

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Statement of Commitment - Aspendale Gardens Primary School February 2023

Background

The Royal Commission into Family Violence identified the critical role that schools and early childhood education have in creating a culture of respect to change the story of family violence for future generations.

Respectful relationships education is a core component of the Victorian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 12.

Everyone in our community deserves to be respected, valued and treated equally. We know that changes in attitudes and behaviours can be achieved when positive attitudes, behaviours and equality are embedded in our education settings.

Respectful Relationships is about embedding a culture of respect and equality across our community. This approach leads to positive impacts on student's academic outcomes, their mental health, classroom behaviour, and relationships between teachers and students.

Together, we can lead the way in saying yes to respect and equality, and creating genuine and lasting change so that every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Aspendale Gardens Primary School is committed to implementing the Respectful Relationships initiative to promote and model respect and equality and to teach our students how to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence.

We are committed to:

- A whole school approach to school-based, primary prevention of gender-based violence
- Ongoing development of our school culture and environment embedding a culture of respect and equality
- Professional learning to support school leaders, teachers and other school-based staff
- Providing support and resources for staff and students
- Building relationships with the community, including prevention and response services, community groups and families
- Delivering social and emotional learning and respectful relationships education consistent with the Victorian Curriculum

Our school will:

- Through a cycle of continuous improvement, undertake an assessment and planning process to identify gaps and/or limitations in existing culture, policies, structures and practices including staff, student and families' feedback on respect and gender equality in our school
- Identify and use Respectful Relationships funding and other appropriate resources to implement key actions to promote respectful relationships and gender equality and prevent gender-based violence.
- Monitor and evaluate our progress in implementation of the whole school approach to the Respectful Relationships initiative.

We look forward to working with our school community on the implementation of the Respectful Relationships initiative.

Principal

Jonathan Baker

School Council President

Ash Williams

Respectful Relationship Leaders

Kelly Cornelius/Liam Murphy

The **Respectful Relationships program** supports schools and early childhood settings to promote and model respect, positive attitudes and behaviours. It teaches our children how to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence.

Topics

TOPIC 1: EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Emotional literacy can be defined as the ability to understand ourselves and other people. It includes the ability to understand, express and manage our own emotions, build empathy, and to respond appropriately to the emotions of others. Building a large vocabulary for emotions helps to increase emotional literacy and build self-awareness and empathy for others.

TOPIC 2: PERSONAL STRENGTHS

Children and young people need a vocabulary to help them recognise and understand strengths and positive qualities in themselves and others. This topic provides learning activities to build this vocabulary and to use it when discussing personal, social and ethical challenges. Research in the field of positive psychology emphasises the importance of identifying and using individual strengths. Social and emotional learning programs which use strength-based approaches promote student wellbeing, positive behaviour and academic achievement.

TOPIC 3: POSITIVE COPING

Learning activities in this topic provide opportunities for students to identify and discuss different types of coping strategies. When children and young people develop a language around coping, they are more likely to be able to understand and deliberately utilise a range of productive coping strategies and diminish their use of unproductive coping strategies. Students learn to extend their bank of coping strategies and benefit from critically reflecting on their own choices and being exposed to alternative options. Activities introduce students to the concept of self-talk and practice using positive self-talk to approach and manage challenging situations. Positive self-talk is a key strategy for coping with negative thoughts, emotions and events. It is associated with greater persistence in the face of challenge and can be learnt or strengthened through practise.

TOPIC 4: PROBLEM SOLVING

Problem-solving skills are an important coping strategy. The program provides a number of learning activities to develop students' problem-solving skills. The activities assist students to develop their critical and creative thinking skills, and to apply them to scenarios exploring personal, social and ethical dilemmas.

TOPIC 5: STRESS MANAGEMENT

Children and young people experience a range of personal, social and work-related stressors in their everyday lives. Activities within this topic have an explicit focus on teaching positive approaches to stress management. Assisting students to recognise their personal signs and symptoms of stress, and to develop strategies that will help them to deal with stress effectively, will help students cope with future challenges. The activities focus on the ways in which self-calming strategies can be used to manage stressful situations.

TOPIC 6: HELP-SEEKING

Learning activities in this topic are designed to help students discuss the importance of seeking help and providing peer support when dealing with problems that are too big to solve alone. This helps to normalise and de-stigmatise help-seeking behaviour. Scenario-based activities help students identify situations in which help should be sought, identify trusted sources of help, and practise seeking help from peers and adults.

TOPIC 7: GENDER AND IDENTITY

Learning activities within this topic assist students to challenge stereotypes and critique the influence of gender norms attitudes and behaviour. They learn about key issues relating to human rights gender identity and focus on the importance of respect within relationships. The activities promote respect for diversity and difference.

TOPIC 8: POSITIVE GENDER RELATIONS

Learning activities within this topic focus on building an understanding of the effects of gender-based violence and focus on the standards associated with respectful relationships. Students develop the skills needed to solve problems, set boundaries within relationships, and play an active role within the prevention of gender-based violence. They develop peer support and help-seeking skills that can be applied in response to various situations.