



# Respectful Futures

Shaping Healthy Relationships

## Facilitation Guide

# Introduction

Along with our mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical facets of wellbeing the First Nations Health Authority indicates that the following values also are integral to our health: Respect, Wisdom, Responsibility, and Relationships. Much of our success and happiness is determined by how we balance these aspects in our lives. In particular, how we interact with others, our friends and colleagues, our family, and our teachers plays a crucial role.

Much of our success and happiness is determined by how we interact with others, in particular, our friends and colleagues, our family, and our educators. When these relationships are healthy, we sense that we are accepted, and feel secure and happy. When our relationships are unhealthy, we may feel unfairly judged, insecure, anxious, or sad. Our energy goes into trying to gain acceptance and security, rather than in becoming who we might be and enjoying life. We all need to learn what healthy relationships look, feel, and sound like. We also need to learn the skills required for developing relationships that will sustain and empower us throughout our lives.

There is a great need to support children and youth to recognize and practise a healthier and more respectful way of being in a relationship with others. When children and youth are able to create and maintain healthy relationships they are better equipped to develop a healthy, balanced life that supports all aspects of their wellbeing.

This is particularly important during this time of heightened challenges surrounding a worldwide pandemic. As we shift some of our interactions to occur in the virtual environment, the concepts and lessons offered in Respectful Futures materials are needed more than ever. This will lead to a greater level of holistic wellbeing by integrating the four facets and values of our health.

First Nations Perspectives on Health and Wellness

<https://www.fnha.ca/wellness/wellness-and-the-first-nations-health-authority/first-nations-perspective-on-wellness>

# Resources for Respectful Futures Program

This facilitation guide is the companion to resources developed by Stroh Health Care in collaboration with the British Columbia Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the Ministry of Education. Those resources, in turn, were modelled on a program called *Respectful Relationships* developed by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, which has been used with great success in educating men who have been convicted on domestic abuse charges. The principles underlying that program are based on concepts shared by a variety of programs devoted to improving interpersonal relationships.

## Overview of Modules

The modules are presented in a progression that allows younger students to address relationships in a more global way, while giving older students opportunities for a more specific and focused examination of relationships. Schools or districts may adopt *Respectful Futures* as a program that will be implemented over time, with the various modules being used at the appropriate age or grade level. Each educator will, however, be able to use particular modules if the content is pertinent to a situation that has emerged in the school or community. For example, certain modules may be selected to help address an instance of serious bullying, physical abuse, or sexual violence. While the modules are designed to flow from one topic to the next, they may also be used as stand-alone learning experiences when necessary.

### *List of the modules:*

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Summary</b>
1	Characteristics of Healthy Relationships	<p>This module is foundational to all that will follow. It begins by inviting students into a conversation about relationships from their perspectives. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a definition of “relationship” that talks about connection, friendship, respect, responsibility, and safety</li> <li>• Exploring a simple model called Me+You+Us, which gives students a framework and a way to talk about healthy relationships</li> </ul>

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Summary</b>
2	Links between Thinking, Feeling, and Behaviour	This module focuses on the connection between how we think, feel, and behave, and highlights the fact that in all situations, we have power and choice. It introduces the ABCDE Model as a tool for understanding these connections.
3	Building Better Relationships through Better Communication	This module explains why communication is more than just talking, and listening is more than just waiting for your turn to talk. It refers back to Module 2, viewing communication from the perspective of the ABCDE Model. Module 3 helps students recognize that how we respond in a situation will affect its outcome.
4	Understanding and Managing Anger	This module helps students understand that anger in and of itself is not a problem. Anger is simply an emotional response to something that has had an impact on us. If we examine what is going on for us in a particular situation, anger can help us identify underlying primary feelings, such as fear or sadness. Module 4 provides tools for managing anger in respectful ways.
5	Understanding the Impacts of Unhealthy Relationships	This module highlights the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. It explores jealousy and how it can erode a relationship. It also provides opportunities for students to analyze and improve how they behave with others.
6	How to Develop and Sustain Healthy Relationships	This module empowers students to understand and engage in healthy relationships through building an understanding of self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-compassion. It reiterates the fact that in these relationships, the persons involved are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for their own happiness</li> <li>• Able to set and maintain healthy flexible boundaries</li> <li>• Able to recognize that each individual has a right and responsibility to represent their authentic self</li> </ul>

Each module is presented within a framework consisting of:

- An abstract
- Big ideas
- Learning outcomes

- Facilitation notes, which provide background information
- A list of learning activities and resources
- Exercises for student participation
- Replay/assessment activities
- A concluding statement that connects each module to the next one

Educators may use any or all of these activities depending on the age of their students and their particular situation and context. The principles for building and maintaining healthy relationships are the same regardless of the students' age or grade level, but the activities and resources used to initiate conversations on these topics may differ for each group. Educators will provide context appropriate for the maturity of their students.

## **How the Modules connect to Bullying and Social Media Challenges**

The *Respectful Futures* modules focus on helping youth to understand and form respectful relationships. They are not intended to be used entirely as an anti-bullying program or as a program focused on safe use of the Internet. However, the ability to recognize and engage in respectful relationships is essential to combating bullying and responding effectively to hateful or hurtful posts on social media. As these issues do relate to the problem of unhealthy relationships, they can be incorporated into the modules during class discussions. As shown in the next section, there are many connections between respectful relationships and other aspects of the BC curriculum.

## **How the Modules Link up with the BC Curriculum**

The *Respectful Futures* modules allow students to bring their own thoughts and experiences to the program. In this way, they align with the BC curriculum's focus on personalized learning. The modules highlight the individual as s/he interacts with others. In addition, these modules were developed with the BC curriculum's core competencies in mind. The modules build capacity in positive communication, critical thinking, and personal and social identity. These core competencies run through all courses and learning standards that form the K to 12 curriculum in BC.

*Respectful Futures* is also compatible with other programs offered in BC and adds its own content and perspective to theirs. In particular, *Respectful Futures* aligns philosophically with E.R.A.S.E (Expect Respect and a Safe Education), and the training offered to educators, counsellors, and principals through the E.R.A.S.E. program.

## Principles

The modules were designed based on the following principles:

- Evidence-Based Material
- Non-Judgmental Approach
- Age-Appropriate and Timely Information
- Creation of Safe Environments
- Teacher as Role Model

## Group Size and Format

The six modules were designed and developed for use in a group format. However, they also work well in one-to-one situations. Educators or administrators may use one module or an exercise from one module with an individual student or a group of students who might benefit from it. The six modules may be delivered in six sessions; however, the more time spent on the modules, the more students will take away from the experience. Some modules might engage youth more fully; in such cases, the material can be covered over more sessions.

## Big Ideas

Big ideas underpin the setting of learner's goals and help to focus the work done by educators. They frame the hopes that educators have for the children and youth who engage with them in the examination of respectful and healthy relationships – what they will understand and what skills they will develop.

When considering the use of these modules, educators will undoubtedly have already identified some big ideas, but the modules do provide some such ideas as suggestions to be considered in planning. They are listed below in no particular order of priority:

- Personal happiness is determined to a great extent by our ability to form supportive, mutually respectful, and honest relationships with others.
- Conflict is a natural part of being in relationship with others; how we deal with conflict determines whether a relationship is positive or negative, healthy or unhealthy.
- Understanding our own emotional responses to stress and stressors is an important part of gaining control of our lives and maintaining healthy relationships.
- Communication is at the core of building strong relationships, and listening is at the core of communication.

- Developing a positive self-worth through acceptable avenues (e.g., academics, athletics, artistic talents, and social competence) can be a powerful force for eliminating the need to engage in unhealthy, disrespectful relationships.
- Learning to have more compassion for ourselves and others aids in the development of a mature and healthy self-esteem.

By engaging these or other big ideas, educators and students can work together to develop strong and resilient citizens who are empowered to respect themselves, support others, and strengthen our society.

### ***Assessment of Learning***

When assessing student learning, it is helpful for educators to have a good grasp of the big ideas that they have identified for their students. Students who can apply what they learned to new situations have successfully integrated the materials. With this in mind, educators can work out what particular knowledge, skills, and attitudes align with these big ideas and then focus on how each student demonstrates learning.

For example, in considering the Big Idea that “communication is at the core of building strong relationships, and listening is at the core of communication,” educators may want to pay attention to growth both in person, in writing and in the virtual environment in such areas as:

- Ability to allow others to speak without interruption
- Ability to listen to others without judgment
- Ability to articulate one’s needs without coercion or threat
- Ability to speak and respond to others in respectful and non-aggressive ways
- Ability to construct and ask difficult questions without implying blame or judgment
- Ability to recognize how one’s communication style may have an impact on others

What other questions would you suggest?



We now live in a world that includes false news, “reality” TV that brings out the worst in relationships, celebrities who model harmful communication, and extensive social media options. There is a great need to support children and youth to recognize and practise a healthier and more respectful way of being in

relationship with others. *Respectful Futures* is both the name of a resource and our shared vision.

### ***Your Feedback is crucial***

To assure to the materials remain current and relevant, your feedback is crucial. Please visit [www.Respectfulfutures.ca](http://www.Respectfulfutures.ca) and let us know what you think.