SESSION 3

communicating in relationships
Session TWO In Review

"RELATIONSHIPS"

are associations with people we know and relate to in a significant way

People play different roles in our lives and we play different roles in others’ lives

Some relationships have different levels of importance and meaningfulness

Roles and relationships can change over time

Some characteristics of friendships include:

- trust
- respect
- generosity
- forgiveness
- acceptance
- showing you care
- non-judgmental
- thoughtfulness
- availability
- understanding
- openness
- having fun together
- good listener
- shared values
- get along
- helping
- loyalty
- spending time together
- shared interests

FRIENDSHIPS

Friendships are very important not only at school but throughout life

We all expect certain things from our friendships

Friendships can mean quite different things to different people as well
Communicating in relationships

**Good Communication Ideas**

**Good Openers**
- Hi, how are you?
- G'day, boy it's hot/cold/wet/rainy/humid today!
- Hello, how are you doing?
- Hey, so what did you think of the camp/class/concert/game the other day?

**Brief Encouragers**
- uh huh
- really?
- okay
- hmmm
- sure

**That sounds really interesting/hard/worrying/exciting/wonderful**
- So tell me more about that
- So what was that like for you?
- I'd like to hear more about that
- And then what happened?

**Interruption**
- Excuse me, I know I’m putting in here but I was wondering ...
- Sorry to be interrupting, but I was hoping to ...
- Look I hope you don’t mind, but I needed to speak to ...
- Could I have your attention for a moment because it’s important that I ...

**Showing You Care**

Hey that must have been really hard for you
I can understand how that must have been
I really feel for you
Look if there is anything I can do
I reckon that must have been difficult
You know I’ll be thinking of you
So how did that affect you?
That can be hard to deal with

**Non-verbal Encouragers**
- Nodding your head
- Raising your eyebrows
- Leaning forward
- Smiling
- Gestures
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Activity I hear you

As the speaker, you have just described an embarrassing situation or communicated some other information to the listener. Use the checklist below to identify and rate the skills the listener used when you were talking. Remember to give constructive feedback. You might like to look at the good communication ideas above to give you some helpful hints.

Listening Checklist

Circle the rating that best describes what the listener did while you were talking. After you have finished your ratings, discuss them with the listener.

- **Posture and body orientation**
  - good
  - ok
  - could do better

- **Eye contact**
  - good
  - ok
  - could do better

- **Longer encouragers**
  - a little
  - some
  - alot

- **Distracting body movements**
  - good
  - ok
  - alot

- **Facial expressions**
  - showing you care
    - a little
    - some
    - alot

- **Volume and tone of voice**
  - if used by the listener
  - good
  - ok
  - could do better

- **Brief encouragers**
  - a little
  - some
  - alot

Do you have anything else to add about how they listened (good and not so good)?
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Session 3

Look who's talking

PART 1
Choose an everyday situation where you are talking to someone, such as a friend, a neighbour, brother or sister, parent, etc. When you are talking to this person, apply the listening skills that you practised today. Ask yourself the following questions:

In what ways did using these listening skills:

- Change the way we interacted?
- Help me and the person I was talking to get more out of the conversation?

eg. we spoke longer than normal, or the conversation went nicely and we didn’t argue about anything.

PART 2
Observe a situation where other people are interacting with each other. This might be some friends talking, a student talking to a teacher, or somebody talking to the bus driver. Watch the way these people interact, and try and identify ALL the listening skills they are using eg. eye contact, nodding, etc.

List the listening skills they used in their conversation:

- Good listening skills
- Not-so-good listening skills

What listening skills did they not use in their interaction?

How might their communication have been better or more productive if they had applied some of the listening skills you just identified as missing?
Talk the Talk;  
Walk the Walk

Language skills – they’re not just for when you’re in another country. We need good skills to be able to understand and get along with the people we see every day. When these skills are working, you probably don’t even realise you’re using them. But when they don’t work, it’s a pretty sure bet you’ll know about it.

You can probably remember heaps of times when you were talking to someone in a shop, or your parents, a teacher, or even a friend, and what you were trying to say just wasn’t getting across. Maybe you weren’t making yourself clear or maybe they were distracted or had problems of their own, or maybe they didn’t have good communication skills themselves.

just like you need more than one CD in your collection, you need a whole stack of skills to communicate with other people

There are more complex skills like

- negotiating
- resolving conflict
- being assertive
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The key to good communication is listening. If you’re thinking about something else or worrying about what to say next, you can’t be listening properly to what the other person is trying to say. There are ways to show people that we’re listening to them.

**Listening skills**

**Gaze and eye contact** - in a conversation, it’s good to look at the person you are listening to, but to stare at them can freak some people out.

**Gestures** - like nodding, smiling, frowning and scowling all help us communicate. Generally if someone smiles or nods, they’re agreeing or encouraging us to continue and if they frown or scowl, they might be disagreeing or they might not understand us.

**Little words** - like yeah and uh huh also encourage us to continue.

**Posture** - a relaxed posture is good and makes the person you’re speaking to more at ease, but you can go too far and you’ll give the impression you’re bored. Turning away also says you’re not interested.

**Distance** - is also important when you’re talking to someone. Too close can be a bit freaky, but too far away gives the message you are trying to back off.

**Facial expressions** - are important too. The appropriate expression lets a person know you’re interested in what they’re saying but a flat expression can give the impression you’re bored. And while you can’t always laugh when people hope you will, there are times when it’s not appropriate to laugh (like when someone tells you that something bad has happened).

And remember, different cultures, even different families, can have different ways of using these non-verbal cues to communicate. Part of being a good listener is picking up on these differences.