

# Theme 2: Power in relationships

**A**ctivities to develop skills in establishing and maintaining non-coercive relationships and reinforcing attitudes and values related to equity, respect and responsibility

STAGE 3

# Overview

*When discussing power in relationships, particular attention is given to building confidence in relationships which are positive and caring. Skills in establishing and maintaining positive relationships, including accepted cultural practices related to caring touch, are reinforced.*

*Focus areas include teaching and learning in the areas of rights and responsibilities and power in relationships.*

## Focus Areas

Different types of relationships  
Expectations of gender roles  
Personal rights  
Rights and Responsibilities  
Sources of Power  
Coercion  
Harassment

## Things to look for

*Things to look for* suggest ways that students may demonstrate achievements of the outcomes at the relevant stage when learning about child protection. Teachers can use this section as a guide to making judgements about what their students know and can do.

### Stage 3

#### Different types of relationships

Can students:

- explain how positive relationships can be developed and maintained?
- describe how relationships can change?
- identify ways of modifying behaviour to make a relationship less close, if appropriate?

#### Expectations of gender roles

Can students:

- explore how expectations of girls and boys and of women and men, can influence their choices and options?
- discuss the roles and responsibilities of adult males and females?
- accept that males and females will have both common and different values?
- value the need for developing a personal identity?

### Stage 3

#### Personal rights

Can students:

- identify a number of rights to which children are entitled?
- identify situations where children's rights are not being met?
- appreciate differences in the ways that a respect for rights may be demonstrated?

#### Rights and responsibilities

Can students:

- identify some rights and responsibilities of children and adults?
- appreciate the need to respect the rights of others?

#### Sources of power

Can students:

- explain how people might have power within a group?
- identify positive and negative uses of power?
- identify their own personal power and ways in which it may be used?

#### Coercion

Can students:

- recognise situations where coercion is used to influence a person?
- discuss the nature of guilt and how it may be used coercively?
- role play responses to coercive behaviours?

#### Harassment

Can students:

- identify some feelings when people refer to their physical appearance, gender, cultural background, language or achievements?
- discuss ways that name calling can be offensive to males and females?
- explain some provisions within the school which deal with incidents of harassment?

**main idea**

*Relationships are connections or links I have with other people. All relationships are different. Relationships can change. Healthy or positive relationships are based on trust and respect.*

**Different types of relationships**

**field building**

- ❖ Revise a definition of relationships. (Relationships are connections or links I have with other people.)
- ❖ Students individually brainstorm a personal list of the names of approximately twenty people with whom they have any link, connection or relationship.

Revise the levels of closeness that exist in relationships. Students examine their lists and decide which relationships are *close*, which are *important* and which are *not close*. Colour codes or symbols placed alongside names may be used to help define these three levels of closeness.

- ❖ Students visually represent their lists of names by creating a relationship tree or web map. Each student places his or her name as the pivot of the branches or web. Names or symbols are positioned around the pivot to correspond to the levels of closeness in relationships.

- *These lists may be retained for further use with activities in this theme and in theme 3.*

- ❖ Revise the definitions of the terms *trust*, *respect* and *care*. Students demonstrate their understandings of these terms by using the words in sentences or by answering questions relating to the words. eg *Trust* is believing that a person will do the right thing. “My friend asked me to look after her most precious possession because she trusts me.”

*Respect* is to treat with dignity and consideration. “My friend doesn’t make fun when I make mistakes because he respects me.”

*Care* is to show concern, affection, attention and protection. “I always watch out for my friend when we play sport because he has asthma and may need help.”

- ❖ The teacher makes a statement which incorporates an extreme opinion on a subject. eg “I think cats are better pets than dogs.” No reason for this opinion is given. Ask students what they think about the statement. This should evoke a lively class discussion which may include some friendly conflict or criticism. When this has concluded the teacher explains that this is an example of *conflict* of opinion.

Focus on the term *conflict*. Create a shared definition. (Conflict is a difference of opinion between people which leads to a clash of feelings, ideas and actions. A conflict can be as small as an argument or as big as a war.)

Create a list of things that two people could have a different opinion about, eg favourite music, the best car, a good job or

occupation, a work of art, suitable clothing, the best time of day, a favourite season, the best way to complete a task, how to spend pocket money. Students suggest what different opinions might be held.

- *If criticism or 'put-downs' of students' suggestions occur,*
- *the teacher should intervene and highlight how such*
- *differences of opinion might lead to conflict.*

Discuss and list factors or events which may cause a difference of opinion to become a conflict eg when one item must be chosen, when both people think the other is wrong, when one or both become angry, when both want the same item, taking sides in someone else's difference of opinion.

### core learning

- ❖ The teacher poses the following questions for discussion:
  - How are relationships started? (Relationships are started through people meeting each other or having something in common which links them, such as being part of a family, being together at school, living close by, playing sport together, coming from the same town.)
  - How do positive personal relationships progress, from just meeting, to becoming friends, to becoming close? (Relationships develop over time, through shared experiences and trust being developed.)
  - If you are related or linked to a person, does that automatically mean that you are close to that person? (No. Sometimes even members of families are not close.)
- ❖ Students identify someone with whom they have been friends for some time. They map this relationship, from when it began until now, identifying steps, stages or events that led to increased closeness.
  - *The teacher may demonstrate the activity by mapping his*
  - *or her own relationship with a friend, such as a neighbour.*
  - *For some groups of students it may be helpful to have a limit*
  - *of four steps in the relationship.*
- ❖ The teacher informs students that a healthy or positive relationship is like a recipe – the right ingredients make it great. There are several ingredients that are important to have in healthy or positive relationships.  
Brainstorm *ingredients* students believe are essential for a healthy or positive relationship. Develop a joint construction in words and pictures, for a *recipe for a positive relationship*.





- *Useful ingredients include – trust, care, respect, safety,*
- *fun, shared views, communication (talking and listening),*
- *honesty, praise or compliments where appropriate,*
- *apologies where appropriate, loyalty, support.*

Inform students that positive relationships will not always be smooth. They will have their ‘ups’ and ‘downs’. They may be frustrating at times, and conflict or arguments may occur. If the foundation remains the same because the good *ingredients* are there, disagreements can usually be sorted out.

- ❖ Discuss with students the place of *conflict* in relationships. Discuss some conflicts that students have had with friends or close family members that have been resolved.

Remind students that no two people are the same, so conflict is a normal part of living with other people.

Conflict is neither good nor bad. It is how people handle conflict that makes the difference. Most conflicts in positive relationships can be resolved.

- *Discussion of conflict in relationships could become*
- *uncomfortable for some students. Teachers need to deal*
- *sensitively with this issue and be prepared to use the*
- *strategy of protective interrupting if necessary. Refer to the*
- *introduction, page 9.*

### Changes in relationships

- ❖ Inform students that personal relationships do not stay exactly the same. Relationships change over time. Some become closer, some less close, some break down, some may finish.

Students brainstorm some factors that can cause a relationship to change (eg growing older, moving house, spending less time together, changing interests, broken trust, dishonesty, lack of respect, use of insults or put-downs, bullying, bossiness, loss of a shared interest, new friends, divorce or separation.)

Remind students that changes in relationships are normal and common. It should be expected that relationships will always change over time, as circumstances change. Discuss relationships between the characters in some popular television serial dramas, where storylines rely on continual changing of relationships.

Pose for discussion:

- How can you tell when a relationship is changing?  
(factors, behaviours)
- What feelings might be experienced when a relationship is changing?

Responses may be mapped to link factors, behaviours and resulting feelings.

- *When discussing feelings in response to situations*
- *discourage the use of statements such as "...made me feel..." This is sometimes called victim language. Encourage*
- *students to talk about their feelings using the pattern:*
- *"I feel... when..." or "When... I feel..." so the impression is*
- *not conveyed that their feelings are controlled by events or*
- *other people. Feelings are responses to situations. They can*
- *be controlled or managed by individuals.*

Literature which deals with specific changes in relationships from a child or young person's perspective might be provided for students. Some examples are given in the booklist.

### Relationships which may need to end

- ❖ Inform students that when relationships don't have healthy ingredients, or if the ingredients change to become unhealthy, relationships may need to be ended or made less close. This is particularly so if the relationships are negative or involve harm or abuse.

Discuss some changes in relationships which may indicate that a relationship should not continue unless changes are made (bullying, coercion, lying, stealing, violence, abuse, being neglected, ignored, being 'used').

- *Students may offer separation and divorce as examples*
- *of factors which cause a relationship to end. It is important*
- *that these are discussed as relationship 'enders' only*
- *between the two separating people. When children witness*
- *a relationship breaking down or ending between two*
- *important people whom they love and depend upon, they*
- *may start to doubt their own relationship with these people.*
- *It is important to acknowledge that change in families*
- *through a separation, divorce or death will bring changes in*
- *relationships. Over time new ways of relating can be*
- *worked out.*

Ask students to think about how an unhealthy relationship could be ended or made less close in a safe and acceptable way. In pairs, students nominate a relationship, such as with a neighbour, a classmate, a sports team mate, sister's or brother's friend, parent's friend. (Do not include unhealthy relationships with family members as it would not be appropriate to expect a child to change these independently.) Students record some suggestions about:

- What could be said to end a relationship, if it was necessary?
- What could be said to make a relationship less close?





- How could you change the way you act towards a person, in an acceptable way?
- If asked, what are some reasons you could use to explain your changed behaviour?

• *Intervention needs to occur if inappropriate or unrealistic responses are given. For example, it would be very uncommon for a child to end a relationship with a parent although it is possible that the relationship could be changed to make it far less close.*

• *Practice of these skills is important to self protection for children. Abuse frequently begins with small violations which progress to larger violations. Children often find it more difficult to explain and seek help about small violations. Where they can take action themselves to reduce closeness or proximity in a relationship that becomes unhealthy, their safety from abuse is increased.*

• *It is important also to emphasise seeking help from a trusted adult, if necessary, to reduce 'closeness' if abuse is involved.*

• *It may be helpful to discuss that a change to a relationship does not have to be final. In some cases, if the unhealthy behaviour stops and both people wish to be friends or 'close' again, this is possible. If appropriate, revisit the story, 'Don't Hurt Me Mama' by Muriel Stanek, or a story where a target of bullying finally becomes friends with the bully.*

• *Where sexual abuse has occurred this is less possible. However, it is important that children who have been physically or emotionally abused or neglected are reassured of the possibility that relationships may be restored. Often the latter forms of abuse are perpetrated by a caregiver who is loved and depended upon by the child. Abuse is often kept secret and endured because the child fears losing the caregiver.*

• *In situations like this, children need to be reassured that relationships may be restored.*

### conclusion

- ❖ Read a story about relationships where there is conflict or change, which has a positive ending such as *Crash* by Jerry Spinelli.



## Expectations of gender roles

- Vulnerability to abuse and the acceptance of many forms of abusive behaviours can be reinforced, within society and by popular media, by narrow beliefs about the way that girls and boys, and females and males, are expected to be.
- There is a wide range of options about being feminine or masculine which all people, particularly children and young people, should be able to consider.
- 'The fundamental shifts which have occurred this century about what it means to be female and male show quite clearly that femininity and masculinity are not necessarily inherent categories that pre-exist in each individual.'
- 'Research confirms that children do not learn how to be female and male in passive ways. Rather individuals actively develop a sense of themselves as gendered people by interacting with the myriad of messages and practices which they encounter. With each individual some aspects of the dominant social order come to be actively desired, while others may be resisted, reworked or responded to in terms of a need to belong or to feel in control.' (Gender Equity: A Framework for Australian Schools)
- 'Apart from the ways in which parents, educators and popular culture speak and practise gender as binarisms, children themselves can act as agents in the construction and maintenance of gender categories.' (Foundation Stones: The Construction of Gender in Early Childhood.)
- The way in which we view and express our femininity and masculinity impacts on our communication, how we view others and how we deal with conflict. In this way gender has an important bearing on the establishment of positive relationships.
- Further resources in the area of gender construction and on inclusive teaching practice are available in the Department's resource package: 'Girls and Boys at School Gender Equity Strategy: 1996-2001'.
- Some activities from this core learning area may be delivered to students in single sex groupings. This approach is useful when teachers are encouraging girls and boys to explore sensitive issues.

### field building

- ❖ Read texts such as *First Light* by G Crew and P Gouldthorpe or *Miranda The Castaway* by J Mayhew, which present positive images and ideas of male and female characters – not narrow or limited ideas of masculinity and femininity.

### main idea

*I receive different messages about being a girl and being a boy. Society's expectations of masculinity and femininity can affect my actions, behaviour and relationships. I have a wide range of choices, and I have choices about the way I want to be as a girl or a boy.*



- ❖ Ask students to bring to the classroom a collection of birthday cards they and their siblings (including babies) have received over the years. Collect and display the cards which girls have received on one display board and the cards which boys have received on another.

- *Avoid using labels such as 'boys' cards' or 'girls' pictures'.*
- *In using this language narrow and limiting ideas about gender can be reinforced. Describe all images in such terms as, 'cards received by boys' or 'pictures on cards received by girls'.*
- *Ensure that class or group rules are maintained and that students are reminded about respect and privacy issues when looking at the cards. Permission to use cards for the following activities should be sought from students. Students and teachers may need to be selective when choosing cards which will be opened and the text examined.*

- ❖ In pairs, students complete the worksheet *Examining birthday cards* (appendix 19) by looking at the pictures on four cards, two from each display.

As a whole class, examine the cards from each display. Students share responses from their worksheets for the cards they examined. Discuss the general messages which the illustrators of the cards have conveyed about what it is to be a girl or a boy.

Discussion based on the following questions:

- Do the pictures on the cards describe how you live your life as a girl or a boy?
- What kinds of pictures for cards would better describe the way you really are?

Students' suggestions about more realistic pictures for cards for boys and girl may be recorded in two columns on a chart. Alternatively students may design and draw a birthday card illustration for themselves which reflects their own individuality.

Explore the list, or examples of students' work, and discuss the following:

- What do these ideas about girls and boys tell us? (Girls can be similar and different, and like doing the same and different things. Boys can be similar and different, and like doing the same and different things. Girls and boys can both be similar and different, and like doing the same and different things.)
- Which ideas are the same for both girls and boys?

- ❖ In small groups, students examine the language used in some of the cards which girls have received and compare it with the language in some of the cards which boys have received.

Students note any words or phrases which are the same in both groups of cards. They also note words or phrases which are

common in the cards girls have received and those which are common in the cards boys have received (eg *sweet, nice, happy, pretty, beautiful* – *great, exciting, fabulous, handsome*).

Groups share their findings with the class.

Whole class discussion:

- What messages do these words give about being a girl or being a boy?
- Are these true for you? Why? Why not?
- How might these messages influence girls and boys about how they think they are expected to act?
- How can the messages limit the options for girls and boys?

### core learning

- ❖ The teacher explains that students will look at some commonly held beliefs about girls and boys. Not all people agree with these but they are often heard.

Students individually complete the worksheet (appendix 20).

Inform students that their worksheets will not be shared.

Students examine each statement and decide whether they accept or challenge it. Remind them that in different situations they may have different opinions about the statements, but they should record their responses as they feel at present. Set a time limit.

Worksheet statements:

*Boys should have more education than girls.*

*Boys are better at maths than girls.*

*Girls are better at reading.*

*Only girls can take care of babies.*

*Boys don't enjoy being touched.*

*Girls should be thin.*

*Only girls can play netball.*

*Girls shouldn't fight.*

*Girls are stronger than boys.*

*Boys are safe when they go out.*

*Boys shouldn't cry.*

*Girls should be neat.*

*Boys are leaders.*

*Girls can stand more pain than boys.*

*Boys are noisier than girls.*

*Boys are great at sport.*

*Boys should be well-built.*

*Girls are better at sorting out relationships.*

*Only boys can play soccer.*

*Girls are not safe when they go out.*





Discuss some of the students' reactions to the statements. Pose the following questions for discussion:

- Are there right and wrong answers to these statements? (No. Children should be free to choose their own ways of being a boy or a girl. However, they should be careful to choose ways that will not limit them, or others, in doing the things they want to do.)
- What are some situations where it may benefit a girl or boy to uphold some of these statements?
- How might the family or cultural background of girls or boys influence their responses to some of these statements?
- Can girls or boys change their opinions about these statements in different situations? (Yes. In a group of friends a boy might uphold the opinion that it is not OK to cry. At home, the situation might be that it is OK to cry. At school, a girl might choose to be quiet. At home, the same girl might be energetic and noisy.)

• *'Individual understandings and personal choices about gender never exist in a vacuum. Normal, acceptable and desirable ways of enacting gender vary among the different groups we belong to and interact within. Therefore positions taken up by individuals can often be contradictory or fluid, as girls and women and boys and men take up a range of different femininities and masculinities depending on the context.'*  
 • *(Gender Equity: A Framework for Australian Schools)*

- ❖ In small groups students conduct a survey about their favourite male and female characters in their own computer games, magazines and videos\*. Students, individually or in pairs within groups, examine a character, using appendix 21. Ensure that each group examines both male and female characters.

• *\*The teacher might arrange beforehand for students to bring in examples of their favourite computer games, magazines and videos to school.*

Students record:

- name of the character
- physical qualities and skills
- personality
- values
- how the character interacts with others.

Within their small groups students share their worksheets and discuss for each character:

- What behaviours and values are made to seem normal?

- What messages does the character give us about being a girl or boy?
- Does the character represent your experiences of what it is like to be a girl or boy?

Whole class discussion:

- How are some of the characters different from your experiences of being a girl or boy?
- What do we need to be aware of when we view these videos, magazines and games? (The images and ideas of masculinity and femininity shown are very narrow. They can limit our ideas about how we want to be as a girl or a boy.)

- *In popular culture females are often portrayed as weak and relying on the greater capabilities of males. When males are cast as fearless providers and females as needy dependants the result can lead to abuse of power as well as limitations on how individuals can achieve their full potential. It can affect most particularly, the potential for caring and trusting relationships.*

- ❖ Students collect information by surveying two female and two male adults in their immediate or extended family. Each student receives two copies of the worksheet (appendix 22). This could be set as a weekend homework task.

Students share some of the responses they have collected to the survey questions.

*Survey questions:*

- *What are some things that you have to do each day (other than go to work)?*
- *What are your responsibilities in life (other than making money)?*
- *What do you think are the main skills an adult needs in order to have a happy life?*

Record some responses to the third question on the board or a chart.

Discussion based on the following questions:

- Were you surprised by any of the responses?
- What were some responsibilities that women and men had in common?
- What were some skills that both women and men believed were important in order to have a happy life?
- Where do people learn these skills? (At school and at home.)
- What activities do we have at school to practise these skills?





**main idea**

*My rights include the right to be safe, to be cared for, to have my body, thoughts and feelings respected and to be treated fairly. These rights can be met for different children in a range of ways.*

(Classroom groupwork, co-operative learning, peer support, buddy systems, SRC.)

Students write a personal reflection in response to the questions:

- What are two things I have learned from the class results of the survey?
- How might this change what I do at school or at home?

**conclusion**

- ❖ For this activity, some instructions may need to be recorded on the board.

Students individually write about what they wish to have, when they are 25 years old, in the areas of:

- their family life
- their skills
- their achievements.

When writing is complete, students are asked to examine the *achievements* they wish for.

For each achievement, they record some positive and negative effects that these achievements may have on their family life and the opportunities they have to use their skills.

Students then prioritise the achievements they wish for, in order of importance. Students share their work with a partner, small groups or the class if they wish.

**Personal rights**

**field building**

- *Teaching about children’s rights can be a sensitive area for some parents. It is important that parents are aware that in child protection education children’s rights are discussed in the context of positive relationships and in association with corresponding responsibilities.*
- *Children need to have knowledge about their rights in order to recognise abusive or neglectful situations. They also need to have confidence in their entitlement to personal rights to be able to speak out when they feel threatened or unsafe.*

- ❖ Revise the rights that all children have (to be safe, to be cared for, to have their bodies, thoughts and feelings respected and to be treated fairly). Display these rights.
- ❖ Examine a list of class rules or school rules. Discuss each rule and the right that is being met when students in the class or the school abide by the rule.
- ❖ Read texts about human rights or the United Nations Declaration

of Human Rights such as sections of the book *Freedom of Speech* by Philip Steele.

### core learning

- ❖ Students form pairs of their own choice. They sit facing their partner, look at and talk directly to them. Each student takes turns in completing the sentence “I have to...” The teacher stops the activity after about two minutes. Students then take turns to complete the following sentences each for about two minutes:

- “I choose to...”
- “I need...”
- “I want...”

Discuss the difference between *needs* and *wants* by calling upon examples that were suggested by students in their pairs and discussed earlier.

- ❖ Revise the definition of a right. (Rights are things that all people should have. There is no ‘question’ or ‘maybe’ about it – they should have these things.)

Brainstorm a list of rights or conditions which students believe all children should expect. Examine the list to ensure it does not contain examples of *wants* (such as a pet, particular clothes, a bicycle).

On a separate chart, group items from the list under the broader rights:

- to be safe
  - to have their bodies respected
  - to have their thoughts and feelings respected and
  - to be treated fairly.
- ❖ View the segment *Papa* or *The Orange* (from the video *Rights From the Heart*). Each segment is about four minutes long. Allow time for discussion and a second viewing.

The teacher informs students that children can play a role in helping each other when they see the rights of other children are not being met. Although they are not responsible for making sure rights are met, they can help other children as did the students in *The Orange* and the rabbit in *Papa*.

Discussion based on the following questions:

- What were some rights that were not met for the child in the video?
- How did the students in *The Orange* (or the rabbit in *Papa*) help the child whose rights were not being met? (They offered support and friendship and helped the child seek help from an adult.)
- How could you help if you saw a child, or children, whose health or well-being was being harmed by their rights not being







met? (Offering support and friendship to the child, encouraging the child to seek help, speaking out and telling an adult.)

- ❖ Students decide which of the following examples respect the rights of the child in the situation by answering yes or no. Discuss which right is being met or not met in each case. This task may be carried out individually using the worksheet at appendix 23.

*A child is allowed to play from 4 to 6pm most afternoons with his neighbour.*

*A child is required to show her parents completed homework before watching television.*

*A child is locked in a car, asleep, for an hour on a hot day.*

*A child is always told he is hopeless and that his brother is better than him.*

*A parent takes a child to buy the right glasses to help her see more clearly so she can learn to read.*

*A child is left with a broken wrist untreated, after physical violence by a parent.*

*A child's parent asks that she baths or showers and changes her dirty clothes.*

*A child's father listens to her reasons for being angry about new travel arrangements to school.*

*A child is reprimanded for breaking a family safety rule.*

*A child has her private body parts touched by a family member and is made to keep it a secret.*

*A child's caregiver allows him to decide how he will spend his pocket money himself.*

- ❖ Facilitate discussion to consider how respect for rights may be demonstrated in different ways in different circumstances. We should not assume that ways of showing respect for children will look the same in different cultures. eg. In some cultures adults show respect for children by giving them a lot of freedom. In other cultures respect is shown by being very strict with children.

### conclusion

- ❖ Students individually select one basic right which is important to them. They draw, write or create a cartoon or collage to express what this right means to them personally.

Students may include specific examples of:

- where this right has and has not been met for them
- instances where this right has benefited them and
- the importance of this right in their day-to-day lives.



## Rights and responsibilities

### field building

- ❖ Define the term *responsibilities*. (Responsibilities are the things that people should do to respect the rights of others and to ensure that their own rights are met. Responsibilities can involve actions and ways of behaving. Responsibilities should be things a person is able to do.)
- ❖ Map the responsibilities held by various individuals within our community.
  - eg students' responsibilities (in the classroom, from grade to grade)
  - responsibilities of school staff
  - shop or business owners' responsibilities
  - police officers' responsibilities
  - the Prime Minister's responsibilities
- ❖ Revise the rights that children have. (To be safe, to be cared for, to have their bodies, thoughts and feelings respected and to be treated fairly.) Are all children entitled to them? (Yes, each child deserves these rights to be met.) What does each right mean?

### core learning

- ❖ The teacher poses the following questions for discussion:
    - What are some of your rights? (To be safe, to have my body, thoughts and feelings respected and to be treated fairly. Rights associated with these may be included.)
    - How can these rights be met?

In groups students create proposals or strategies they believe might meet one or more of the rights that people have. Share and discuss responses.

Guide the discussion to establish that in order for rights to be met *it is essential that others respect those rights*. People can have rights only when others carry out their responsibilities by actions and behaviour which support and guarantee those rights.

eg People have the right to have their feelings respected. Insulting people is not OK. It does not respect their feelings. A way to protect this right is for individuals not to insult others.
  - ❖ Students clarify their understanding of rights and responsibilities by completing the worksheet (appendix 24) in small groups or pairs. When students complete the worksheet ask them to decide who has each right or responsibility within a family – the caregivers (mother/ father), grandparents, adult family members, children, the youngest child or the oldest child.
- Discuss responses as a whole class. (Each of the points listed is a joint right or responsibility.)

### main idea

*I know my rights.  
I am responsible for  
respecting the rights  
of others. All adults  
have a responsibility  
to protect children  
from harm and abuse.*



- ❖ The class forms two groups. One group takes on the role of *adults* in a family. The other group takes on the role of *children* in a family. Roles should be swapped during the exercise so all students experience both perspectives.

The following questions are posed to each group in turn. Members of each group present responses from their allocated perspective. Some points made may be debated by either group, on behalf of adults or children.

- What are some rights of adults in a family?
- How can children act towards adults in a family, to support and respect their rights?
- What are some of the rights of children in a family?
- How can adults in a family act towards children to support their rights?
- How can children act towards other children in a family to support their rights?

The teacher informs students that groups of people function or 'get on' well when the rights and responsibilities of all members are balanced.

Students may wish to comment on how they felt in taking on their allocated perspective in the previous discussion.

- ❖ Discuss the difference in responsibilities between an adult and a child. (All adults have a responsibility to protect children. Many adults have a responsibility to provide care for children. Children are responsible for respecting others and treating others fairly. They can never take on full responsibility for the safety and protection of others.)  
Ask students to provide examples where adults bear *full* responsibility but children bear *some* responsibility. (eg The right to a clean or healthy environment in the home involves some responsibility for children to clean up their own mess or contribute some effort to cleaning up family mess.)
- ❖ Pose the following questions for discussion:
  - If you meet your individual responsibilities does it *guarantee* that your rights will be respected? (No. Meeting your responsibilities guarantees that those around you will have their rights respected. However, meeting your responsibilities will not always protect you from others, including other children, who don't respect your rights.)
  - What could you do if someone acts towards you in a way that does not respect your rights? (You can take action to get your rights respected. If this doesn't work, you may need to seek help from an adult.)
  - What if an adult harms or threatens you? (Adults have particular responsibilities towards children. You are entitled to be protected – not harmed, by adults. There are many other

adults who can help you. These could be family members, neighbours, network people, teachers and other adults whose job it is to look after the safety and well-being of children.)

- Are there times when children are not entitled to be safe from abuse or harm? (No. Adults are always responsible for ensuring children are safe from harm. Adults who abuse children sometimes try to make them think that they don't deserve to be safe or respected so they will keep the abuse a secret. These adults usually know that what they are doing is wrong. Children always have the right to be safe and respected.)

### conclusion

- ❖ Students record for themselves a list of actions and behaviours that represent their *responsibilities* in respecting the rights of others at home and at school.

These can be recorded on a personal shield (appendix 25).

## Sources of power

### field building

- ❖ Revise the definition of power. (Power is being able to do something or make something happen. Power can be the ability to make others do things.)
- ❖ In small groups students brainstorm on large chart paper, a list of one of the following:
  - powerful *things or objects* (fire, water, drill, saw, plane, tractor, rocket, jet boat)
  - powerful *creatures* (lion, shark, buffalo, kangaroo, tiger snake, crocodile, wasp, red-back spider)
  - powerful *people* (Prime Minister, Premier, police officer, judge, religious leader, principal).

A presenter from each group displays and shares the list with the class.

- ❖ Using the displayed lists, students take turns to describe the particular power or ability of some of the items on the lists.
 

eg A drill has the power to make holes in hard, thick objects.

A tiger snake can pursue its prey and kill it with poisonous venom.

A police officer has the power to charge people with crimes and to arrest them.
- ❖ The teacher has prepared a set of pictures from magazines. The set consists of pairs of complementary images of power eg a large powerful car/a small car, a baby/an older child, an exercise book and pens/a computer, a person in 'street smart' clothes, a similar person in ordinary clothes, a well known rock star/an unknown musician, designer sport shoes/budget sport shoes,

### main idea

*People can have power from different sources. They have choices in the way they can use their power. Power should be used in a fair and OK way that respects the rights of others.*

a sports champion/an ordinary person playing sport, a mansion/a small cottage.

Pictures may be mounted on cardboard and numbers, letters or symbols marked on the reverse to signify pairs.

- *NB. Ensure that each pair of complementary pictures*
- *depicting people shows people of the same sex and similar*
- *cultural backgrounds so identification of sources of power can*
- *be clearer. Power is rarely one-dimensional. Power according*
- *to gender and race is a dynamic within each source of power.*
- *Levels and kinds of power change according to different*
- *situations. This introductory activity aims to establish*
- *understandings about basic sources of power.*

Students sit in a circle, and pictures are randomly placed, face up, in the middle. Students take turns to try to select a pair. If the pair is correct they are asked to identify the kind of power that is present in one picture and absent in the other. Other students and the teacher may offer comments.

### core learning

- ❖ Read the story *The Tiger, The Brahmin and the Jackal* by Kath Lock. Discuss the different powers of each character and how they were used.
- ❖ Display appendix 26 as an overhead or large chart. Inform students that the list contains sources of power and an example of each. Mask the list and examine each item in turn. Students may also suggest names of powerful people and identify the kinds of power they have.

- *Students may need to be reminded of classroom rules about*
- *respect for others. They may be asked not to use the names*
- *of members of the school community but of people in the*
- *broader community. Well known celebrities or characters*
- *from TV or other media may also be used.*

- ❖ Remind students that every person has power. Power may not always be as obvious as the kinds of power discussed in the previous activity.

The amount of power a person has will change according to different situations. In every group of people, from a family to a community to a country, there will be people who always have a lot of power. These people are often the leaders of the group who guide the people and help them to achieve the goals of the group. Other members of the group also use their power within the group.

The teacher reminds students that everyone *has* power. Power in itself is neither good nor bad. It is how it is used that determines that.

How and when people use their power is up to them. Using power is a choice. You can choose to use power or you can choose not to use power.

If you choose to use your power in a way that does not respect the rights of others you *abuse* power. If you use your power in a way that respects the rights of others you are using power in a *responsible* way.

### Card game

- ❖ Students form small groups. Each group receives a set of cards (appendix 27). The cards are placed face down in a pile in the middle of the group. Students take turns to choose a card, to identify the power used in the situation and to decide if the power was used in a *responsible* way or in a *abusive* way. The card is placed on Pile A (*responsible use of power*) or Pile B (*possible abuse of power*).

Discuss responses to each situation based on the question: How did you know the situation was an OK use of power (a not OK use of power)?

- ❖ Students reflect on the power (ability to do things or make others do things) which they have *themselves*, at home or in their neighbourhood with friends and family. Students consider situations where they are bigger, stronger, more clever, know special information, are popular, have better possessions or have been placed in a position of authority. Students map situations of power using appendix 28.
- ❖ As a class, identify one male and one female superhero from a well-known television show, cartoon program or computer game. Brainstorm for each, their sources of power and the ways they use their power.

Discussion based on the following questions:

- What are some messages that these characters give to boys and girls about using power?
  - Are these fair and OK ways of using power?
  - In the show (program or game), which ways of using power are presented to be most valuable? (Aggression, violence, lack of concern for others, ruthlessness, lack of respect for others, males putting females down.)
  - If boys and girls believe these messages about power, how might it affect the way they act?
  - What might result from that? (It may lead to an abuse of power. It may limit individuals in using other skills and achieving their full potential.)
- ❖ View the segment *Door to Door* (from the video *Rights From the Heart*). Discuss the sources of power that the students had and how power was used. Include the sources of size, age, strength,





popularity, group size, position (the teacher) and knowledge (of rights). Discuss how power was used at the end of the story.

- ❖ Examine a map of the school. As a class group students identify places in the school where they might feel unsafe or threatened by students using power.

Discussion based on the following questions:

- What are some situations where you see girls using power in the school?
- What are some situations where you see boys using power in the school?
- How does boys' use of power affect other boys?
- How does boys' use of power affect girls?
- How does girls' use of power affect other girls?
- How does girls' use of power affect boys?
- When is the use of power by boys or girls unfair and not OK?
- How can students' use of power be helpful?

### conclusion

- ❖ Students form up to seven groups and discuss one of the following:
  - responsible uses of *parent* power
  - responsible uses of *adult* power
  - responsible uses of *teacher* power
  - responsible uses of *popular* power
  - responsible uses of *information* or *expert* power
  - responsible uses of the power of *fame*
  - responsible uses of the power of *strength*.

Each group decides on a situation which depicts a way the power can be used which is fair and OK. Members of the group role play the situation for the class. A presenter from each group introduces the role play.

- ❖ Read the book *Bill's New Frock* by Anne Fine at ongoing intervals with students. After each chapter discuss how the characters in the story used their power.

### extension

- ❖ The teacher informs students that sometimes it may be more difficult to see when some people are using their power to persuade or influence others.

Most of us have a strong need to belong. We especially want to be liked by people who are important to us. We also often want to be liked or be friends with people who are popular, who are rich or who have authority. It can make us feel special. We feel that we have to be nicer to these people so they will keep liking us. Pose the questions for discussion:



- Who are some people that you need to be liked by, or want to be liked by?
- Would it be easier or harder to say “NO” or “GO AWAY” to these people? Why?

Explain to students that this means that people who are important to us, who are popular, have money or authority might have more influence over us because it is harder to say NO to them. It might also be harder to see that they are using their power because we already try to please them. Remind students that this does not always happen but we have to be more careful when we are in a situation where we are keen to please another person.

Discussion based on the following questions:

- How might someone who has lots of money try to influence a person who has no money?
- How might a popular student try to influence a less popular student?
- How might a favourite uncle try to influence a niece?
- How might a famous musician try to influence a young fan?
- How might a camp leader try to influence a child she is supervising?
- How might a boss try to influence someone who works for him or her?

## Coercion

### field building

- ❖ Revise the difference between a gift and a bribe. (A gift is given by choice with no conditions or expectations. A gift becomes a bribe when the giver expects a favour or act in return.) If appropriate, swaps or exchanges of items between students may also be discussed. Where a swap or exchange requires a favour in return, seems unfair or involves secrecy, this could also be a bribe. Inform students that a bribe can also be a gift that is promised – not actually given. Bribes may include money, toys or gadgets, swap items, favours, outings, privileges and use of equipment. Bribes often involve not OK (inappropriate) behaviour in return.
- ❖ Examine the concept of *pressure*. Blow up a balloon and put it under pressure. Find other suitable objects (such as a ruler, the tip of a sharp pencil, a piece of chalk, a tissue, the arm or leg of a toy) and apply pressure to them. Observe the results and reactions of students. (The chalk or the pencil might break. Students may feel uncomfortable.)

Discussion based on the following questions:

- What were some feelings and body signals you experienced when the pressure was being applied to the objects?



### main idea

*Coercion occurs when one person makes or tries to make another person do something which that person doesn't want to do. Coercion can involve guilt, threats, force and bribes. It can be hard to say NO and GO from coercion but I should always talk to*

**main idea** cont.

someone about it or

TELL an adult if

I need help.

(Feeling uncomfortable, stressed, heart beating faster, tight throat, nervous, wanting the pressure to stop).

- When might people be put under pressure by other people? (When other people try to make them do something they don't want to do.)
- Can people be pressured in non-physical ways? (Yes.) How? (Threats or bribes may be made. Non-physical bullying such as looks and gestures may occur.)

**core learning**

❖ Students form pairs. They role play a situation where one student forms a fist and the other student is challenged to try to open his or her partner's fist. The teacher stops the activity after a few minutes as most students will try to use physical strategies to force their partners' fists open. The question is posed:

- What strategies were used to try to open the fists of partners?  
There is no discussion of responses.

Students change roles and the other partner now makes a fist.

The teacher instructs students that they are now to try to open the fists of their partners without touching their partners.

As a whole class, students respond to the following question:

- What strategies were used to try to open the fists of your partners?

The teacher has prepared a number of blank cards. As each response is presented a summary of the strategy is recorded on a card. Some responses from the first role play are also recorded. Cards are kept for the next activity.

❖ Introduce the term *coercion*. Create a shared definition. (Coercion occurs when one person makes or tries to make another person do something which that person doesn't want to do. Coercion usually involves pressure.)

The word *coercion* is written as a heading on the board. Below the word *coercion* the following descriptors are written as sub-headings: *force, bribes, threats, guilt*.

Examine the cards from the previous activity. Students take turns to attach, using adhesive tack, a strategies card under its appropriate sub-heading. Discuss reasons for card placement and how each strategy is a form of coercion.

❖ Discuss the concept of *guilt*. Create a shared definition. (Guilt is a feeling of shame or remorse. It can result from a person doing something wrong or not doing something that was expected. eg You might feel guilt if you break a rule, take the last piece of cake and someone else misses out or forget someone's birthday.)

The teacher informs students that guilt can be a natural response, but one that is not always a correct or appropriate response. Feeling guilty does not necessarily mean that a person is guilty. Ask students



to share experiences of feeling guilt or feeling guilty. As students share their experiences, guide them to distinguish between:

- guilt that is appropriate (when you have acted wrongly or not respected someone's rights)
- guilt that is not appropriate (if you feel that you have to do something you don't need to do to make another person happy).

Inform students that guilt can sometimes be used to pressure a person into doing something she or he doesn't want to do.

Sometimes guilt might be used to make a person keep a secret that shouldn't be kept. People can be made to feel guilty if they were part of the secret, or guilty about causing someone they know to get into trouble. Secrets which shouldn't be kept are harmful and should be told.

- *In many situations of abuse, children feel guilty about the abuse. Abusers often try to shift the blame to the person experiencing the abuse because it can reduce their own feelings of guilt. Children are often told that "they deserve the abuse because they are no good," "they (somehow) asked for the abuse to happen," "they should have stopped the abuser, so they are to blame for ongoing abuse" and "they would hurt other people if they told about the abuse."*
- *Guilt can be a powerful reinforcer of secrecy. The story 'Some Secrets are for Sharing' by R Winston-Hillier provides a good example which may be appropriate for use with students.*

❖ Consider one or more of the following examples:

1. *Costa wants to borrow Rob's new jacket. Rob's parents told him he wasn't to lend his clothes to anyone. Costa says that Rob is so lucky because he gets everything he wants from his parents and Costa's parents never buy him anything. Rob feels guilty.*

Discuss the following:

- What did Costa say that was coercive?
- How did Rob feel?
- Was that an appropriate response?
- What should Rob do?

2. *Karlie went shopping with her friend. On the way home her friend showed her two pairs of earrings that she had stolen from a shop. Karlie was shocked. Her friend said that Karlie could have one pair if she never told anyone how she got them. Karlie loved the earrings but later she felt unhappy whenever she wore them.*



Discuss the following:

- What did Karlie's friend say that was coercive?
- How did Karlie feel?
- Was that an appropriate response?
- What should Karlie do?

3. *Brad's Uncle was fun to be with and took Brad to the movies quite often. When they were alone, Brad's Uncle would play a tickling game with him. Lately, Brad had felt uneasy about this game because his Uncle had started tickling his private parts. He said that Brad had let him do it before so now it was too late to stop. Brad felt guilty because he had enjoyed the game before.*

Discuss the following:

- What did Brad's Uncle say that was coercive?
- How did Brad feel?
- Was that an appropriate response?
- What should Brad do?

Discussion of the scenarios should emphasise the points:

- Coercion involving guilt can be harder to resist and harder to talk about.
- Coercion involves lack of caring about and respect for the other person's feelings, safety and personal rights.
- Coercion is not OK. Talking to a friend can help you decide what would be the best thing to do about the situation.
- If coercion involves being unsafe you should TELL a trusted adult who will help you.

### conclusion

- ❖ Students observe a series of scenes (enlarged copies of appendices 29, 30 and 31):
  - Lending your skateboard to someone you know won't look after it.
  - Going to a video shop after school without telling your parents.
  - Lending your favourite poster to someone you know is careless.

The teacher informs students that in each scene a person has been pressured or coerced to do something he or she didn't want to do. Examine the scenes one at a time. Ask students to describe what happens in each. Students identify types of coercion (*force, bribes, threats, guilt*) that might have been used and what might have been said.

Students form groups of five to create a role play in response to the first part of one of the scenes where coercion is used. A script for the scene is written. NB. Students do not practise the role of the coercer.

Students are encouraged to use strategies to resist the coercion (eg ignoring, staring past, 'broken recording', acting confident, refusing a bribe, naming the behaviour, being assertive.) One student from each group performs the role play for the class. The teacher plays the role of the person who is using coercion.

- *More information about some of these strategies may be found in 'Child Protection Education: Stage 2' pages 106 to 111.*

## Harassment

### field building

- *Before participating in the following focus area*
  - *students need to have established understandings about*
  - *personal rights and responsibilities.*
- ❖ Revise personal rights. Discuss who is entitled to them, and how rights can be met, respected and assured.
  - ❖ Revise classroom and school rules which are based on rights and responsibilities. Examine or familiarise students with school rules (or discipline codes), behaviour and welfare policies, grievance procedures and practices.  
Retain and display for reference in core learning.
  - ❖ Create a shared definition for the term *harassment*. (Harassment is any act which is not wanted and offends or humiliates a person. Harassment can be repeated, or continued attacks or disturbance. Harassment is usually directed at a person who is considered different in some way. It may be based on a person's race, sex, age, homosexuality or disability.)
  - ❖ Conduct an informal survey about students' experiences of harassment in the school. Students individually complete a *Personal Reflection* survey (appendix 32), recording their responses to questions and listing strategies they might use if they have experienced harassment.  
Collate responses as appropriate. Ensure anonymity is maintained. Retain for reference in core learning.

### core learning

- ❖ Inform students that sometimes behaviours which cause mental or emotional harm to a person have not been considered 'harmful' or abusive enough to worry about in the past. Now these behaviours are not acceptable because we understand the harm they cause people. Sometimes it might be hard to ask for help if you are the target of these behaviours, because people may not believe the extent of the

### main idea

*Harassment is any act that is not wanted and offends or humiliates a person. It is usually directed at a person who is considered different in some way. Harassment is not acceptable behaviour in the school or community.*

harm or hurt you are experiencing and may not offer help. Sometimes people start to think that they just have to put up with this kind of abusive behaviour and don't ask for help. They may think that they have to get used to this behaviour and that it is part of their everyday life. Sometimes people are scared to ask for help because if they are not helped when they tell, the abuse might get worse. Read the following scenarios which describe the experiences of two individual students. Ask students to think about whether they have experienced this kind of hurtful abuse which is hard to talk about.

*Melanie was in Year 5. She enjoyed school and joined in most activities. Melanie was good at sport and maths.*

*Melanie had a group of close friends and at lunchtime they usually played basketball or went to environment club.*

*There were some boys at Melanie's school who also used the basketball courts. It was always a race at lunchtime to see who could get the best court first.*

*When Melanie and her friends got there first the boys would sit on the side lines watching them play. The boys would mock the way they played and laugh at their passes. They called out comments about the girls' underwear or breasts.*

*This never stopped, even when Melanie told the teacher.*

*Rae had lived in Australia with his family for only one year. He spoke two languages and since coming to Australia he was also learning to speak English.*

*Rae became very friendly with one boy in his class. This boy sometimes did some swimming training after school. He invited Rae to do some training with him. Rae met him down at the local swimming pool. Some other boys that Rae didn't know were there. They laughed at Rae and made him feel very awkward.*

*Whenever Rae went to the swimming pool, these boys always seemed to have a joke about him.*

*They made fun of his accent. They would pretend to be friends and then make jokes about his mother. A couple of times the boys ducked Rae and held him under the water for a long time. They said it was just good fun, nothing to get upset about. Rae felt humiliated and scared.*

Inform students that both examples are situations of harassment. Revise the definition of harassment. (Harassment is any act which is not wanted and offends or humiliates a person. Harassment can be repeated, or continued attacks or disturbance. Harassment is

usually directed at a person who is considered different in some way. It may be based on a person's race, sex, age, homosexuality or disability.)

Discussion based on the following questions:

- How is harassment similar to bullying? (They both involve behaviour which is unwelcome, intimidating, insulting, offensive and repeated. They can be physical, verbal or non-verbal, such as looks and gestures. People who are targeted can be reluctant to talk about it. Harassment on particular bases is against the law under the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act.)

Explain that bullying and harassment involve misuse of power. Bullying and harassment are not OK behaviours. They are unfair and do not respect the rights of others.

- ❖ Present students with the information page about harassment (appendix 33). It may be presented as an overhead projection or copied and distributed to groups.

Read through the information giving students the opportunity to clarify their understandings through questions.

The teacher may need to introduce the following points:

- sex-based harassment includes being called names about being homosexual (whether the person is homosexual or not).
- sex-based harassment has nothing to do with sexual attraction and genuine expressions of interest between a girl and a boy, as long as neither of them find the behaviour offensive.

Discuss the meaning of *equal opportunity* and how this is based on rights.

Complete the brainstorming and discussion activity in groups. Share responses as a whole class.

- ❖ The teacher or students re-read the scenarios to the whole class. Identify behaviours in each story that are forms of harassment.

Students form small groups. Using appendix 34 students examine one scenario and record responses to the following questions.

- What are some behaviours that are harassment?
- What strategies can Melanie (Rae) use when harassment occurs?

Share responses. As a whole class discuss:

- Which strategies would you find easy to use if you were in the same situation?
- Which strategies would you find more difficult? Why?
- Is it OK not to react to harassment? (Yes. However, if the harassment continues and embarrasses, hurts or frightens you, something should be done about it.)
- If someone harasses you, what can you do? (You have a choice in what you might do. You have the right to choose to do what is best for you personally.)





Compile a list of *Strategies to deal with harassment* using students' responses to the last question. Display as a chart in the classroom.

- *Harassment is defined as unwanted behaviour. It is*
- *important to include as a strategy 'tell the harasser that the*
- *behaviour is not wanted or not liked'. As in bullying, it is a*
- *good strategy to name the behaviour and ask for it to stop.*
- *eg "You're harassing me. I don't like it. I want you to stop."*
- *Then the harasser cannot excuse his or her behaviour by*
- *saying it wasn't intended to hurt, it was only fun or that the*
- *other person didn't seem to mind the behaviour. Refer to the*
- *section on bullying in 'Child Protection Education: Stage 2',*
- *page 67, for other related strategies.*

Discuss how some strategies may work better for different people in different situations. (eg Ignoring harassment may work best in the middle of a school assembly. Some people may prefer not to confront the person or people harassing them, but to seek help in other ways.)

The teacher reminds students that *anyone* can be the target of harassment and people should not feel ashamed or think they deserve it. Good strategies to deal with harassment are ones that help you ignore the harasser and keep you feeling confident in yourself. Everyone has a right to be an individual and to be respected. If you are hurt or worried about harassment you should talk to someone about it. Friends can support you and you are less likely to be harassed if you have your friends around you. If your own strategies don't work, you should seek help.

- ❖ Explain to students that harassment is behaviour that is taken seriously. There are laws in our community that make many forms of harassment a crime. Schools have rules and procedures that ensure that, if harassment occurs and is reported, action must take place to stop it.

Discuss how students have the right not to be harassed and they also have the responsibility not to harass others.

Identify the school's discrimination contact officer. Review the grievance procedures and practices within the school. Arrange an interview with the school's discrimination contact officer. Plan some appropriate questions to ask prior to the visit. Write a class report of the interview for publishing in the school newsletter.

Students might create a flow chart or a flyer or pamphlet to raise the awareness of other students about these processes.

- ❖ The teacher introduces some findings from the survey (carried out in field building) that indicate differences between and among girls and boys in their experiences of harassment at school. Discuss as a class group what might be done to change the levels of harassment in the school. Record some suggestions. Present these findings to the SRC.



## extension

- ❖ The teacher reads the following unfinished story:

*John was in Year 6. He enjoyed school and especially liked reading and drama. He had one or two close friends but didn't really belong to a group.*

*John spent lunchtimes in the library. Most of the Year 6 boys played games on the oval. Sometimes they invited him to play and joked and called him a 'sis' when he refused. John didn't mind too much because he knew it was part of a game that had gone on for years.*

*Although now that he thought about it, the jokes about being a 'sis' had changed a bit since he had blonde streaks put in his hair a month or so ago. John's cousin was a hairdresser and she had done them for him. Last week John had decided that the streaks didn't look so good since his hair had grown longer. On the weekend John had asked his cousin to cut the streaks out.*

*This week at school, things had suddenly changed. His hair was really, really short. His close friends seemed to be avoiding him. Other students looked at him as if he was a bit strange. When he was walking to the library a group of boys whistled at him and called him 'sexy legs'. Another boy deliberately bumped into him and then jumped away and said "I don't want to touch you, I might catch something!" John felt embarrassed and intimidated.*

*When he got to the library and opened his book, he saw that someone had written 'gay boy' inside the cover.*

Discussion based on the following questions:

- What are some of the behaviours in the story that are harassment?
- What was the harassment based on? (It is sex-based harassment. The boys assumed that John was homosexual.)
- Why might John find it difficult to take action against this kind of harassment? (He feels embarrassed about the behaviour. He may begin to worry that if he makes a fuss it might get worse. He might worry that other people might start to believe that he is homosexual. He might worry, because they are saying this, that he is homosexual.)
- What could John do? (John should choose a strategy that is best for him personally. He could name the behaviour, say he doesn't like it and ask it to stop. He could ignore the behaviour. If the harassment doesn't stop he should TELL someone about it.)
- Is this behaviour OK? (No. This is another form of harassment that is against the law in NSW. If it happens at school and is reported, schools must take action to stop it.)
- If John was homosexual would this make a difference? (No. It is against the law to harass people because they are homosexual or because you or someone else thinks they are homosexual.)





- *Harassment based on perceived homosexuality includes calling girls and boys 'lesbians' or 'gays'. Students need to know that these words are highly offensive as 'put-downs'.*
- *Teachers have a responsibility to challenge this behaviour if it happens at school.*
- *Sex-based harassment includes calling a boy names such as 'sissy', 'girl' or 'fairy' and calling a girl names such as 'butch' or 'lemon'. Use of such terms as 'put-downs' is against the law in NSW government schools.*

### conclusion

- ❖ Using appendix 35 as an overhead projection or enlarged chart, discuss the statements one at a time. Pose the questions:
  - Do these show fair and OK behaviour? Why not?
  - What effect might this behaviour have?
  - How would you feel if you experienced one of these statements?

Students informally investigate the kinds of play and interaction that take place between boys and girls in the playground during recess or lunch break for a set time daily for one week. Record their observations and discuss. Discuss ways that girls or boys may be picked on or harassed because of their gender.
- ❖ Examine the school discipline code and consider additional rules and consequences that might be strengthened or added. Examine the playground supervision roster and policy and plan how it might be changed to reduce levels of harassment in the school. Present class proposals to the principal and the school community, explaining why these changes might be considered.
  - *The effectiveness of these final activities can be enhanced with the involvement of the principal in teaching or team teaching the activities.*