LESSON 1

Healthy Relationships

Ages 12–15

Lesson 1. Healthy Relationships

Ages

12–15

Learning Objectives

Cadets and JCRs will be able to:

- Identify the qualities of a healthy relationship (Activities 1, 2, and 3).
- Learn strategies to resist peer pressure (Activity 3).
- Develop a personal safety plan (Activities 1, 2, and 3).

Facilitators have three activities from which to choose in the body of this lesson. Each activity ranges from 15–20 minutes in length. Time required for the introduction is 3–5 minutes, and time required for the conclusion is 5–10 minutes.

Learning Tools and Materials

If audiovisual equipment is not available, handouts could be produced from the slides, or the information could be displayed on a flip chart or white board.

Slide deck:

- Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship
- Ways to Resist Peer Pressure
- Look, Listen, Link, Live©
- Kids Help Phone
- Community Resources

Handouts:

- See, Hear, Feel
- Peer Pressure Scenarios
- Gabriel's Story
- Support Circles
- Safety Plan

Lesson Preparation

Introduction

- Nil.

Activity 1. Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship

- Set up audiovisual equipment and cue slides (or alternative way to display information):
  - Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship.
- Gather one piece of flip chart paper for each group.
- Gather felt markers for each group.

Activity 2. See, Hear, Feel

- Set up audiovisual equipment and cue slides (or alternative way to display information):
  - Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship.
- Print a copy of the See, Hear, Feel handout for each participant.
- Ensure participants have a pen or pencil.

Activity 3. Dealing with Peer Pressure

- Set up audiovisual equipment and cue slides (or alternative way to display information):
  - Ways to Resist Peer Pressure.
- Print a copy of the Peer Pressure Scenarios handout for each participant.
- Ensure participants have a pen or pencil.

Conclusion

- Set up audiovisual equipment and cue slides (or alternative way to display information):
  - Look, Listen, Link, Live©;
  - Kids Help Phone; and
  - Community Resources.
- Fill in the Community Resources presentation slide with local agency numbers and helplines.
- Print required number of copies of handouts:
  - Gabriel's Story;
  - Support Circles; and
  - Safety Plan.

Introduction

Estimated Time

3–5 minutes

Review the following safety guidelines at the start of the lesson:

- Participate as you feel comfortable.
- Maintain confidentiality when discussing someone else's experiences.
- Listen when others are speaking.
- If you are uncomfortable with the topic or discussion, you have permission to leave the room for a break. An adult will check up on you.

Healthy relationships are very important in our lives because they help improve our mental and physical well-being. They also help us do better in school, have better friendships, feel more confident, and provide us with the support we need when we are having a bad day. In this lesson, we are going to talk about what makes a relationship healthy.

Read the following scenario out loud to the participants to facilitate a quick discussion on the topic.

Gabriel has just moved with his family, and they are new to the community. He has not had a positive experience at school as a group of older boys has been making fun of him and throwing garbage in his locker. He has dreaded going to school every day.

His parents suggested he join the cadet / JCR program to meet new people. His first meeting is tonight, and he feels excited. At the same time, he feels nervous and lacks confidence. During the break, all the cadets / JCRs gather together to chat, and Gabriel does not feel comfortable enough to join them. One of the cadets / JCRs, Lucas, notices Gabriel is alone and invites him to join the group.

Is the relationship between Gabriel and Lucas a healthy relationship? Why or why not?

Answer:

Yes. Lucas showed empathy and support to Gabriel. "Empathy" is the ability to understand and share how someone else is feeling by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation. Lucas saw Gabriel was alone and tried to include him. Gabriel probably felt welcomed by the group.

We will be doing an activity to help explore and better understand healthy relationships.

Activity 1
Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship

Estimated Time

15–20 minutes

1. Ask the participants to think about what makes a relationship healthy. To help them reflect in preparation for the activity, read aloud or post one or more of the questions below:

   a. What qualities would you look for in a friend?
   b. What makes your relationships with adults feel healthy?
   c. What characteristics are important in your dating relationships?
   d. If you are unsure what a healthy relationship looks like, think about how you would want to be treated in a relationship. What would be important to you?

It is important to note that some participants may not know or understand what a healthy relationship is and how it works. This could be the first time they have talked about such life skills. They may need extra time to brainstorm, and / or they may need you to provide concrete examples.

2. Divide the participants into small groups (four or fewer participants per group). Distribute one piece of flip chart paper and felt markers to each group. Have them list their top ten characteristics of a healthy relationship on the flip chart paper.

3. Go around the room and have each group share some examples from their list.

4. Display the Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship content, using the presentation slide or the alternative method you have prepared. Use the following speaking notes to review each characteristic. Ask the participants for examples of what each characteristic would look like in their different relationships.

   "Respect" means acting in a way that shows you care about someone's feelings and well-being. When we are in an environment that is respectful, we feel safe and are more likely to be our true, genuine selves.

   Having "trust" involves having confidence in someone and knowing that they will be there for you.

   "Healthy communication" means each person in a relationship can express their needs, expectations, and boundaries.

   "Conflict resolution" is being able to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement in a fair, open,
   and respectful way.

   "Independence" means making choices and decisions outside of a relationship, such as doing an activity even if your friends are not interested in it.

   A healthy relationship should be "fun." You enjoy time together and look forward to hanging

out with that person.

Being “supportive” is part of a healthy relationship. Your friends should be able to ask you for help when they need it. You should be able to count on your friends for help when you need it.

In friendships based on “equality”, everyone feels that they have the power to make decisions and freely state their opinions; are safe to share their feelings; and are respected. People feel they can be their genuine, authentic selves.

In a healthy relationship, you should feel comfortable; “safe”; and not threatened by violence, bullying, or harassment.

“Empathy” is the ability to understand and share how someone else is feeling by imagining what it would be like to be in that person’s situation.

“Respecting personal boundaries” involves listening to others and respecting their limits and their expectations for how they want to be treated in a relationship.

5. Is every relationship in your life going to have all the characteristics we talked about?

   Allow the participants time to answer.

   All our relationships are different, so some require different characteristics than others. For example, your relationship with your friend is going to be different than your relationship with a parent or caregiver. Not all our relationships are going to have all the characteristics that we talked about, and that is okay. Some of your relationships may need work or may need help from others to make them healthy and safe.

Activity 2
See, Hear, Feel

Estimated Time

15–20 minutes

1. Healthy relationships are very important in our lives. We have relationships with our families, friends, peers, teachers, leaders, dating partners, communities, online friends, and online acquaintances. We are going to talk about what makes a relationship healthy.

It is important to note that some participants may not know or understand what a healthy relationship is and how it works. This could be the first time they have talked about such life skills. They may need extra time to brainstorm, and / or they may need you to provide concrete examples.

2. Have the participants brainstorm a list of characteristics that make a relationship healthy. To get them started, write down “empathy” (from the introductory scenario) as the first item on the list. Have them call out their examples as you write them on flip chart paper. Display the Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship content, using the presentation slide or the alternative method you have prepared. Use the following speaking notes to review each characteristic.

“Respect” means acting in a way that shows you care about someone’s feelings and well-being. When we are in an environment that is respectful, we feel safe and are more likely to be our true, genuine selves.

Having “trust” involves having confidence in someone and knowing that they will be there for you.

“Healthy communication” means each person in a relationship can express their needs, expectations, and boundaries.

“Conflict resolution” is being able to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement in a fair, open, and respectful way.

“Independence” means making choices and decisions outside of a relationship, such as doing an activity even if your friends are not interested in it.

A healthy relationship should be “fun.” You enjoy time together and look forward to hanging out with that person.

Being “supportive” is part of a healthy relationship. Your friends should be able to ask you for help when they need it. You should be able to count on your friends for help when you need it.

In friendships based on “equality”, everyone feels that they have the power to make decisions

and freely state their opinions; are safe to share their feelings; and are respected. People feel they can be their genuine, authentic selves.

In a healthy relationship, you should feel comfortable; “safe”; and not threatened by violence, bullying, or harassment.

“Empathy” is the ability to understand and share how someone else is feeling by imagining what it would be like to be in that person’s situation.

“Respecting personal boundaries” involves listening to others and respecting their limits and their expectations for how they want to be treated in a relationship.

3. The cadet and JCR programs are designed to offer well-organized activities for youth and to create an environment that is safe, fun, and challenging. To apply what we talked about, let us look at what a healthy cadet / JCR environment looks, sounds, and feels like.

4. I would like you to think about where you gather for cadet / JCR activities and all the different people with whom you interact. What do you see, what do you hear, and how do you feel in this space? Think about the different characteristics that we reviewed on the presentation slide. What are some examples of healthy behaviours?

5. Divide the participants into small groups (four or fewer participants per group). Distribute a copy of the See, Hear, Feel handout to each participant.

6. This handout is divided into three sections that represent seeing, hearing, and feeling. In your group, list examples of what you see, hear, and feel when participating in a healthy cadet / JCR activity.

> You can do this as a large group brainstorm and fill in the handout together.

7. The following table provides some examples of possible answers for each of the senses.

8. Go around the room and have each group share examples from each of the three columns.

9. Ask the groups the following questions:

See	Hear	Feel
A clean facility	Laughter	Safe
Cadets / JCRs look comfortable being anywhere in the facility	Ideas and feelings are shared	Cared for
Cadets / JCRs and leaders welcoming new people	Compliments	Happy
No disrespectful or unwanted touching	People asking you how you feel and showing concern	Accepted and included

a. What do you like the best about your cadet / JCR program, and what makes it healthy?

Possible answers could include:

- We can trust each other.
- People respect each other's boundaries.
- People respect each other's boundaries.
- It is a safe place.
- We feel accepted and included.
- We have fun.
- We listen to each other.
- We work together.
- The leaders care about us and help us learn.
- We can ask the leaders for help.

b. What characteristics are missing or need improvement in your program?

c. What are some steps you can take to help work on the characteristics that need improvement?

Possible answers could include:

- welcoming new cadets / JCRs;
- being kind;
- being respectful;
- asking others if they need help; and
- standing up to bullying behaviour.

Optional: If time permits, have each group prepare a short role play about what makes their cadet or JCR program healthy. Ask for a few groups to conduct their role play for the larger group to see.

See, Hear, Feel

See	Hear	Feel

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Activity 3
Dealing with Peer Pressure

Estimated Time

15–20 minutes

1. In this activity, we are going to talk about peer relationships. Healthy relationships with peers and friends are very important. Belonging to a group of friends can be a great experience.

2. While having friends is a good thing, we can be influenced by our peers to fit in, to do what they or others are doing, or to have what others have. Sometimes, our friends may try to force us to do things we are uncomfortable doing. This is called “peer pressure”.

   “Peer pressure” is the feeling that you are being pushed toward making a certain choice (good or bad), usually by someone in your own age group—a “peer”. We generally want to be liked by our peers, so sometimes we give in to peer pressure because we are afraid of being rejected by others; we do not want to risk losing a friend; or, we are afraid of hurting someone’s feelings by saying no. We may not understand what is going on or how to get out of the situation, so we might go along with it to fit in.

3. There are some ways to help you resist peer pressure.

   Have the participants work in pairs and discuss the different strategies they have used to resist peer pressure. After a few minutes, go around the room and have each group share one strategy.

4. Display the Ways to Resist Peer Pressure content, using the presentation slide or the alternative display method you have prepared.

   ### Ways to Resist Peer Pressure:

   - Say “no” and let the person know you mean it.
   - Stand up straight, and make eye contact.
   - Say how you feel.
   - Do not make excuses.
   - Stick up for yourself.
   - Walk away from the situation.
   - Find something else to do with other friends.
   - Hang out with friends who will speak up and support you in resisting peer pressure.

5. Divide the participants into small groups (four or fewer participants per group). Distribute a copy of the Peer Pressure Scenarios handout to each group. Give the groups a few minutes to read the scenarios and to decide on the best response for each one.

6. Go around the room and have each group share their responses to one of the scenarios.

Optional: Have the participants role play their response to the Peer Pressure Scenario of their choice.

7. Ask the participants the following questions:

a. In the scenarios, you examined some different types of risky behaviour that can arise due to peer pressure. What are some other risky behaviours that a young person could be pressured into doing?

   Allow the participants time to answer.

   Possible answers could include:
   - stealing;
   - skipping school;
   - smoking;
   - bullying younger youth;
   - engaging in sexual acts at a party;
   - lying to family members;
   - daredevil stunts;
   - not abiding by the rules at the corps / squadron / patrol; and
   - social media pressure to engage in reckless behaviour, e.g., the “Tide Pod challenge”.

b. What could be the consequences of some of the actions we listed?

   Allow the participants time to answer.

   Possible answers could include:
   - embarrassment;
   - hurting friends and family members;
   - being expelled from school;
   - consequences at the corps / squadron / patrol;
   - being arrested and charged with a crime;
   - injury;
   - addiction;
   - poor health; and
   - death.

c. What will you do differently when faced with peer pressure in the future?

Peer Pressure Scenarios

Your friend asks to borrow your homework because they did not get around to doing it last night. They say, “Come on, I would do the same for you if you needed to copy my homework. The teacher will call home if they find out I have not done my homework again, and my parents will kill me."

You and your friend are shopping, and you do not have enough money for the earbuds you want. Your friend says, “Just take it! No big deal. The clerk is not even looking.”

You and your friend are hanging out with your 17-year-old cousin. Your cousin suggests that you all go outside to smoke a joint. Your friend says yes and tells you that everyone else is doing it.

You are at camp and another cadet / JCR asks you to sneak out at night after curfew. They have snuck in some alcohol and want you to go drink it with them.

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Conclusion

Estimated Time

5–10 minutes

Safety Planning

Distribute a copy of the Support Circles or Safety Plan handout to any participants who did not fill one out prior to the lesson. Have them fill in the required sections.

If the participants filled out the Support Circles or Safety Plan handout already, ask them to revisit the section in which they recorded safe people to talk to. Are these the same people they would talk to about their relationships? Allow them time to record any changes.

Intervention: How to Help

Look, Listen, Link, Live©: How to Help a Friend

1. We know that youth will reach out to their peers for help before they will talk to an adult. We want to give you information so you can support a friend or peer if they come to you for help with relationship problems.

2. Display the Look, Listen, Link, Live© content, using the presentation slides or the alternative method you have prepared.

This is a four-step model that we use to help a friend. Let us consider how we can help Gabriel from our scenario. We are going to review the scenario and help Gabriel using the Look, Listen, Link, Live© model.

Read the scenario out loud.

> You may distribute copies of the scenario (Gabriel's Story) to allow the participants to follow along, or you may put the scenario on a presentation slide.

Gabriel has just moved with his family, and they are new to the community. He has not had a positive experience at school as a group of older boys has been making fun of him and throwing garbage in his locker. He has dreaded going to school every day and is afraid of the boys.

His parents suggested he join the cadet / JCR program to meet new people. His first meeting is tonight, and he feels excited. At the same time, he feels nervous and lacks confidence. During the break, all the cadets / JCRs gather together to chat, and Gabriel does not feel comfortable enough to join them. One of the cadets / JCRs, Lucas, notices Gabriel is alone and invites him to join the group.

You have made friends with Gabriel and see him the next day in the hallway at school, pulling garbage out of his locker.

3. Have the participants go through the four steps of the Look, Listen, Link, Live© model by asking the questions below.

STEP 1: LOOK. In this step, we are looking for signs that a person is upset and in need of help?

What are the signs that tell you Gabriel needs help?

Possible answers could include:

- Gabriel is new to the community and does not know a lot of people and is often alone with no friends.
- He is being bullied by older boys in the school and is afraid.

STEP 2: LISTEN. In this step, we listen to the person without judgment.

How would you approach Gabriel to talk to him? What would you say?

Possible answers could include:

- Walk over to Gabriel at his locker and ask him if he is okay.
- Ask him what happened, and let him know that you are there to help.

STEP 3: LINK. In this step, we link the person to helping resources.

Where would you link Gabriel for help and support?

Possible answers could include:

- Offer to go with Gabriel to the principal's office to report what happened.
- Let Gabriel know that bullying is wrong and against school policy and you want to make sure he is safe.
- Connect Gabriel with other cadets / JCRs at school—they can sit with him at lunch and check in with him.
- Link Gabriel with the cadet or JCR leader for support.

STEP 4: LIVE. In this step, you take care of yourself and find healthy ways to cope. Helping a friend deal with a difficult situation can take a physical and emotional toll.

How would you take care of yourself, and what suggestions would you have for Gabriel?

Possible answers could include:

- Write down your feelings in a journal.
- Play your favourite music or sport.
- Exercise.
- Spend time with a pet.
- Watch videos.
- Go to a movie.
- Get outside and hunt or hike, and enjoy the outdoors.
- Get creative and bead, sew, or write poetry or music.
- Eat healthy.
- Talk to friends and family to help work through your own feelings about the situation.
- Encourage Gabriel to join some clubs at school to get to know more people and make friends.
- Continue to try to help Gabriel feel included at cadet / JCR training activities.

4. To summarize, display the Look, Listen, Link, Live© content, using the presentation slides or the alternative method you have prepared.

Closing Comments

- Healthy relationships are characterized by respect, trust, safety, and good communication.
- Everyone has the right to be safe, and there are people you can talk to if you need help or support. Some examples are: friends, caregivers, parents, foster parents, aunts, uncles, elders, cadet and JCR leaders, and school personnel.
- Display the Kids Help Phone content, using the presentation slides or the alternative method you have prepared.
- Display the Community Resources content, using the presentation slide or the alternative method you have prepared.

Gabriel's Story

Gabriel has just moved with his family, and they are new to the community. He has not had a positive experience at school as a group of older boys has been making fun of him and throwing garbage in his locker. He has dreaded going to school every day and is afraid of the boys.

His parents suggested he join the cadet / JCR program to meet new people. His first meeting is tonight, and he feels excited. At the same time, he feels nervous and lacks confidence. During the break, all the cadets / JCRs gather together to chat, and Gabriel does not feel comfortable enough to join them. One of the cadets / JCRs, Lucas, notices Gabriel is alone and invites him to join the group.

You have made friends with Gabriel and see him the next day in the hallway at school, pulling garbage out of his locker.

Using the Look, Listen, Link, Live© model, answer the following questions:

- STEP 1: LOOK. What are the signs that tell you Gabriel needs help?
- STEP 2: LISTEN. How would you approach Gabriel to talk to him? What would you say?
- STEP 3: LINK. Where would you link Gabriel for help and support?
- STEP 4: LIVE. How would you take care of yourself, and what suggestions would you have for Gabriel?

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