

Different relationships

Key stage 2

Learning Intention:

- To be aware that there are different types of relationships, including marriage and those between family and friends.
- To identify behaviour and attitudes which contribute to maintaining friendships and relationships, including an understanding of consent.

Learning Outcome:

- To have explored some of the differences in relationships between friends and family.
- To have explored the concept of online relationships and whether these are true “friendships”.
- To be able to consider and discuss a range of family types including homosexual /lesbian parents, single parents, foster carers.
- To have considered the meaning of the word love and the variety of different meanings that it has.
- To have considered how other people feel in some situations and how this helps or hinders friendships.
- To have practised skills needed to maintain relationships, including the issue of consent.

Teacher Introduction:

Start by saying: Many people will have different ideas of what the word ‘relationship’ means. This lesson will help us to think about the term ‘relationship’ and examine what relationships we all have. It will also give us an opportunity to look at the word ‘love’ in the context of relationships and explore what we mean when this word is used. We need to remember our working agreement and to be kind and respectful to each other whilst we are thinking about these things.

Resources:

- Dictionary per group
- Paper, pens, crayons
- Small pieces of paper or card
- Paper heart shape or piece of paper printed with a heart outline per child
- Sample Agony Aunt/Uncle letter
- Traffic Light Cards

Activity 1:

Ask the children what the word 'relationship' means. Brainstorm as many words as possible to describe the various relationships that may exist between people. Scribe a list and ensure that all relationships are included, such as same-sex parents, step-siblings, aunts, cousins, friends and so on.

Ensure that children understand the difference between relatives and non-familial relationships.

Also useful for: FP, CP, RR, OR

Activity 2:

Give each child a piece of paper. Explain the conventions of how family trees are drawn.

Ask each child to draw his or her own immediate family tree. Help the children to recognise the relationships within their family circle (for example that their father's brother is their uncle). Label each person with both their name and their relationship status, such as "cousin. If any children are looked after or adopted you may wish to use a fictitious or well-known family, like the British Royal family, instead.

Also useful for: FP, CP, RR, OR

Activity 3:

Ask the children to think about their family, including relatives they have not included on their family tree. Explore the following questions, reassuring the children that it is okay to be honest. Again, if there are looked after children in the class you may wish to make this a more general activity rather than focus on

- Do you like everyone in your family?
- Are all family members a friend?
- Are some of your friends closer to you than members of your family?

Also useful for: FP, CP, RR, OR

Activity 4:

Ask the children to consider the following questions and scribe their responses:

- Is everyone we meet a friend?
- What makes a friend different to an acquaintance or member of our family?
- Is everybody in our family a friend?

Individually, ask each child to think about what makes a good friend, and to write a list of qualities that friends should have.

Ask them then to choose one quality from their list that they consider the most important. Ask them to write it on a separate piece of paper or card. In pairs ask the children to compare their choices and discuss why they have chosen that quality above the others.

Ask the pair to find another pair to form a group of 4 and to discuss the same, then the same with a group of eight.

Ask the groups of eight to look at the qualities they have chosen and to arrange them in order of importance. Children may choose to do this by putting the cards in a line, or in a 'diamond 9' with the most important card at the top, followed by the next two, the next three and so forth. As a class discuss the differences and the similarities between the card selections.



Ask the children to feed back. Use their answers to explore any questions which arise, such as whether some friends need different things from us than others – for instance, if our friend is disabled or struggles to understand things in the same way as we do.

Also useful for: FP, CP, RR, OR

Activity 5:

(Note: This activity is designed to raise key issues: the risks of talking to strangers online; the risks of sending images; cyberbullying; whether someone we talk to online is a “friend”; and the issue of consent. Teachers can find out more about these problems by visiting www.thinkuknow.co.uk/teachers or www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents)

Ask the children if they use the internet to talk to their friends. Scribe a list of the apps and websites they use to do this.

Put the children into groups and give each group one of the following scenarios:

“I am 10. I like using a game site and I have lots of friends on it. Some of them are people from my class and some are people in America who talk to me while I am on the site. One boy in New York was really nice to me. He dared me to send him some pictures of me in my underwear. I sent the pictures and now he says he will tell my mum unless I send him some more. I don’t want to.”

“I am 9. I used my phone to send my friend a picture of me looking really silly. Now we have had an argument and he says he is going to send the silly picture to everyone at school, even though he knows I don’t want him to. Everyone will laugh at me and be mean.”

“I am 10. I found some embarrassing pictures on my sister’s laptop. She has been mean to me so I sent them to her friends, even though I knew she wanted them to be a secret. Now her friends are laughing at her and the photos have been sent all over our school. She is very unhappy.”

Ask the groups to discuss the scenarios and to feedback the responses. Explore the emotions they think the writers had at different stages in the story. Ensure the class understands key messages:

- Someone we don't know is a stranger, whether this is in real life or on the internet. Just as we would not share secrets or pictures with a stranger in the park, so we should not do so online.
- The moment we put something online we cannot get it back and we cannot control what happens to it.
- The way we feel can make us do something unkind or risky without thinking about it.
- We should always check before sending something about other people, to make sure they give their consent.
- We have the right to say no to things, and our feelings should be respected by others.
- We can always get help with online problems by going to www.thinkuknow.co.uk or by calling ChildLine.

Also useful for: FP, CP, RR, OR

Activity 7:

Ask the children what they think makes good advice – for example:

- that it is neutral
- that it sees all points of view
- that it is honest
- that it makes constructive suggestions
- that it is polite
- that it is realistic

Scribe the list of responses.

Explain what an Agony Aunt or Uncle is, using the sample below to illustrate the concept. Ask one child to read out the letter from “Molly”.

Dear Agony Aunty Alice,

My mum gets really cross with me because my room is a mess. Mum and I used to keep it tidy together but now I am in year 5 I would rather go out and play after doing my homework than tidy up. Mum got a job last year and now says she has to go to work all day and can't do it for me. I don't like it when she is cross with me because it makes me upset. I love my mum and want to make her proud of me but I still want to be able to see my friends. What should I do?

From Molly, aged 10

Before reading the response, ask the children what kind of advice they would give Molly. Scribe their ideas, then read out the Agony Aunt's response:

Dear Molly,

Lots of children have this sort of problem. It happens when we grow up and need to start taking more responsibility for ourselves.

Your mum might not understand how upset you are, but you need to remember that she is working hard and is probably tired. Have you told her how it makes you feel when she shouts? Try telling her calmly – find a nice peaceful time and say something like “Mum, I know I need to do more to help you but please don’t shout at me because it makes me very unhappy. Can we talk about how we can both make this better?”

Maybe you could agree that you will spend ten minutes every night tidying up. This means that you will be able to keep your room nice but still have lots of time to play afterwards. Your mum can agree that she won’t shout at you as long as you stick to your part of the agreement. I hope this means that you and your mum can have a happy time together.

From, Agony Aunty Alice.

Ask the children how the response matches their ideas of what makes good advice, and whether they agree with the Agony Aunt’s reply. Would they add anything else?

Ask the children why they think someone might prefer to write to a stranger in a newspaper or website rather than talk to someone face to face.

Also useful for: FP, UE, CF, RR, MW

Activity 8:

Ask the children to think of a time when they had an argument with a friend. Emphasise that this needs to be something they feel safe talking about – for instance, make sure it is not an on-going dispute, one that involves several children, or one that has caused arguments amongst parents. Teachers should be prepared for this activity to bring up issues of online conflict, such as comments made on social media. Topics in the Being Safe section deal with online issues in more detail.

Alternatively, use one or more of the following scenarios:

- Tomaz was giggling during a lesson because Luke had told him a joke. The teacher told Tomaz to stay in at playtime but didn’t realise that Luke had made him laugh. Tomaz now thinks that Luke should have told the teacher about telling the joke so he could have missed play too, but Luke says it was not his fault that Tomaz got into trouble. Now they are not talking to each other.
- Milly borrowed Subira’s favourite top to wear to a party. At the party, she spilled a drink on the top and the stain will not wash out. Milly’s mum has said she will buy Subira a new top at the weekend, but Subira is still very upset and says Milly should have been more careful. Milly thinks Subira is being silly as she will soon have a new top and can still wear the old one.
- Simon has been playing Fortnite with a player called EaglesFan1. They have played for a while and Simon really liked their chats and games together. Now he has found out that

EaglesFan1 is in fact Anna, a girl in the year below him at the same school. Simon thinks Anna should have told him that she was EaglesFan1. He got very cross when he saw Anna at school and said that girls shouldn't play Fortnite or like football. Anna says she was only being careful, as they had learned at school not to give out personal information, and that it's fine for girls and boys to like different things. When Simon got cross, she got upset and told him he was rubbish at Fortnite anyway.

Ask the children to think about the reasons for the argument, reminding them that they need to be honest about their own actions as well as other people's. Help the children to explore how their own backgrounds and experiences may affect their reactions.

Ask each child to write a letter to an Agony Aunt or Uncle about their argument or your chosen scenarios. Collect all the letters and distribute them at random, asking the children to take on the role of Agony Aunt or Uncle and to write a reply to the letter they have been given.

Return the original letters and the replies to their authors and let the children read the advice they have been given. Ask the children if they think the advice is helpful, reassuring them that they can talk to you if they are worried or upset about their problem (or anything else that may be affecting them).

Also useful for: FP, UE, CF, RR, OR, MW

Activity 9:

Ask the children what they think are the top 5 pieces of advice for maintaining friendships. In groups, ask them to create a poster to display these "top tips" and put the finished work on the wall around school.

Also useful for: FP, UE, CF, RR, OR, MW

Plenary:

Remind the children what they have learnt:

- They have explored different types of relationships.
- They have thought about what makes a good friend.
- They have discussed the difference between friendships and other sorts of relationships.
- They have talked about the different meanings of the word 'love'.
- They have thought about ways to solve dilemmas involving relationships.

Debriefing activity:

Ask the children to remember the top tips for maintaining friendships, and to think about a time when they have done something good for a friend. Allow them to reflect on this and how it made them feel, then close the session.

Differentiation for SEND:

These activities should be suitable for all children, although those on the autistic spectrum may require additional support with interpretation and expression of emotions, particularly those of other people. Activity 4 can be expanded to explore the ways in which we may need to show extra qualities, such as empathy or patience, with friends who are affected by learning or physical disabilities.