

Teaching and learning activity

For students in Years 7 to 12



Overview

This resource provides a teaching guide for the Growing connections video, delivered as part of the 2023 National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

This activity is suitable for students in Years 7 to 12, and highlights the importance of a sense of belonging and connectedness to support student social and emotional wellbeing and the prevention of bullying.

Learning intention

Students will understand what connection means.

Students will be able to recognise connections that they have in their lives.

Students will understand how strong connections can help to prevent bullying.

Resources

- [Growing connections video](#)
- Space to conduct the activity

Learning sequence (30-40mins)

1. Facilitate class discussion (5mins)
2. [Watch the Growing connections video](#) (2mins)
3. Context and questions (10-15mins)
4. Activity and follow up discussion (15mins)

Curriculum links (Years 7-10 only)

[Australian Curriculum Links version 8.4](#)

Years 7 and 8 Health and Physical Education Achievement Standards

Students evaluate the impact on wellbeing of relationships and valuing diversity. They analyse factors that influence emotional responses.

Students investigate strategies and practices that enhance their own, others' and community health, safety and wellbeing.

Years 9 and 10 Health and Physical Education Achievement Standards

Students critically analyse contextual factors that influence identities, relationships, decisions and behaviours.

Students analyse the impact attitudes and beliefs about diversity have on community connection and wellbeing. They evaluate the outcomes of emotional responses to different situations.

Personal and Social Capabilities

Social awareness element

Social management element

Cross-Curricular Priorities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia



Important to note

This teaching and learning activity provides an opportunity for students to focus on the connections that they have in their lives. By establishing connections in different areas of their lives, students will be best supported to seek help if bullying does occur.

Knowing exactly what bullying is and understanding why it happens are critical to finding positive and lasting solutions for everyone involved. Bullying is a complex, multifaceted issue, different in each school and year level. The appropriate way to respond will differ for each situation and every student.

Teachers may need to scaffold student responses about bullying to ensure they are appropriate. When discussing bullying, it is recommended that teachers ensure:

- students are aware that this activity is a general discussion on what to do when responding to the topic of bullying and that students can raise their concerns with you after class
- there is currently no obvious or immediate bullying issue — if there is, this may not be the right time for the class. In some cases, it may be better to delay this discussion until the problems are addressed
- students know classroom rules for talking and contributing ideas — remind students that bullying is a sensitive topic, and it is important to use respectful listening
- they avoid using class role-play related to this topic as it can raise issues and cause distress to some students
- they know how to use protective interrupting (acknowledge that they have heard the student but stop them from divulging further details) if a student begins to reveal inappropriate personal information about themselves or other students. Refer to your school policies and procedures for advice about responding to disclosures
- that any students who become distressed should be referred for support to guidance officer or other appropriate staff member and parents or carers to be notified.

School connectedness

The Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO, 2023) describes a student's sense of belonging at school as school connectedness. When a student feels valued, accepted, and connected to their environment, there are flow-on benefits that support their learning and engagement. Positive connections with peers and the school community can enhance the development of students' cognitive, behavioural and emotional engagement. Further benefits of school connectedness which can help to prevent bullying include improved academic outcomes, reduced absenteeism, increased trust and respect, and empathy.

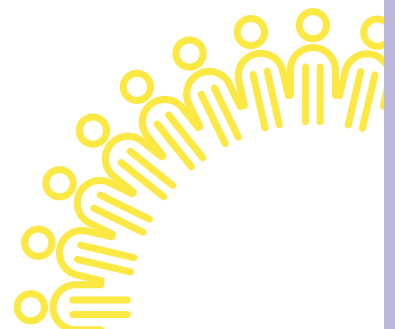
More information and resources

[Bullying. No Way!](#) – Supporting school communities with evidence-informed resources and activities for a proactive approach to bullying education and prevention.

[Australian Education Research Organisation](#) – Encouraging a sense of belonging and connectedness in secondary schools.

[Be You](#) – Supporting educators to develop a positive, inclusive and resilient learning community.

[Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)



Activity

Introduction 5mins

Facilitate a class discussion around the words, “connection”, “belonging”, “community”, and “bullying”. During this conversation, you may need to review the definitions of these words, and what they mean for your class context.

Video 2mins

[Watch the Growing connections video](#)

Activity / Context

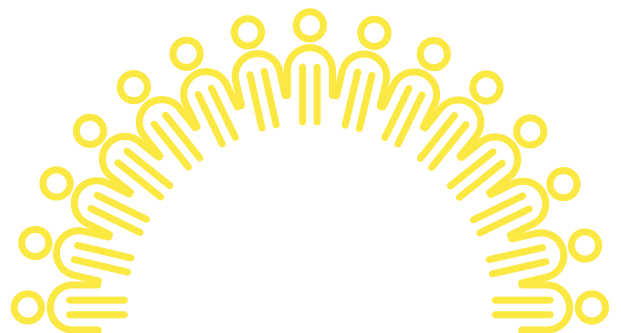
Teacher reads statement below -

“When someone has many connections to people and places, they feel safe, happy and supported. The more connections they have, the better they are at coping with challenging situations in their life. Being connected and having people to talk to, or to ask for help, are great ways to prevent bullying.”

Questions 10mins

Facilitate a discussion with students about the connections they have in their life. These connections can be at different levels: family, school, community, etc.

- When your friends check-in on you or invite you to join group activities, how does that make you feel?
- Why do you think it’s important for people to connect at school?
- Does everyone always agree or have the same opinion? Why not?
- Outside of school, how do you connect with your community or culture?
- Why is it important to have community connections outside of school?
- What kind of support do your current connections give you?
- Is there a time where a connection in your life has supported you?
- How can you make more connections/how can you connect with people who you don’t know very well, or are different to you?
- Do you think online platforms make connections better or worse? How?
- How can connecting with other people help to prevent bullying?
- How could you support someone that was involved in bullying/going through a tough time?



Activity

Activity
15mins

Use **Freeze Frames** to create a powerful visual statement about connections.

Freeze frames are used in drama to make a visual picture, like a photograph, to show characters in a scene or series of scenes. The freeze is held for several seconds to clearly show the actions, body language and facial expression of what the characters are feeling and how they are interacting with other characters in the scene. This freeze frame activity will incorporate individual students into the scene, one at a time, under the direction of the teacher.

Teacher creates a list of scene/scenario concepts (alternatively, prompts are provided below).

Remind students that when creating the freeze frame, the individual characters are not the only important factor in the image. Students also need to think of the interaction between characters and their surrounding environment, including props that might be part of the frame.

1. Teacher calls one student over to read the scene.
2. Student is allowed 10 seconds to pose and 'freeze' in the frame to act out the scene.
3. The class tries to guess what the scene is. If the class guesses incorrectly, a second student is chosen to read the scene, and join the freeze frame.
4. The class is provided another opportunity to guess the scene.
5. The game continues until enough students have been added to the scene that the class can guess successfully.
6. If time permits, choose another scene to ensure all students have had the opportunity to be involved.
7. Once activity is finished, facilitate discussion about the power of connections; the more people that were added (connections), the easier the scene was to solve (the easier the game was to play, the more fun was had, the more support there was, etc).

Freeze Frame Prompts

- Family day at the beach
- The beginning of a swimming race
- A child lost at the shops looking for their parent
- Working out at the gym
- A family taking their dog for a walk in the park
- A wedding
- Football game at a stadium
- Alien landing on Earth for the first time
- A group of friends dancing at a party/disco

Differentiation

- Replay video to support student understanding.
- If students are unable to participate, provide a task to support the group activity such as timing or filming the freeze frames, or creating new freeze frame prompts (under the direction of the teacher).
- Discuss scenarios where students have needed support from others (their connections) to get through a tough situation. The teacher can make up scenarios to prompt discussion, rather than asking for students to share personal stories.
- Where appropriate, discuss how having strong connections helps to prevent bullying.
- Students can be encouraged to provide examples in response to the questions. Note that at times to protect the wellbeing of students, the teacher may need to use protective interrupting.

