# Healthy Relationships – Year 8

Good quality relationships can make us happier and can improve our sense of wellbeing by providing us with feelings of security, support and giving meaning to our lives. Relationships with others help to define who we are and contribute to our sense of identity, self-worth and self-esteem. Healthy Relationships foster resilience and are central to our ability to deal with the challenges that we encounter in life. Our mental health depends on having access to positive and healthy relationships with others when we need them and people who understand us.

This film focuses on the characteristics and benefits of a healthy relationship and explores what constitutes an unhealthy relationship. The pupils identify how their friendships with others are helping to meet the social and emotional needs of themselves and others. They explore how healthy relationships are based on commonly accepted values which govern behaviour e.g. respect, honesty, consideration and discuss what happens and the kind of behaviours that occur within friendships when these values are missing or negated in some way by either party in a friendship. The pupils discuss their expectations from their friendships with others and personal boundaries in terms of what they consider to be acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in healthy friendships. This film demonstrates PSHE teaching and learning methodologies including Circle Time, Diamond Nine Prioritising and Continuums.

## Sensitive Issues

When teaching about healthy friendships it is helpful to be aware of the friendship bonds and group dynamics between the pupils including friendship issues, conflicts and those pupils who may have experienced bullying. Healthy relationships support us with meeting our social and emotional needs. However, although we all have the same needs it is important to reinforce that everyone is different and the importance we place on these needs and the ways in which we meet them will vary between individuals depending on personality types and characters. People also differ in the number of friends they have, some having a large network of friends and others a much smaller group. The number of friendships we require varies between people and it is important to emphasise to the pupils that the quality of our friendships is much more important than the quantity. Discussions on healthy relationships will naturally involve pupils exploring behaviour that may occur when people are in an unhealthy relationship. Pupils may have encountered or come to realise that their relationship with another person shows characteristics of an unhealthy relationship.

Allow pupils to talk about these relationships in a non-judgmental way by focusing on the behaviour and the impact it has had on others rather than the person. It is advisable to ensure that the ground rules you have negotiated with the pupils include strategies that will enable all pupils, including those who have experienced challenging friendships, to participate safely and contribute with security and confidence. These rules should include not mentioning or naming individual pupils when discussing friendship issues. If concerns or disclosures are raised, follow your school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.

## Wider Context

Teaching about healthy relationships should form part of a whole school approachand become an integral part of the way in which schools promotes and encourage positive relationships, behaviour and personal rights and responsibilities. Healthy relationships work will be most successfully delivered within the context of a comprehensive PSHE programme of work including complementary learning around ‘Emotions’, ‘Rights Rules and Responsibilities,’ ‘Anti-bullying’, ‘Personal Safety’ and ‘Diversity and Communities’.

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| Activity | Content | Methodologies |
| **Introduction** | Welcome  Aims of session  Ground Rules. | Circle Time. |
| **Activity 1** | Exploring how healthy friendships help to meet some of our social and emotional needs. | Circle Time using social and emotional needs cards. |
| **Activity 2** | Exploring personal qualities we value in others and how they help to meet our social and emotional needs. | Prioritising using a Diamond Nine. |
| **Activity 3** | Reflecting on friendship scenarios and the negative and positive impact of particular personal qualities on the social and emotional needs of others. | Agree / Disagree Continuum and scenarios. |