



# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS - HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY BEHAVIOURS >

Session plan



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SOMETHING**

**PERSONAL, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

# AT A GLANCE

This session helps learners to recognise healthy and unhealthy behaviours in relationships, including friendships, and to think about when and where to get themselves or others support. It was created by Brook (<https://www.brook.org.uk/>).

This session acts as an introduction to the topic and therefore is suitable for all ages. However, there are options for extensions or discussions which include key messages on romantic and, potentially, sexual relationships which can be included for groups, where appropriate and relevant. These themes will then be built on in the second session - Romantic Relationships and Harmful Behaviours.



## CURRICULUM LINKS

### England

- ✓ RSE: Healthy relationships

### Scotland

- ✓ Health and wellbeing curriculum

### Northern Ireland

- ✓ Learning for Life and Work: Personal Development

### Wales

- ✓ Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience



## QUALIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ Wellbeing - LO: Understand physical wellbeing

# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ✓ Recognise qualities which we should look for in healthy relationships, including friendships
- ✓ Recognise positive and negative behaviours within relationships
- ✓ Understand a range of strategies to deal with harmful behaviours
- ✓ Understand where people can go for help and support if they are in a relationships that exhibits harmful behaviours

# ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	TIME	PAGE
<u>Things to consider</u>	N/A	<u>03</u>
<u>Introduction and setting a safe space</u>	5-10 minutes	<u>04</u>
<u>Warm up: Qualities in healthy relationships</u>	10-15 minutes	<u>06</u>
<u>Keep it or bin it?</u>	15-20 minutes	<u>08</u>
<u>Scenarios</u>	15-25 minutes	<u>09</u>
<u>Wrap up</u>	5-10 minutes	<u>10</u>
<u>Additional resources</u>	N/A	<u>11</u>

# THINGS TO CONSIDER >

Before teaching this session, read through and consider the points below.

1. We would recommend implementing key concepts within a trauma informed approach across the whole school or educational setting. Namely working to ensure your setting is a safe place for learners. This includes creating a safe learning environment for Achieve lessons, increasing empathy and emotional regulation prior to behaviour regulation and boundary setting, open communication, transparency and trustworthiness in staff and adults within your setting.
2. Some learners may be experiencing, have experienced or witnessed unhealthy relationship behaviours or abuse (for example, domestic violence). Therefore, learners may make disclosures of harmful relationship behaviours in response to the session's content. Please familiarise yourself with your setting's safeguarding policies and procedures and be ready to act on them as required.
3. Scenarios and conversations about sex and relationships should be inclusive of LGBT+ people. Please use gender neutral language (e.g. partner) and include diverse relationships within any written scenarios.
4. This lesson should sit in a wider programme to support and extend learning, including online safety (relationships online), self-esteem and wellbeing.



# INTRODUCTION AND SETTING A SAFE SPACE >



## TIME REQUIRED

5-10 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Flipchart paper or whiteboard and pen
- ✓ Healthy and unhealthy behaviours presentation

## ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Introduce the session to the group. Explain that you will be exploring relationships, what a healthy relationship should look like and some potential signs of an unhealthy or harmful relationship. Run through the learning outcomes that are also listed on the presentation.
2. Create a safe space for learning with the group. Explain that the content of today's session crosses over into our everyday lives and is personal, so it is important that everyone feels safe. Please establish a group agreement with explicit points on confidentiality, respect, the option to leave the room or not engage in an activity and being inclusive of different types of relationships.

Guidance on what to include and the importance of not skipping this step is outlined below, under the heading 'Group contracting'.

3. Record your agreed rules onto flipchart paper or a whiteboard and leave it displayed in the room for the duration of the sessions, for reference.

### GROUP CONTRACTING

As with any group session, ground rules/contracting should be established in advance by the group. It is assumed that this would have already taken place prior to these sessions being delivered. However, that said, due to the nature of the content being discussed, it is recommended that a reminder of established ground rules are re-examined in relation to the benefits of creating safe spaces for discussion in relation to this content. As a guideline, emphasis and discussion should be placed on the following boundaries for establishing a 'safe space':

- ✓ Confidentiality – Explore what this means to each learner and as a group. Recognise and explore differing individual interpretations and agree upon a shared group understanding. Make sure you are explicit with the group on the limits of confidentiality, i.e. when you may have to take things outside of the session due to safeguarding.
- ✓ Only volunteer yourself – Ensure participants are not volunteering others to share.
- ✓ Be respectful of others, those who are in the room and those not in the room - We want to make sure everyone feels safe in the session, so no rude remarks or discriminatory language.
- ✓ Ask questions – We are all learning together and it's OK not to know something. Tell learners to ask and if you don't know the answer, you can research it together.



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- ✓ Feeling safe– Know what to do if a learner is finding the content difficult, perhaps due to lived experience of an abusive relationship, e.g. they can sit out from the activity, leave the room, speak to 'x' person afterwards.
- ✓ Take part – We learn best by joining in and taking part, if we are able to do so.





# WARM UP: QUALITIES IN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS >



## TIME REQUIRED

10-15 minutes



## WORKSHEET

✓ Qualities worksheet



## QUALIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES

✓ Identify characteristics of healthy relationships

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Ask learners to think of someone that makes them feel good about themselves. It could be anyone - a friend, a parent, a sibling, a partner, maybe even a pet! What qualities do they have? Once learners have had a chance to think, take some suggestions. If the group are finding it hard, ask, 'How do they treat you?'

2. Now, ask the learners to think of as many things as they can which make a relationship good to be in. What qualities do healthy relationships have? (Those that have already been mentioned or additional ones). Tell learners to write these down onto the Qualities worksheet, which can be used as evidence towards the qualification.

This can either be an individual task or completed in small groups, which may require some more collaboration and compromise. We would recommend groups of 2-4 to allow all learners to contribute. Some examples include: respectful, trustworthy, honest, generous, kind, funny, fair, supportive, appreciative, good listener, caring, shared interests, clever.

3. Once learners have finished their list, they should pick their top three most important qualities for healthy relationships, ranking them 1-3 on their worksheets.

After allowing some discussion time in the groups, ask for suggestions and note any difference in the room. You may choose to write the suggested qualities up on the whiteboard to emphasise learning.

4. Debrief the key messages below through your discussions and answer any questions from the group.



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## KEY MESSAGES

- ✓ There are many similarities in healthy relationships no matter who they are with (friendships, family or romantic). We are all different, so will rate some qualities as more important than others and it may also depend on which relationships we are considering.
- ✓ However, there are some overarching qualities and behaviours that everyone deserves in their relationships. These include being respected, feeling safe and being cared for. Trust and good communication are other key building blocks of healthy relationships, as well as being appreciated and valued. Did these qualities come up in your group discussions?
- ✓ These qualities help relationships to weather the storms when things get tough. What people appreciate will be different, so talk to your partner/friend/family member and see what they would like you to do to show you care.
- ✓ You should never feel pressured or manipulated into something, including sexual stuff, in any relationship. Equally, you should not do this to others.

## EXTENSION

You may choose to extend the debrief to include consent. Ask learners what consent means and create a shared definition using the key messages below to guide you:

- ✓ Consent means agreeing to do something or giving your permission. It should be an informed, enthusiastic and continuous yes, including body language and verbal communication.
- ✓ In order to have someone's consent, they must have the freedom to choose (no force, blackmail, emotional manipulation, etc.), capacity to understand what they are agreeing to (not asleep, not drunk) and have the choice to retract their consent at any time (change their mind).

# KEEP IT OR BIN IT?

In this activity, please include relevant statements for the group, with fewer if time is limited. Some statements relate specifically to romantic and sexual relationships, which may not be appropriate for all age groups.



## TIME REQUIRED

15-20 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Healthy and unhealthy behaviours presentation
- ✓ Keep it or bin it? Adviser sheet

# ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Tell the learners that one side of the room is 'keep it', the opposite 'bin it' and 'depends' in the middle of the room. Alternatively, the activity could also be done with hands up/hands down, thumbs up/thumbs down or stand up/sit down, if space is limited or if more appropriate for the learners.
2. Explain that you will read out a series of statements which relate to behaviours that can happen in relationships. After reading out the statement, the group should decide if it is a behaviour they would like to keep in relationships they have (healthy) or a behaviour they would like to bin (unhealthy) or depends (perhaps on the circumstances).

Explain that you might ask them follow up question about why they have chosen to 'vote' as they have, so they need to be ready to justify their choice. However, if a learner is uncomfortable explaining their choice please move onto another person.

3. Read out each statement from the Keep it or bin it? Adviser sheet. Allow the group to individually 'vote' by moving to the appropriate side (or hands up/hands down etc.), and then discuss the behaviour. Try and ask individuals why they have chosen to 'vote' as they have. You could ask "Are some behaviours acceptable in certain situations and not others?" or "What behaviours are always unacceptable?"
4. Debrief using the key messages on the Keep it or bin it? Adviser sheet.

## ADVISER GUIDANCE

This activity prompts groups to share their personal opinions and perspectives on behaviours in relationships. Individuals may share unhealthy opinions, stereotypes or myths that they hold or that are held by society more widely. We don't want any learner to feel personally attacked or picked on. It is important to challenge these positively using the Adviser sheet. Often, the best learning comes when other learners within the group are supported to share their more healthy opinion on the statement, in contrast to the unhealthy opinion.



# SCENARIOS



## TIME REQUIRED

15-25 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Scenarios worksheet
- ✓ Scenarios Adviser sheet



## QUALIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ Identify characteristics of healthy relationships

# ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Ask the learners to get into small groups (alternatively, this can be completed individually) and hand out scenarios from the Scenarios worksheet. Please choose scenarios relevant for the group's age and experience (some will look at romantic and sexual situations which may not be appropriate for all).

You may choose to increase the number of scenarios for further challenge for some learners, as well as giving different scenarios to different groups to maximise later discussion.

2. Allow the learner's time to read and discuss each scenario. They should be encouraged to consider and write down responses to:
  - How might the characters be feeling in the relationship?\* (You should offer some suggestions for types of feelings for the group, e.g. frustrated, upset, disheartened, angry, cared for, grateful, supported)
  - What are signs of it being a healthy or unhealthy relationship?
  - What advice would you give to the characters in the scenario?

The learners' worksheets could be used to help evidence their understanding of the assessment criteria.

3. Bring the group back together to discuss each scenario, using the Scenarios Adviser sheet and the key messages below.
4. Pick out some key strategies the learners mention for dealing with unhealthy behaviours (taken from the 'advice for the characters' section of the Adviser sheet) and write these up on a whiteboard to emphasise learning.

## KEY MESSAGES

- ✓ If something doesn't feel right in a relationship then it's important to talk to the person and see if they can change their behaviour, if it safe to do so. If it is not safe, please speak with an adult you trust for help and support. Communication and honesty are important qualities in a relationship.
- ✓ Remember the healthy relationship qualities discussed earlier, including respect and consent. You should never feel scared, threatened, bullied or controlled in a relationship. You should be able to be your true self without fear.
- ✓ If we or someone we know is experiencing an unhealthy relationship or harmful relationship behaviours, it is important they speak to an adult they trust for help and support. There are also dedicated services to support people within relationships, some of which that are shared at the end of the session.



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# WRAP UP >



## TIME REQUIRED

5-10 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Healthy and unhealthy behaviours presentation

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Ask the group if they have any questions, before running through the key summary messages (see the presentation). If you have additional time, you may choose to ask the learners to share one thing they have learnt in the session which they will take away.
2. Review the next session to check its suitability for your group. If it is suitable, tell the learners that in the next session, you will be building on today's learning, speaking more about romantic relationships and what abuse in relationships can look like.
3. Take time to signpost to additional places for support, including in your setting (e.g. yourself after the session, pastoral or counselling teams) and external organisations.



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# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✓ Brook website - Information for learners on relationships. Including blogs on topics such as 'Trust and jealousy' 'Online dating and staying safe' and 'Breaking up'.  
<https://www.brook.org.uk/topics/relationships/>
- ✓ Brook learn - This offers free e-learning training and downloadable resources on a host of RSE topics, including 'Consent' and 'Relationship and enduring love'.  
<https://learn.brook.org.uk/>
- ✓ Childline 'Am I in a Good Relationship?' video 1 - Includes a discussion about healthy and unhealthy behaviours and a fictional scenario.  
<https://youtu.be/trcq9I0gtG8>
- ✓ NSPCC Promoting healthy relationships (12-18 year olds) - Tips from the NSPCC for your teaching on this topic.  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/promoting-healthy-relationships>



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