

Teaching and learning activity

For students in Foundation to Year 2



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 Foundation to Year 2, 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.

Resources

- [Growing connections video](#)
- Paper (plain or coloured)
- Pencils (lead or coloured)
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Drawing/writing materials
- Optional: ruler

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

[Australian Curriculum Links \(version 8.4\)](#)

Foundation Year Health and Physical Education Achievement Standards

Students identify and describe the different emotions people experience

Years 1 and 2 Health and Physical Education Achievement Standards

Students identify how emotional responses impact on others' feelings.

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 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.

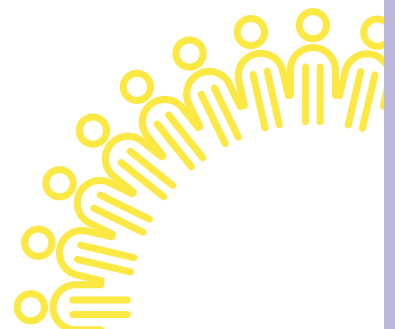
More information and resources

[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 primary 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” and “community”.

For younger students, connections can mean a person that they have something in common with. During this conversation, you could 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 and happy. The more connections they have, the better they are at dealing with hard times in their life. Having people to talk to, or to ask for help, are great ways to help prevent bullying.”

Questions 10mins

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

- Who is someone that you have a connection with?
 - Do you like coming to school? Why?
 - What do you like to do with your friends at school?
 - If you don't know how to do something in class, who can you ask for help? How do they help you?
 - If you were on your own in the playground, how might you feel?
 - If you saw someone who was on their own in the playground, how do you think they might feel?
 - What could you say to them?
 - How can you make a new connection?
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Activity 15mins

Make a **Connections Paper Chain** to create a powerful visual statement about connections:

1. (Optional step) Use a ruler and pencil to draw straight lines along the paper.
 2. Cut the paper into long, rectangular strips. (*Note: paper can be coloured or plain; if using coloured paper, consider using the colours from the 2023 NDA campaign – orange, yellow, purple and blue.*)
 3. Give each student a strip of paper and pencil. Ask students to draw or write on the strip about someone or something that they have a connection with.
 4. Staple (or glue/tape) the first link into a circle. Repeat with each strip to create one, long connected chain.
 5. Display the paper chain for students to watch it grow as more connections are added. Connections could be added across different classes.
 6. Facilitate a whole class discussion reflecting on classroom and school connections, as shown by the growth of the chain.
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Differentiation

- Replay video to support student understanding.
- Students can create their own individual chains, representing the many connections in their lives.
- Students can create more links to contribute to the class chain.
- Students can offer peer support to other students.