you are

Concentration, awareness, presence and mindfulness are all about the same thing – paying attention to where you are now. Learn how to let the past be the past and create your future rather than fearing it. Practise taking time to be mindful.

Resilience practice #6 – Be hopeful

Hope is a powerful protector. Being hopeful means you are courageous, creative and can adapt to different opportunities. Be okay with making mistakes and taking on new challenges with the knowledge they will make you stronger. By embracing and learning from the challenges we face we can become more resilient. Facing adversity, setbacks and challenges are essential to our development as people. People who choose to be hopeful in the face of adversity, essentially make plans for positive growth.

Resilience practice #7 – Positive relationships

Broaden your social connections even if you are not especially sociable. Strike up conversations with people who are different than you. Find people you disagree with and understand them. Be kind and respectful and be prepared to forgive rather than blaming others when mistakes are made.

Resilience practice #8 – Empowerment

Empowerment helps us to overcome our setbacks and to remain resilient in times of challenge. A growth mindset shifts people from thinking they can’t to believing that they can and this is the essence of empowerment. One of the ways to increase your sense of empowerment is to take on a new challenge or put your energy into a project for the greater good of the world you live in. Find your passion and put energy into making it happen e.g. increasing happiness in the world, reducing our impact on the environment, creating safer spaces/places for people.

Resilience practice #9 – Stretch your mind

Plan to do things you have never done before, try new things, go on adventures, and build your curiosity and creativity. If you get scared of getting things wrong you won’t try new things. If you don’t’ try new things you may become bored and life becomes dull. Don’t settle for anything less than an interesting life.

Resilience practice #10 – Sharpen your social skills

One of the really simple ways to be a good friend to someone is to decide that you are lucky to know them. Getting to know people and improving your communication skills shows you are interested in what people have to offer the world. Mentally remind yourself to notice something awesome about each person you meet or say hello to in a day. Talk to people who are different to you without judgement. Getting to know people from different backgrounds helps to stretch your way of thinking about life. Broadening your thinking about people and their lives can help to build your resilience to what life throws at you.

Resilience practice #11 – Clarify your values

Values are the positions we take on things, they form the basis of our views and opinions. Values help us to be sure of ourselves and often guide our direction in life. Spend time talking to others about your values and beliefs by sharing your own views of the world. Seek to understand other people’s values by respectfully listening to different viewpoints.

Resilience practice #12 – Positive identity

Take time to self-reflect and get to know yourself. Explore your passions and discover what you are good at. Take risks to try new things out to see if they work for you, broaden your search for your passions. Just have a go and make your creativity and energies come alive.

Resilience practice #13 – Boundaries and expectations

Aim high, work hard and play hard. Do the tough stuff and expect the best for yourself and want the best for others. Challenge yourself. Devote yourself to developing at least one passion and find the goodness and worth in other people.

Resilience practice #14 – Be your own health consultant

This doesn’t mean doing a medical degree to become a Doctor or searching Dr Google every time you have an ache or pain. It does mean seeking help and support from qualified sources so that you can act to increase your own wellbeing. Take your health seriously. Find time each day to find your calm and be mindful. Be physically active to get your heart rate up a few times a week. Have a balance intake of food so that what you put in to your body is going to keep you healthy. Sleep well, as this is the most powerful way to reduce stress, build energy, increase your memory and learning and prevent depression.

Resilience practice #15 – Adopt a guardian angel

There are times when you will be busy that you forget to look after yourself. Ask one or two people to keep an eye out for you and tell you if you look stressed or overwhelmed. Let them know you won’t be offended. And when they do tell you make sure you take steps to look after yourself based on their feedback.

Resilience practice #16 – Love

Take time to celebrate and love the person you are and delight and love the people around you. Realise the love you have for friends, the land, the sea, animals, nature, music, art, family and your own self and purpose. Value your own uniqueness and look within yourself for nourishment, energy and solace. Love more than is reasonable to do so. Love is contagious, if you can help others to love well you change the world.