 Supporting others

Duration: 60 minutes

Purpose of the task

Building a knowledge base when it comes to self-support and supporting others assists students to have a toolkit of information they can draw upon when they or someone they know is going through a tough time.

Teacher further learning:

* Responding to tragedy: Resources for educators: [edutopia.org/blog/tragedy-grief-resources-education](http://www.edutopia.org/blog/tragedy-grief-resources-education)
* Five tips for supporting students grieving: [edutopia.org/blog/tips-grief-at-school-2- chris-park](https://www.edutopia.org/blog/handling-grief-at-school-1-chris-park)

Course outcomes

1.1 Assess personal strengths and skills to achieve positive outcomes in a range of challenging and changing situations.

1.2 Critically evaluate services and resources to identify sources of reliable information and support.

1.3 Build positive thinking, self-belief and a sense of empowerment to take action to promote meaningful futures for self and others.

7.2 Demonstrate the capacity to seek help for self and others.

What do we want students to know, understand or be able to do?

* Explore the benefits of gratitude and empathy on individual and community wellbeing.

Required resources and materials for preparation

Student activities are set around:

* small group
* whole group
* individual activities
* offline and online

Equipment required:

* A3 paper or butchers’ paper
* A4 paper (1 per student)
* pens/textas
* post it notes
* index cards (5x7)
* access to the internet and laptop/tablet/phone

Suggested content

| Learning context | Content |
| --- | --- |
| Mental health and wellbeing  Focus: Developing self-efficacy and mental fitness | Building resilience   * empathising |
| Mental health and wellbeing  Focus: Support for self and others | Skills and strategies for managing change and challenges   * grief and loss * plans and expectations, e.g. being realistic * influence and persuasion   Connecting and reaching out   * networks of online and offline support * recognising when help is needed * asking for and accepting help for self and others * supporting others |
| Independence  Focus: Building self-concepts and independence | Self-management   * managing change and initiating contingency plans * responsibility for self and actions |

Teaching notes

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

There are a number of strategies that can be used to create a supportive learning environment which enables students to feel safe to learn and ask questions. They include:

* making students aware at the beginning of Life Ready sessions that disclosing personal information that indicates they may be at risk of harm will be reported to the school principal in all instances. This includes personal disclosures related to instances of abuse, drug use, neglect or sexual activity under the legal age of consent.
* being aware that some parts of Life Ready can be confronting and sensitive for some students.
* enabling students to withdraw if they find issues personally confronting to protect them from making harmful disclosures. Equally, it is important to be prepared for issues that arise as a result of a student making a public disclosure in the classroom.

More information on creating a safe and supportive learning environment can be found on the [Life Ready website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready).

Evaluating resources before use

Preview and evaluate all strategies, resources and teaching and learning approaches in full before use with students to determine suitability for student learning needs, stage of development and local school context. Consider the age, maturity, cultural background, sexuality, gender, sex, health and other characteristics of students in your care. Apply professional judgements to all strategies, teaching and learning approaches and resources including audio visual materials (e.g. videos, media clips and YouTube), interactive web-based content (e.g. games, quizzes and websites) and texts.

Use the [resource review flowchart](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/083acd3a-daca-4307-9afe-bc6c888f694a/1/final-resource-flowchart-html5.zip/index.html) to decide about the suitability of teaching and learning resources.

Materials should be reviewed in full and endorsed by the school principal before use in NSW government schools.

Communication with parents and caregivers

Some aspects of Life Ready may be viewed as sensitive or controversial, such as learning about abuse, child protection, drugs, respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and violence. Inform parents and carers, prior to the occasion, of the specific details of the Life Ready program, so that parents and caregivers have time to exercise their rights of withdrawing their child from a particular session. In this regard, a parents or caregiver’s wish must be respected.

Establishing how parents and caregivers will be informed about programs and involved in consultation is a school-based decision. Where parents and caregivers indicate they wish to withdraw their child from a program it is useful to negotiate which parts of the Life Ready program they are concerned about. A sample information letter is available on the [Life Ready website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/life-ready).

Learning experiences

Activity 1- Grief and Loss

Group discussion

Teacher background information: [www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/grief-and-loss](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/grief-and-loss)

* What is grief and loss?
* Times when people might experience grief and loss (e.g. Breakups [relationships and friendships], death, illness, moving away from friends, moving out of home).

Individual focus work

* Students read the fact sheet: Working through grief: [au.reachout.com/working-through- grief](http://au.reachout.com/working-through-%20grief) and write a scenario where this fact sheet could be used to assist a friend who is going through a tough time.
  + Describe the tough time
  + How could you use this fact sheet?
  + Where else/who else could support you and/or your friend?

Circle chat: Getting back on track

* Students read: 9 tips for coping with the hard stuff: [au.reachout.com/articles/9-tips-for-coping-with-the-hard-stuff](https://au.reachout.com/articles/9-tips-for-coping-with-the-hard-stuff) (online or printed)
* Whilst standing in two concentric circles facing each other, students are allocated 30 seconds to share with their partner what coping strategies they would suggest for the following 4 scenarios:
  + a best friend moves interstate to attend another school
  + a breakup occurs between two people who have been in a relationship
  + a relative is chronically ill
  + a friend or relative passes away

**Note**: Teachers are to be sensitive to recent events (if known) regarding students experiencing grief and loss and supply these students with the appropriate support(s) information and care. Allow the student to opt out of this activity if required/requested. This should be organised prior to running this activity and in consultation with the student(s).

* After 30 seconds, students switch. The inside circle remain stationary and the outside circle moves three steps to their right to meet their next partner.
* Continue sharing until each student has discussed the four scenarios.
* Remind students of where to go for help at the school, out of school (online and offline) at the conclusion of this activity.

Activity 2- Contributing to community

Mindmap: Community

* Students spend 1 minute recording everything they can think of regarding the word community in a mindmap
* Students combine to form small groups, and combine their information to complete two mindmaps:
  + what is community?
  + what is contributing to community?
* Students watch: Inspirational video: Pay it forward: [youtube.com/watch?v=GJeWFoKZ63U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJeWFoKZ63U)
* While watching the clip, students list as many examples as they have seen on the video which could be classified as ‘paying it forward’.
* Students draw their own Y-Chart on an A4 piece of paper and complete for Paying it forward. What does paying it forward look like, sound like, feel like?
* Discuss Y Charts as a group

Activity 3- Empathy

Online clip

* Students watch RSA SHORT - Brené Brown on Empathy: [youtube.com/watch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw)
* Students record everything they hear or see that they find of interest.

**Note**: Groups may like to watch the clip more than once to capture all the information

Brain writing: What is empathy?

* Students use one small index card (5x7) each and a handful of post it notes.
* Students are allocated 2 minutes to record what they know about empathy.
* Invite students to place their card on the wall or designated space for display.
* As a group, students explore the cards on display.
* Students use post it notes to vote for cards they agree with. Where students agree, they put their post it notes on top of the card(s).
* As a whole class, discuss the top three response cards voted for.
* Provide students with a group definition.

Think Pair Share: Empathy through connections and friendships

* Assign a two minute time limit for students to come up with as many ideas as they can think of in regards to the qualities and actions to the question, ‘What makes connections stronger between friends?’
* Students form pairs and share their answers.
* Each pair comes up with three top tips for building connections with friends.

Group discussion: Take a seat, make a friend

* Students watch Soul Pancake: Take a seat, make a friend: [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfHV4-N2LxQ&list=PLvzOwE5lWqhQWsPsW5PQQ5gj5OBewwgUw&index=2.)
* Students discuss: How could we deliver this activity (or similar) at our school?

Individual activity: Writing a gratitude letter

* Students choose one person they would like to show their gratitude to and write a letter to that person. Encourage students to deliver the letter in person, or phone/online call that person today.