

# Teacher Resource Pack

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## CONTROL FREAK

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# Teacher Information and In-Class Activity Pack

**Performance Type:** Four actor forum theatre play

**Topic:** Relationship violence and controlling behaviour

**Duration:** 60-90 minutes, including active interventions after scripted play

**Audience Size:** Maximum of 60 students

**Age Group:** Years 9 to 12

**Content Warning:** Contains strong language and themes of relationship violence

## *Synopsis*

Control Freak engages young people to examine how gender roles and coercive control can affect behaviours within relationships, empowering them to build more equitable communities which foster healthy relationships.

Meet Gemma. She is young and madly in love with her boyfriend Brenn. It starts out with the small things like checking her texts and suggesting she change the clothes she's wearing before they go out. However, she soon finds herself with more than just an overly loving and passionate boyfriend - she finds herself trapped in an abusive relationship.

## *Concepts Addressed*

- Understanding coercive control and small-scale controlling behaviours
- Potential consequences of rigid gendered stereotypes and toxic masculinity
- Social norms that excuse violence against women
- Development of healthy and equitable relationships
- Role of the bystanders in calling out misogyny and disrespect
- How and where to find help

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

**Section 1** should be used prior to the performance. These activities are designed to introduce students to the concepts explored in the play to support their engagement with the performance.

**Section 2** is to be used on the day of the performance, reminding students of key topics and giving them an outline of how the performance will run, focusing them for the interaction with the performers.

**Section 3** is designed as a set of activities to extend the learning after watching the performance. These activities support the learning generated in the performance and solidify student's understanding of the topics.

## PLEASE NOTE

*Constable Care Child Safety Foundation invites schools to participate in pre- and post surveys to determine the impact that our incursion has had on students' knowledge, attitude and behavioural intent. If you would like to participate in this simple, completely anonymous in-class evaluation process, please contact us at [education@constablecare.com.au](mailto:education@constablecare.com.au) and we will send you the materials.*

# 01

## Introducing Key Concepts

In the days leading up to the performance we suggest you talk to students about what they are going to see on performance day as well as providing information to parents about the themes that students will be exploring in this production. Introducing students to the key concepts of the show through one or more of the in-class activities in this section will also help to enhance their understanding and engagement when taking part in the performance itself.

### *Domestic Violence: A National Emergency*

63 women in Australia were killed in 2015 as a result of domestic and relationship violence, spurring our Prime Minister to describe it as a national disgrace. Up to 49% of victims of family and domestic violence are aged between 20 and 34 years of age, a period when people are starting their first real jobs, getting married, and starting families. There is a real need to address this issue at an educational level to support young people embarking on their own relationships and family lives and to stop the cycle of violence.

### *Small Scale Controlling Behaviours*

The central element of healthy and unhealthy relationships explored in Control Freak, are small scale controlling behaviours. Behaviours that are intentionally, and sometimes unintentionally, perpetrated that upset an equal balance of power and manipulate someone into doing something they didn't want to do or have happen. Raising an awareness of these behaviours amongst young people, such as constant messaging, reading personal information without permission, controlling what you wear, speaking for you, is an integral part of supporting the students in developing healthy relationships.

### *Gender Roles and Expectations*

Contemporary research into the primary prevention of domestic violence highlights the high correlation between sexist and patriarchal attitudes towards women and the perpetration of abusive behaviours towards women. Control Freak explores students' expectations of men and women in relationships and what happens when these assumptions are not realised in reality.

### *Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships*

The core principal guiding our work with Control Freak is a healthy relationship. The show develops the students' knowledge and skills to form healthy relationships in the future – relationships that are built on respect, equality, compromise and trust. Healthy relationships can exist in all forms of relationships, not just romantic ones, and the ability to develop and maintain healthy interactions with all people is an essential skill that Control Freak seeks to develop.

## ***Respect and Empathy***

The practical pro social skills of respect and empathy are at the core of developing a healthy, respectful relationship. Control Freak explores these skills and supports the students in using them in practical scenarios to problem solve and work towards developing healthy relationships.

## ***Curriculum Links***

Control Freak and the related activities in this resource pack respond to two key elements of the Western Australian Syllabus and Australian National Curriculum. The theme of healthy relationships is a core component of the Year 9 and 10 'Personal, Social, and Community Health' branch of the Health and Physical Education syllabus. This performance and the related activities explore the many themes and issues that the syllabus covers, from building positive relationships, physical and mental health, to emotional self-regulation, and social risk management.

The performance of Control Freak and the activities in this resource pack are designed to engage students in vigorous discussion about complex and confronting issues. Through participating in these processes, students will be exploring and developing a myriad of skills outlined in the National Curriculum's 'General Capabilities' section. The 'General Capabilities' section of the new curriculum emerged from the Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goal's for Young Australians (2008) as a high priority for Australian schools. Our program supports teachers and students in addressing and skill building in the 'Personal and Social Capabilities', 'Ethical Understanding', and 'Critical and Creative Thinking' branches of these General Capabilities.

# 02

## Before the Show

This section of the resource pack outlines some key activities to complete with students prior to watching the performance. These activities are designed to develop critical discussion around the topic, explore essential themes of the performance, and upskill students so they are ready and able to participate in the interactive performance.

### **In Class Activity: Focus Questions for Discussion**

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- engage with and reflect on their own, peer and social understandings of healthy relationships in their contemporary society
- explore the prevalence/severity of domestic violence in Australia and the impact it can have on their lives
- develop an understanding of the key elements of healthy relationships and begin to raise their awareness of what an unhealthy relationship looks like

#### **Instructions**

Working with your class, support them to engage in discussion centred around the questions below. This should be seen as a diagnostic activity, developing a clear understanding of students' current perspectives and assumptions on the topic.

#### **Discussion**

1. What is a healthy relationship? List five key elements.
2. What is an unhealthy relationship? List five key elements.
3. How is abuse usually perpetrated in a romantic relationship?
4. How do you know when you are being manipulated? What does it look/feel/sound like?
5. How common is domestic violence in Australia?
6. Why do you think domestic violence occurs? What causes people to be abusive?
7. Does society expect that same things from men and women? Why/why not?
8. Is a world without domestic violence possible? How could we achieve that?

The above focus questions can be approached in a variety of ways, catering to the needs and learning styles of the class.

#### **Think Pair Share – Discussion**

1. Students are presented with one question at a time.

2. They are given 1 minute to think individually about the question and make notes.
3. Students pair up and discuss their thoughts, adding to their notes.
4. Pairs are called upon to share their thoughts with the group.

### *Dot Point Response – Written*

1. Students are given the list of questions and asked to create three key dot point ideas in response to each one.
1. A focus on individual work and time for thought should be given to allow students to reflect honestly on their own personal experiences and/or understandings of the issues.
2. Students are asked to share some of their ideas for each question.

### *Expert Groups – Written and Discussion*

1. Students are split into small groups (3 – 5) and the questions are divided up between groups.
2. Groups are then given time to research their questions in detail and prepare specific and factual responses to each question.
3. The groups then share their findings for the whole class, demonstrating for the larger group their new expert knowledge. Their answers should be recorded and collected by the teacher, to be used in a follow up activity after watching the performance.

## **In Class Activity: Follow the Hand**

Follow the hand is an activity used to generate discussion around power and control, personal experience of this control and its relation to a social setting. The activity challenges student's habitual patterns of thinking and allows for dynamic learning styles. Students will engage in a quick and light-hearted physical activity that puts them in a position of power and a position of dependence.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- develop a visceral and immediate experience of power relationships
- extend their self-awareness and personal understanding of power in their lives
- create a catalyst from which to discuss power and power relationships
- examine the complexity of illicit substance use and the importance of information, resilience and self-regulation

### **Set Up**

You will need:

- A clear and empty space with students in pairs

## **Instructions**

1. Students label themselves A and B
2. A places their hand 5 centimetres away from B's face.
3. A is to take B on a journey through the space by leading them with their hand
4. B's objective is to keep the same distance (5cm) between their nose and A's hand at all times.
5. A and B swap roles after 2 minutes.

## **Discussion**

- Which did you prefer, leading or following? Why?
- Can you think of a real-life example where that power play exists?
- How does this link activity link to small scale controlling behaviours, trust, compromise, and respect?

The discussion should assist students in recognising their own experience of the activity and power relations. The extension of the discussion should lead students to relate power relationships to their daily lives and then to abusive relationships.

## **In Class Activity: Typical Gender Profiles**

### **Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- develop an understanding of the preconceived assumptions about gender and societal roles.
- increase the knowledge of the expectation others have of their gender
- begin to identify correlations between gender assumptions and their behaviour within relationships

## **Instructions**

1. Students work in small groups according to the gender they most associate with.
2. Each group is to then create a list of five character traits that describe a common person of a different gender.
3. Groups then create an image of this character on a large sheet of paper and add the traits to the image
4. Students add five things that this character would look for in an ideal partner
5. Then list three examples of roles models this character would look up to
6. Repeat the process by completing a character profile on the gender of their own group
7. Once completed, groups should share their character profiles with each other and compare.

## **Discussion**

1. How do the character profiles compare and contrast? Why do you think that is?

2. Where do these assumptions of different genders come from? Can they be changed?
3. How well do you fit in or differ from the typical character profile of your gender?

## **In Class Activity: Relationship Storyboard**

### **Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- develop an understanding of what they, themselves, and their peers expect in a relationship
- begin to generate an understanding of the complexities of relationship expectations and the challenges involved in a healthy relationship
- explore the pro-social skills of empathy, creativity, perspective taking and compromise

### **Instructions**

Working in small groups, students are to construct two storyboards (scene by scene breakdown of a short story/short film) that represent (1) a typical relationship at their school, and then (2) an ideal healthy relationship that they would like.

The storyboard should consist of at least eight (8) scenes that include the following things:

- How the couple met
- What was it like when they first started dating?
- A happy day in their relationship
- A conflict where the two want different things
- A day when one of them feels stressed or sad
- A fight between the two
- A moment hanging out with friends
- A moment alone in private

The storyboard can be created in any way the group feels most comfortable. It could be drawn, written as scene descriptions, created on the computer, made into a screenplay, etc. Groups should present their storyboards to the class and engage in discussion that compare and contrast the stories that represent current relationships at school, and those that represent relationships that would like to have (use discussion questions below).

### **Discussion**

You will need:

- How are the current and ideal relationships different? Why?
- How were conflicts and fights handled in the ideal relationships? Do you think this actually happens in real life? Why/why not?
- What elements of your ideal relationships are healthy? Which are unhealthy, if any?
- How can you support people stuck in an unhealthy relationship move towards having a healthy relationship?

This section of the resource pack includes some information that should be given to the students before they watch the performance. This information explains how the session will run, what it will cover and what will be expected of the students. Delivering this information to the students empowers them to participate in the session and explore the ideas to the best of their ability.

## **Forum Theatre FAQ**

### ***What is Forum Theatre?***

Forum Theatre is a style of theatre developed in Brazil by Augusto Boal through his form of Theatre of the Oppressed. It began as a social revolutionary movement to empower the citizens in Brazil and South America to rise up against their oppressive governments. The objective of Forum Theatre is to empower the disempowered by breaking down experiences of oppression and generating options for change.

The style of theatre is interactive and revolves around the audience participating in discussion about the choices the characters make and providing new options to create alternate outcomes. It is a tool to create social change and deconstruct power relations in a hope to make positive differences in people's daily lives.

### ***How Does Forum Theatre Work?***

Forum Theatre performances are hosted by a person called the 'Joker'. This person facilitates the discussion between the stage and the audience. The company of actors present a short play of scenes that end in a crisis point, where change is desperately needed for the characters. It is here that the 'Joker' will turn to the audience for help, generating discussion and canvassing options for change that exist in the immediacy of the scenes. The Joker will engage the audience in a variety of probing questions and dialogue in order to develop their ideas into action on stage. The audience will influence and re-direct the course of action for the play, generating new endings for scenes. Members of the audience will also have a chance to play their ideas out on stage and discuss the success or failure of each option.

### ***What is Forum Theatre Aiming to Do?***

The objective of Forum Theatre is to develop ideas and skills to enact social change in the real world. Forum Theatre acts as a catalyst to generate new conflict resolution ideas and as a medium to practice implementing those ideas. Forum Theatre aims to combat oppression in a community, whatever form that may take.

Forum Theatre does NOT aim to give answers and solutions; rather it creates a platform for the community engaged in the show to build solutions. Forum Theatre is driven by the needs and demands of its audience, being a flexible and ever-changing show that reflects the responses of the people who engage with it. Forum Theatre rests on a 'need for change' existing in the audience - if there is no desire to change the ending of the crisis point, no solutions can be created.

### ***How Will the Forum Theatre Session Work?***

The scripted performance runs for 15 - 20 minutes, which is then followed by an interactive discussion, exploring the complexity and consequences of mental health issues amongst young people today. The actors and the Joker facilitate the discussion and create the chance for the audience to get up on stage, engage in debate and explore their ideas related to these issues within their community.

At the end of the session the actors will summarize the key concepts identified in this resource pack and encourage students to speak to relevant school staff and/or seek appropriate professional help if they are struggling with any issues related to the performance.

# 04

## After the Show

### **In Class Activity: Compare and Contrast Relationship Storyboards to Show**

#### *Learning Outcomes*

Students will:

- extend their understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships, and how they are developed in their own lives
- develop their critical reflection skills and work to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own community, driving towards creating options for change
- continue to develop their skills in creating and growing healthy relationships in their lives.

#### *Instructions*

1. As a whole class, students should create a dot point timeline of Brenn and Gemma's relationship from Control Freak. Identify key moments in their relationship and key moments where you observed unhealthy behaviours.
2. Working in small groups, students should compare the storyboards they create prior to the performance with the events of Brenn and Gemma's relationship.

Groups should focus on the following:

- a. What elements of Brenn and Gemma's relationship are also in either of your storyboards.
- b. Which elements of their relationship do you think were healthy and was something you would like in your relationships.
- c. Which elements of their relationship do you think were unhealthy and you would not like in your relationships.
- d. Once groups have completed these discussions amongst themselves, the class should come together to create a class narrative of a healthy ideal relationship that everyone agrees on.

### **In Class Activity: Focus Questions**

#### *Learning Outcomes*

Students will:

- develop their skills of critical reflection and identify the new information they have gained from the session
- extend their understanding of healthy relationships in a personal and academic context
- gain the knowledge to recognise the prevalence and consequences of small-scale controlling behaviours in their daily lives, along with an understanding of how to combat them.

## Instructions

1. Students should be given the list of questions from the “Focus Questions for Discussion” in Section 1 and asked to write dot point answers for each question.
2. Hand out their previous responses to the questions and ask the students to highlight the changes they notice between the two sets of responses.
3. Continue with the following questions:
  - a. Print scene briefs for each group (Appendix E)
  - b. Why do you think domestic violence is so prevalent in Australia?
  - c. Why do people perpetrate domestic violence?
  - d. How can you, as a group of young people, work towards removing domestic violence from our national story?
  - e. How can you support yourself and your friends in developing healthy relationships in the future?
  - f. How do you think gender stereotypes and rigid role expectations in relationships can play a part in this issue?

## Discussion

Once students have had time to think about these questions and/or write their responses, they should be used to generate classroom discussion. The focus should be placed on developing preventative support strategies along with coping strategies. The discussion should also help students see that many of their peers may have similar experiences of these issues – they are not alone.

## **In Class Activity: Stages of Change Tableaux (drama-based activity)**

### Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- develop a practical and self-driven understanding of problem solving in relation to unhealthy relationships in their school environment
- explore a new way of problem solving, using their body and images, along with cognitive discussion and group dialogue
- utilise their new skills developed from the session and generate ideas and skills to make direct social change in their school

### Set Up

You will need:

- a clear space for all students to stand and move around freely

## **Instructions**

1. Students begin by creating whole class tableaux (frozen images) to begin with. The class should create a tableau of the following scenes:
  - a. Holiday in Bali
  - b. Anger (moving into abstract representation)
  - c. Airport
  - d. Bullying
2. To scaffold the process, build the image one student at a time. The teacher can start with the first element of the frozen image, then the students join the image one by one adding to the scene. Students should reset after completing each image.
3. Now split students into smaller groups, and ask them to find their own space on the floor. Each group should create two tableaux, one demonstrating a very unhealthy relationship, and one demonstrating an ideal, healthy relationship.
4. Students are then asked to discuss in their groups how an unhealthy relationship could transform into a healthy relationship. What steps need to be taken to make the change and remove unhealthy relationships from a school or culture?
5. The next task is to create 4 more tableaux that represent the journey of change from the school with unhealthy relationships to the school with healthy relationships.
6. The final task is to isolate the difference between each of the six tableaux the groups have created and create a list of the changes needed to go through each step of the process. Each group should end with a list of linear steps required to transform an unhealthy relationship into a healthy relationship.

## **Discussion**

The discussion should focus around developing the need for change within the students, and rippling out towards their communities. Highlight the benefits of healthy relationships and a society free from domestic violence, and the practical, achievable tasks that can be taken on that can lead to real changes around these issues.

## **In Class Activity: Whole School Approach**

### **Learning Outcomes**

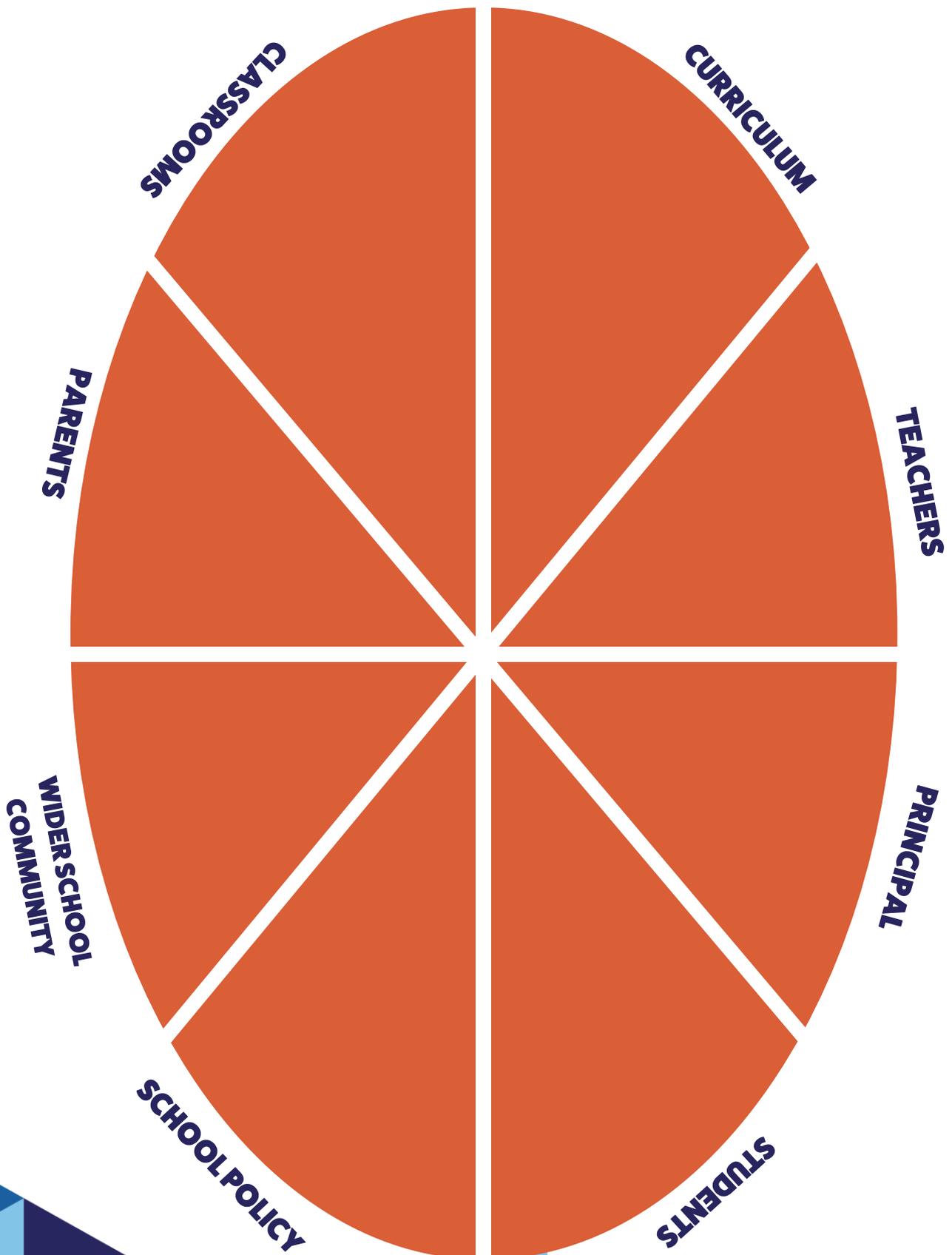
Students will:

- develop their ability to recognise the role their school community has in combating unhealthy relationships
- begin to identify areas of possible changes within their school community to promote respect, empathy and healthy relationships
- explore their potential to be change makers within their community and work towards reducing the oppression generated by domestic violence and unhealthy relationships.

## ***Instructions***

1. Working in small groups or individually, students are to complete the attached worksheet “Whole School Approach to Healthy Relationships”.
2. In each section of the diagram, students write achievable actions that can be made by each of the players/frameworks of the school context to reduce and ultimately remove domestic violence from our society.
3. Once they have completed the worksheet, the class should share their ideas and identify which of the options are possible to achieve.
4. The class should then make an action list, ordering the tasks they will endeavour to complete, and set a deadline for each of the actions.

# Whole School Approach to Healthy Relationships



# Support Resources

## Domestic Violence Support

### *Lifeline*

Call line for young people and adults in crisis  
13 11 14. [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

### *Kids Helpline*

Telephone counselling for children and young people  
Free call: 1800 55 1800. [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

### *Australian Childhood Foundation*

Counselling for children and young people affected by abuse.

Free call: 1800 176 453 [www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

### *Headspace*

Headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year olds. [www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

### *Mensline Australia*

Supports men and boys who are dealing with family and relationship difficulties

1300 789 978 [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

### *1800-RESPECT*

National Sexual Assault, Family & Domestic Violence Counselling Line for any Australian who has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

1800 737 732 [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

### *Anglicare WA*

Anglicare is a not for profit which supports people, families and their communities to cope with the challenges of life by building their resilience and capacity. They provide a number of domestic violence services which can be accessed by the link below.

[www.anglicarewa.org.au/relationships/domestic-violence](http://www.anglicarewa.org.au/relationships/domestic-violence)

### *Relationships Australia*

Support groups and counselling on relationships, and for abusive and abused partners.

1300 364 277 [www.relationships.com.au](http://www.relationships.com.au)

## Domestic Violence Information and Resources

### *White Ribbon*

White Ribbon is the world's largest movement of men and boys working to end men's violence against women and girls, promote gender equality, healthy relationships and a new vision of masculinity [www.whiteribbon.org.au](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au)

### *National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)*

NAPCAN raises public awareness of child abuse and neglect and its impact by developing and promoting effective prevention strategies and programs. The resource hub provides a large range of tips, resources and brochures [www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)

### ***The Line***

The Line talks about relationships, gender, sex, bystander action and technology; how to keep it healthy and respectful for teens, parents and teachers.

[www.theline.org.au](http://www.theline.org.au)

### ***Our Watch***

Our Watch has been established to drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children

[www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)

### ***Western Australian Police Force***

How Police can help in a domestic violence situation including police and restraining orders.

[www.police.wa.gov.au/Your-Safety/Family-and-domestic-violence](http://www.police.wa.gov.au/Your-Safety/Family-and-domestic-violence)

### ***Dept. of Child Protection and Family Services***

Advice and resources from the State Governments' Department of Child Protection

[www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDV/Pages/FamilyandDomesticViolence](http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDV/Pages/FamilyandDomesticViolence)

### ***Violence Free Families***

A not for profit organisation working for the reduction of all types of family violence. Specifically, designing new and innovative men's behaviour programs to ensure that more men have greater access to interventions that will help them take responsibility for their behaviour and keep women and children safe.

[www.violencefreefamilies.org.au](http://www.violencefreefamilies.org.au)

### ***Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services***

A WA organisation committed to improving the status of women and children in society. They seek to ensure that all women and children live free of domestic and family violence [www.womenscouncil.com.au](http://www.womenscouncil.com.au)

# YOUTH CHOICES

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