

## Unit 4 Support networks

### About the unit

In this unit children identify positive things about themselves, investigate the qualities they value in others and learn about the skills of developing and maintaining friendships. They learn to identify people in their support network that they can ask for help, as well as sources of information outside their immediate network and support such as local and national organisations. The activities in this unit can help smooth the transition to secondary school as children's perceptions of their friendships and relationships change and develop.

This unit links to unit 1 'Special people'.

The activities in this unit are designed to be flexible so that they can be adapted for the class, the whole school or individual pupils. It is important to establish clear ground rules for these activities (see the *Teacher's handbook* for more details).

This unit supports the Every Child Matters aims 'be healthy', 'stay safe', 'enjoy and achieve' and 'make a positive contribution'.

### Where the unit fits in

This unit addresses the following aspects of the key stage 2 non-statutory framework for PSHE and citizenship:

#### Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities

- 1b recognise their worth as individuals by identifying positive things about themselves and their achievements
- 1c face new challenges positively by collecting information, looking for help, making responsible choices, and taking action

#### Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

- 4a learn that their actions affect themselves and others, to care about other people's feelings and to try to see things from their points of view
- 4c are aware of different types of relationship, including marriage and those between friends and families, and to develop the skills to be effective in relationships
- 4g learn where individuals, families and groups can get help and support

#### Breadth of opportunities

- 5a take responsibility
- 5b feel positive about themselves
- 5e meet and talk with people
- 5f develop relationships through work and play
- 5g consider social and moral dilemmas

### Expectations

Expectations should be adapted according to the needs, age, key stage and maturity of the children. By the end of this unit most children should be able to:

- recognise and describe their skills, interests and achievements
- identify their level of confidence in asking others for help, both at the beginning and end of the unit
- describe what they value in others and some of the ways of maintaining and developing friendships and other relationships
- identify people in their immediate support network and beyond, and those that they can ask for help in certain situations
- identify possible risks in seeking support and know how to recognise and reduce these.

# Teaching activities

## 1 Interests and skills

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to value their individuality and personal achievements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before starting the activities in this section, ask the children to write down a number between 1 and 10 to show how much they know about where, when and whom to ask for help. One represents not knowing very much at all and 10 represents knowing a lot. Then ask them to write down a reason for the number they have chosen, <i>eg I need to know more about different places that give information and help, I have lots of family members that I can talk to.</i></li> <li>Children complete the sentence 'Something I enjoy and/or am good at is...'. (This activity could take place in circle time – see Appendix A in the <i>Teacher's handbook</i> for more on this teaching approach.)</li> <li>Give each child a piece of paper containing an outline of a shield, divided into four boxes. At the top of the shield, ask them to write their name and design a crest for themselves that represents their interests and skills. In each of the four boxes ask them to draw and write about one of their skills or interests. They can share their shield with a partner and identify similarities and differences.</li> <li>Set aside some time in the week when individual children can talk to the class and answer questions about an interest they have. They could also bring in objects from home that are important to them.</li> </ul>	<p>Children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluate what they know about where, when and how to seek help</li> <li>recognise and describe their own skills and interests</li> <li>talk or write about their achievements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some children find it difficult to say, draw or write positive things about themselves. It is important not to put children under pressure if they feel this way. (See 'Handling sensitive and controversial issues' in Section 2 of the <i>Teacher's handbook</i>.)</li> <li>These activities provide an opportunity to discuss our individuality but also to recognise that we may have interests and skills in common.</li> <li>Using ICT: when producing the shield some children may prefer to use ICT rather than drawing by hand.</li> <li>Agree clear ground rules for how to behave when somebody is talking about something personal to them. (See 'Setting ground rules' in Section 2 of the <i>Teacher's handbook</i> for more details.)</li> </ul>

# Teaching activities

## 2 What makes a friend?

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ to identify what they value in others</li> <li>■ to recognise behaviour and attitudes that contribute to maintaining friendships and relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Make a class list of words that describe a person in terms of personality, <i>eg fun, confident, shy</i>. Children could think about a well-known person, a member of their family or characters from books.</li> <li>■ Play the game 'I would like...to sit next to me because...'. One person asks another to come and sit next to them, giving positive reasons. Encourage the children to think about positive aspects of a person's personality from the list they developed above or in terms of what they do for them or others, <i>eg is kind to me, makes me laugh, helps other people when...</i>. Continue this for four or five turns, then discuss with the children how they feel, both when they are choosing someone and when they are being chosen.</li> <li>■ Ask the children to complete the sentence 'A friend is...'. Hold a whole-class discussion about what a friend is and does, about the relationship between friends and how it feels to be a friend. Ask the children to describe different types of friend and the differences between them, <i>eg best friend, family friend, new friend, pen friend</i>.   <p>Prompt with questions, <i>eg What do you like about your friends? What is the difference between a friend and a best friend? Do we have to share the same likes and dislikes as our friends? How can we make sure friendships still work when we like different things? Write up responses as a word map on the board.</i></p> </li> <li>■ Ask the children, in pairs, to design a poster with the title 'My ideal friend'. This should be based on the qualities they would look for in an ideal friend, and not portray someone that they already know. Ask children, in small groups, to make two lists on big pieces of paper. On list 1 they record their ideas about what causes problems with friendships or stops them working, <i>eg distance, new people arriving, different opinions</i>. On list 2 they record what they and others can do to help make friendships last, <i>eg talking and listening to each other, sticking up for each other, making up if we fall out</i>. Ask groups or individuals to list times when they have or haven't done these things.</li> </ul>	<p>Children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ describe what they value in others</li> <li>■ describe what is meant by a range of terms relating to friendships and relationships</li> <li>■ describe some of the factors involved in maintaining and sustaining friendships and other relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ It is important to monitor this activity so that children don't just choose their friends to sit next to them.</li> <li>■ Year 6 children may want to think about when they move on to year 7 and what they might do to sustain current friendships as they change schools.</li> <li>■ Children may choose to share details about relationships at home, including divorce or separation, domestic violence, bereavement. It is important to be prepared with responses consistent with school policy in these areas.</li> <li>■ The reason for using a fictional friend rather than a real one is to avoid any children being left out of appearing on the posters.</li> </ul>

# Teaching activities

## 2 What makes a friend? (continued)

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
Children should learn:		Children:	

These could be shared with the rest of the class. Discuss how these ideas can be applied to their relationships with other people in their networks (see 'Who can help us?' in this unit). As a class, think about how stable relationships can be maintained between adults.

- To bring together this work, the children could make lists (individually, in groups or as a class) of the qualities and skills needed to sustain friendships and relationships.

# Teaching activities

## 3 Who can help us?

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Children should learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ to identify who is in their support network and how their network has changed and developed</li><li>■ how to talk to people in their support network and ask for help</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Ask each child to draw a network diagram of people special to them. To do this they write their name in a box at the centre of the paper with branches coming out from the box. At the end of each branch they create another box containing the name of a special person. Coming out from each of those boxes they put a series of lines where they write about why that person is special to them. They draw lines between their special people to show any links in the network. Later in the term the children could reflect on any changes to their network, adding any new people and deleting/writing about people who have left it.</li><li>■ Children work individually to write a scenario in comic-strip form about a time when they needed or might need help. They should identify somebody from their network to talk to in such a situation and show how to approach and talk to them.</li><li>■ Tell the children that they may need to be sensitive to other people's feelings or circumstances when asking for help. Ask the children to work in groups to list difficulties that there might be in talking to someone, <i>eg they are too busy, they are sad themselves, they live far away</i>. Then ask them to list ideas for overcoming these difficulties, <i>eg writing a letter, asking for a time later in the day</i>. Each group could share their difficulties and ideas for resolving them.</li></ul>	<p>Children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ identify people in their support network and describe why they are special to them</li><li>■ demonstrate that they know how to ask for help and support</li><li>■ identify whom to ask for help in certain situations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Children may have had earlier experience of considering and recording their networks, which they could reflect upon here.</li><li>■ When updating the network diagram, children may want to include difficult changes such as divorce or bereavement. Be sensitive to this possibility.</li></ul>

# Teaching activities

## 4 Where can we find support?

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Children should learn:</p>		<p>Children:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ how, when and where to find support when the people in their network cannot help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Discuss the fact that sometimes there are problems or issues that somebody in our network can't help with, <i>eg they don't have knowledge or expertise in that area</i> or that children feel they can't talk about with somebody they know.</li> <li>■ Around the classroom, put up four large sheets of paper with the headings 'About school', 'About home', 'About friendships', 'About health'. In pairs, the children record on sticky notes an idea of a problem somebody might need to get help or support for, and stick the notes under the appropriate heading. Once everyone has identified an issue, the whole class should read the posters.</li> <li>■ Make a class list of places and people where children and families could go to find out how to get support for these issues, <i>eg doctor's surgery, library, school nurse, teacher, internet.</i></li> <li>■ Develop a case study of a child the same age as the class who has a problem, <i>eg health needs, a problem at home, difficulties with school work.</i> Make sure that the examples could relate to boys and girls. You or another adult could hot-seat the character. Ask the class to share these feelings and then write them around the edge of a circle (which means that no feeling looks more important than another). Ask the children for suggestions of how the person could get help with their problem.</li> <li>■ As a whole class, compile an 'internet risks' list. Ask the children to work in small groups to produce suggestions for an internet safety code. This could be compiled as a class, made into posters, displayed around the school and sent home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ identify some sources of support outside their immediate networks</li> <li>■ identify an appropriate source of support for a particular issue</li> <li>■ identify possible risks in seeking support and how to manage these</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Make sure children understand that they should not contact unknown people or organisations (particularly on the internet) without adult support. Explain also that there are organisations that exist to look after children's welfare, both locally and nationally.</li> <li>■ You may want to investigate the impact on friendships and relationships of chat rooms and electronic communications. Learning to form and manage relationships that don't involve physical contact requires new skills, <i>eg recognising any clues in online behaviour and language in order to stay safe.</i></li> <li>■ The Home Office <i>thinkuknow</i> website provides guidance for children and parents on internet safety. Teachers should also be aware of their school's policy on safe internet use.</li> </ul>

# Teaching activities

## 4 Where can we find support? (continued)

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Points to note
Children should learn:		Children:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Repeat the first activity in this unit, where the children gave themselves a number relating to how much they knew about where, when and whom to ask for help. Ask them to reflect on what they felt at that time and whether the number has changed now. If it has, they record the new number and write next to it the reason why it has changed, eg <i>I have practised asking for help, I have ideas of how to find times when my mum can talk with me.</i></li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Link with citizenship: scheme of work unit 4 'People who help us'.</li><li>■ Make sure that children have access to the contact details for ChildLine and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) as a backup (see 'Resources'). These should be displayed where children can see them.</li></ul>

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## Links with other subjects

### RE non-statutory national framework

#### Experiences and opportunities

3p considering a range of human experiences and feelings

## Resources

- BBC: *Kids' health* – a website with information about how the mind and body work, with activities and suggestions on improving school and home life
- ChildLine – free confidential helpline for children and young people in the UK (telephone 0800 1111). The ChildLine website contains information about CHIPS (ChildLine in Partnership with Schools)
- Home Office: *thinkuknow* – a website that provides guidance for children and parents on using the internet safely
- National Children's Bureau (NCB) – promotes the voices and interests of children and young people across all aspects of their lives
- National Healthy Schools Programme – helps schools develop a whole-school approach to promoting health and well-being. This makes sure that what is taught in the classroom is reflected and supported by the school ethos and environment. For more details see the *Wired for health* website
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) – a national children's charity campaigning for child protection (telephone 0808 800 5000, email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk))
- Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) – offers evaluation and monitoring services to those concerned with the health and social development of young people
- Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) – a curriculum resource from the Primary National Strategy. This unit links to the 'Relationships' and 'Getting on and falling out' themes in the SEAL curriculum materials

- *Teachernet* – contains case studies of sex and relationship education practice across a range of schools, and includes information on provision of sex and relationship education to pupils with special educational needs
- *Wired for health* – this website contains information for teachers and healthy schools coordinators on health issues. It includes four separate websites for pupils of different ages

The website addresses of these resources are on the PSHE pages of the QCA website ([www.qca.org.uk/pshe/](http://www.qca.org.uk/pshe/)).

Care should be taken when encouraging children and young people to access websites.