



# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS - ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS AND HARMFUL BEHAVIOURS >

Session plan



Prince's Trust

**START  
SOMETHING**

**PERSONAL, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

# AT A GLANCE

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

The session builds on key messages from the Healthy and Unhealthy Relationship Behaviours session. Therefore, it should only be delivered if that session has been completed. This session talks explicitly about romantic and sexual relationships and therefore may not be appropriate for all age groups.



## 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
- ✓ 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: Myths and facts</u>	15 minutes	<u>06</u>
<u>Spotting the signs of relationship abuse</u>	20 minutes	<u>07</u>
<u>Healthy relationship timeline</u>	20 minutes	<u>09</u>
<u>Optional: Self-reflection</u>	10 minutes	<u>10</u>
<u>Wrap up</u>	5-10 minutes	<u>11</u>
<u>Additional resources</u>	N/A	<u>12</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. Bring out your agreed group agreement from the previous session and ask if there are any points to add. 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.



Prince's Trust

**START  
SOMETHING**

- ✓ 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: MYTHS AND FACTS OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS >



## TIME REQUIRED

15 minutes



## WORKSHEET

- ✓ Myths and facts quiz worksheet
- ✓ Myths and facts quiz Adviser sheet
- ✓ Romantic relationships and harmful behaviours presentation

## ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Tell the learners that you are going to start today's session with a quiz about romantic relationships, exploring some myths which exist in society. Explain that this isn't a test, so it's OK to not know the answer and you can all learn together. You are not thinking about anyone's relationship in particular, but romantic relationships in general.
2. Hand out the Myths and facts quiz worksheets for learners to complete, either individually or in groups. Alternatively, read out each statement and ask the group if it's a myth or fact.
3. Debrief each statement using the Adviser sheet and key messages below. Ensure you challenge stereotypes or myths expressed by learners positively.

### ADVISER TIP

Challenge stereotypes and myths positively and effectively by moving away from personal responses which say 'you' and instead use generalised responses like 'that's a really common myth that lots of people believe, however in reality...'

### KEY MESSAGES

- ✓ We always deserve to be treated with respect in relationships that are free from pressure or violence. Everyone should feel safe and cared for, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race or ability.
- ✓ We should be able to trust our partners without being threatened, controlled or bullied.
- ✓ Developing skills of listening, communication and empathy can support negotiation through tougher times in relationships.
- ✓ If your partner does something which you find annoying, irritating or thoughtless, it is best to talk to them about it. Communication and honesty are important qualities.



Prince's Trust

**START  
SOMETHING**

# SPOTTING THE SIGNS OF RELATIONSHIP ABUSE >



## TIME REQUIRED

20 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Spotting the signs scenario Adviser sheet
- ✓ Romantic relationships and harmful behaviours presentation

## ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Explain to the group that in the last session you thought about what makes a relationship healthy and unhealthy. But how would they spot the signs of harmful behaviours, which means it's an abusive relationship?

Follow up by considering what the difference between an unhealthy relationship and an abusive relationship is. Take some suggestions.

2. Using the presentation slides to debrief, explain to the group that there often isn't a clear line when a relationship moves from being 'unhealthy' to 'abusive'. However, if it begins to form a consistent pattern where one partner is attempting to exert power and control over the other, this is indicative of abuse.

Abuse in a relationship can take many forms and people of any gender, age, sexuality, race or ability can be abusive partners or survivors of abuse. The abuse can sometimes be invisible to those outside the relationship.

3. Explain to the learners that you are going to work through a story about a romantic relationship and try to spot the signs of abuse. This is a true story that was shared with Brook by a young person.
4. Using the Spotting the signs scenario Adviser sheet, read through the story, stopping and debriefing the key points and facts.
5. Once completed, remind the learners that whether something unhealthy happens in a relationship once, or more than once, we all deserve relationships where we feel safe, respected and cared for. Please use the key messages below to debrief and answer any questions.

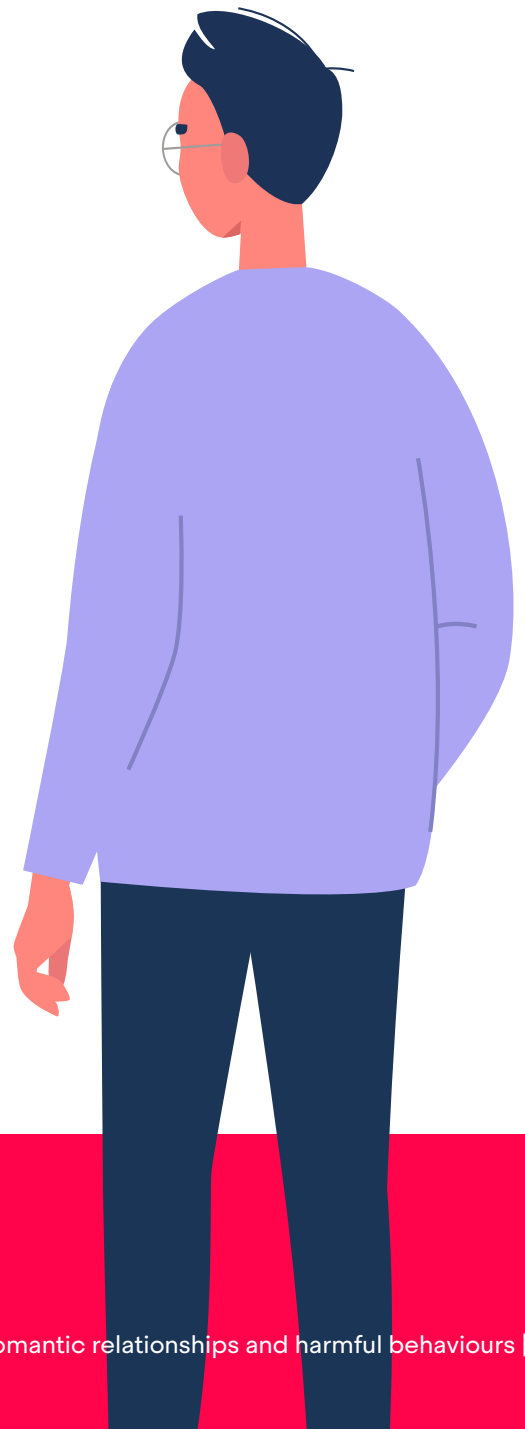


Prince's Trust

**START  
SOMETHING**

## KEY MESSAGES

- ✓ Feeling threatened or scared in a relationship is not OK.
- ✓ Abuse is always wrong, and never the fault of the person who is being abused.
- ✓ Abuse can be split into different types, though often they overlap and more than one can be present: sexual, emotional, physical, financial and psychological.
- ✓ If you find yourself in an unhealthy relationship or abuse is happening to you, it's important to tell someone and remember you're not alone. Please speak to an adult you trust, there are also lots of organisations that can help.
- ✓ Sometimes when someone is in a relationship it can be hard for them to recognise when they are experiencing abuse or to know how to seek help. Friends can play a really important role in recognising abuse and seeking help on another person's behalf.





# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP TIMELINE



## TIME REQUIRED

20 minutes (if time is limited, the number of cards can be reduced)



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Relationship event cards
- ✓ Relationship timeline Adviser sheet

# ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Using the front of the classroom or appropriate space, explain that we are going to create a healthy relationship timeline for a fictional couple, with the start of the relationship at one end and moving on in time further across the room/space. Explain to the group that this is a made up couple and should not be based on real life people.
2. Ask for some volunteers to come to the front and give each one a 'relationship event' card. Explain that each person can now decide if they want the event included in this healthy relationship timeline and where it would happen: near the beginning or further on?

If the group is small, learners can have more than one card each or simply work together to place the event cards in order.

3. Give all the volunteers a few minutes to decide where to place themselves along the line (this can get a little rowdy with some groups, so explain the person holding the event card is deciding where to place themselves, no one else).
4. Once in place, ask all the volunteers to hold up their cards so everyone can see them. Ask someone from the 'audience' if they would like to move any of the events or remove/include any events missed out. This process can be repeated if time allows.
5. Run through the order of events from the start, clarifying any which need further input using the Adviser sheet, e.g. would every couple get married in their relationship timeline?
6. Thank the volunteers and ask them to sit down. Debrief by explaining that everyone's relationship timelines will be unique. This is based on our values and what we feel is important to us, in collaboration with our partner.

However, everyone deserves to be in a healthy relationship where we feel safe, cared for and respected. Remember some people may choose never to be in a romantic relationship. This is a valid option too.



Prince's Trust

**START  
SOMETHING**

# OPTIONAL: SELF-REFLECTION >

This activity can be included if appropriate for the learners. It could be used as evidence towards meeting the assessment criterion for the qualification listed below.



## TIME REQUIRED

10 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Self-reflection worksheet



## QUALIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ Identify characteristics of healthy relationships

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Explain to the group that they are going to reflect on what they've learnt over the course of the last two sessions. Thinking back over all the healthy and unhealthy situations and behaviours which have been discussed, how can they apply what they've learnt to their own lives and relationships?
2. Hand out the self-reflection sheets, one for each learner. Ask them to complete the three sections:
  - What healthy behaviours do I wish to show in my relationships?
  - What unhealthy or harmful behaviours do I want to avoid in my relationships?
  - What should I do if I or someone I know is experiencing harmful relationship behaviours?

### ADVISER TIP

The completed Self-reflection sheet can be used towards meeting the assessment criterion for the qualification. This is a personal activity and therefore some learners may not be comfortable with this activity being submitted. You should seek informed consent for this to happen. Alternatively, the 'Qualities worksheet' or 'Healthy Relationships Scenarios' from the first session can be submitted.



Prince's Trust

# START SOMETHING

# WRAP UP >



## TIME REQUIRED

5-10 minutes



## MATERIALS

- ✓ Romantic relationships and harmful behaviours presentation

# ACTIVITY STEPS >

1. Please 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. 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.



Prince's Trust

# START SOMETHING

# 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/>
- ✓ PSHE Association Disrespect NoBody: Preventing teenage relationship abuse - Session 1 called 'What is 'relationship abuse?', includes session plan, resources and PowerPoint slides.  
<https://pshe-association.org.uk/search?queryTerm=Disrespect%20NoBody>