

Lesson 1: I am special, so are you!

Teacher Notes

What happens if students don't come up with suggested responses themselves?

Depending on their age, developmental level and a range of other factors, students may not come up with the suggested responses noted throughout this lesson plan. Should this be the case, teachers are encouraged to lead students through prompts, or where required, overt suggestions or explanations to ensure the relevant points are clearly addressed.

Why is self esteem included in a children's safety program?

A healthy self esteem is fundamental to self protection and a person's ability to reach their full potential. Research has shown that children with low self esteem are at greater risk of victimisation. They are more likely to be targeted by offenders and less likely to resist or report abuse.

By including elements to boost participants' self esteem, the *Safe Start* program aims to reduce children's future risk of victimisation. Children with a high self esteem also benefit as they have been found to learn more and retain this information for longer.

Part A: Appreciating Individuality

Worksheet 1.1 (all ages): Debrief activity by highlighting that there are lots of things about us that are the same and lots of things about us that are different. There is nobody on this planet who is exactly like us, so it's important we take care of ourselves and acknowledge how special we are. After all, being different is what makes us special!

Worksheet 1.1 Years 5 - 6: Part C asks participants to discuss factors that impact on how we see ourselves. Factors may include: the media; social expectations of age, gender and culture; our relationships with our friends, parents and teachers; our achievements; and perceived talents, e.g. how well we do at school work, how good we are at sports.

Part B: Expecting respect

One of the most important things you can teach a child is to both expect respect and to show others respect. The best way to teach children respect is to show them respect. When a child experiences respect, they know what it feels like and they begin to understand how important it is. Being respectful helps a child succeed in life. If children don't have respect for peers, authority, or themselves, it is almost impossible for them to succeed.

Children learn from everything we say and do. Make sure that you are modeling respectful behaviour. Some of things you can do are:

Be honest – If you do something wrong, admit it and apologise.

Be positive – Avoid embarrassing, insulting or making fun of children. Instead, offer genuine and specific praise.

Be trusting – Let children make choices and take responsibility.

Be fair – Listen to a child's side of the story before reaching a conclusion.

Be polite – Use "please" and "thank you" as you would with an adult.

Be reliable – Keep promises. Show them that you mean what you say.

Be a good listener – Give children your full attention, where possible.

Be caring – Show concern for people, animals and the environment.

Avoid poor role models – When you see examples of disrespect, discuss them.

Worksheet 1.2 for Years 5 - 6 includes an optional activity, the 'Compliments Role Play', which may be used instead of the worksheet on page 1 of this handout, or as a follow-up activity to reinforce some of the lesson's key points.



Conclusion

To ensure the 'quiz' activity runs smoothly, ensure all students are aware of the rules, e.g. how they are to indicate their intention to answer the question. Consider selecting team captains who may be lacking self esteem and would benefit from the opportunity to undertake this position, without being fearful or overly intimidated by it. Your encouragement and support of team captains will be needed to assist with any set-backs. Rewards for the winning team may include a small prize or privilege, such as extra play time.

Reference:

McChesney, S 2009, *Respect – How to teach it and how to show it* (online). Available: <http://www.teach-nology.com/tutorials/teaching/respect/> [Accessed 17 August 2009].