THAT’S MY TEAM!

SESSION 3
Background

A sense of belonging is seen as a basic human need. It involves feeling valued, needed and accepted by others. For young people, feeling connected to positive peers and adults is protective against a range of adverse health and behavioural outcomes. To lack a sense of belonging is associated with a higher incidence of mental illness and emotional distress amongst adolescents.

In this episode of the video, two contestants are asked to choose members of their team for a group challenge. This highlights some rivalries between some contestants and raises some long-held feelings of being excluded for one of them.

This session aims to show students how they all have a contribution to make in a group or team work situation. They will be involved in a group activity which requires cooperation, sharing and acknowledgement of others’ contributions. The session will also highlight that they all belong to several different types of groups in which they have different roles and different relationships with other members of the group.

Learning outcomes

In this session students:

- Demonstrate cooperation and conflict resolution skills in helping people belong to a group
- Demonstrate skills of listening and taking the perspective of others
- Identify skills needed to be an effective group member
- Apply a problem-solving approach to a group task
Key messages

- Belonging to a group such as a family, friendship group, sporting, interest or cultural group is important for many people and is protective for good mental health.
- We all belong to a number of different groups in which we can have very different roles and different relationships with the other group members.
- Belonging to groups requires specific skills to ensure the group functions effectively and cohesively.

*Skills:* perspective taking, cooperation, conflict resolution, listening, problem solving

Session outline

3.1 **Video** – Episode 3 of Strongbbox
3.2 **Discussion**
3.3 **Activity** – Can I join you?
3.4 **Activity** – To group or not to group?
3.5 **Extra activity** – If I were the leader…
3.6 **Extra activity** – Figuring out what other people need
3.7 **Out of class activity** – Map to belonging

Materials

- Video set at Episode 3
- Photocopy of Resource 3.1
- Photocopy of Resource 3.2 [optional]
- Envelopes [optional]
- Photocopy or OHT of Resource 3.3 [optional]
Session Plan

3.1 Video - Episode 3 of Strongbbox  
13 mins

What’s happening this week? The resident expert reviews the judges’ ratings of the contestants and the house mates form two teams to meet their next challenge. The losing team receives a penalty.

3.2 Discussion  
5 - 10 mins

Learning environment  Whole class

Preparation/materials
  • No specific requirements

Procedure

1. Lead a brief class discussion on sense of belonging. Some discussion points might be:
   • Feeling that you belong is important for general wellbeing. Why is that?
   • How does a sense of belonging come about?
   • What are some thoughts and feelings that come with a sense of belonging?
   • How do these thoughts and feelings differ when you are in situations or groups where you feel you don’t belong?

2. Discuss how Erin reacted when she was chosen last for the challenge teams. What was she thinking and feeling? Below are the comments Erin made to the Video Diary about the incident – read this out to the class.

   "I hate that. I hated it at school, and I hate it now. I was always last picked, and it happened again. The girl no-one wants."

3. Ask students to identify any statements in Erin’s dialogue that rob self-worth, e.g. “I was always last picked....” and, “The girl no-one wants”. Can students suggest statements that build self-worth to counter the robbing statements?

Extension

4. Discuss how Erin then coped really well with the challenge, showing confidence and concentration on the task, but did not cope well with winning. What made her lose confidence? What was she thinking? Is winning always a positive experience?
3.3 Activity – Can I join you?  

**15 mins**

**Learning environment**  
Groups of 4

**Preparation/materials**
- Photocopy and cut up Resource 3.1 – Instructions for the number 1’s [1 per person from each group] + Instructions for 3 remaining group members [1 different set for each group]

**Procedure**
1. **Ask** students in each group to number off from 1 to 4 and ask all of the number 1’s to go outside.
2. **Hand out** a set of instructions to the remaining group members [each group should receive a different set of instructions but you may need to double up if there are more than four groups]. Allow groups some time to plan how to follow their instructions. **Hand out** the set of instructions for the number 1’s outside (each person gets the same instructions).
3. **Ask** the number 1’s to rejoin their original group. Do not allow the group interaction to continue for longer than 30 seconds.
4. **Stop** the activity after 30 seconds and **ask** students to discuss in their groups the following:
   - What did the number 1’s think was going on?
   - What were the number 1’s and the other group members asked to do?
   - Were the feelings that the group members experienced different to how they were instructed to behave?
5. **Ask** groups to report back to the whole class. Discuss some of the following:
   - What were the number 1’s thinking and feeling?
   - What were the others in the group thinking and feeling?
   - How did the behaviour of the others affect the number 1’s?
   - How did the behaviour of the others affect each member individually?
   - What did the group consider or do to exclude or include the number 1’s?
   - How did the interaction affect each member’s sense of belonging?
   - How did they feel about how they had to behave?
   - Were there differences between the groups with the same scenario and between groups with different scenarios?
   - The people who were excluded from the groups were selected merely because they were allocated the number 1. What are some of the reasons that people exclude others (e.g. looking different, ethnicity, gender, stereotypes, etc.)?
• What do groups do to exclude others (behaviours, verbals, etc.)?
• What might happen if groups took the perspective of the people they tried to exclude?
• What can groups do to help people belong?

NOTE: Teachers may need to watch that students in the groups do not take the exclusion too far as some students may be sensitive even to simulated rejection.

3.4 Activity - To group or not to group?  10 mins
Learning environment  Whole class
Preparation/materials
• No specific requirements
Procedure
1. Brainstorm the types of groups students belong to, e.g. school groups, family, sporting groups, interest clubs (computers, theatre, dance, bands etc.), school groups (home groups, form class), travel groups (bus, train), church groups, and friendship groups. Record these on the board.
2. Categorise them into groups you choose (e.g. friends, interest club) and groups you have little or no choice to be involved in (e.g. maths class, travel groups like your bus or train) and ask them how they feel about being in a group they chose compared with a group they had no choice in.
3. Discuss why a sense of belonging is important. Some questions might be:
• What are the advantages of belonging to a group and some of the disadvantages?
• What do people look for in a group?
• How do you know you belong?
• How do you know you don’t belong?
• What if the group you belong to rejects you? What are the risks?
• Are there obligations to the group you belong to?
• Are there times when you don’t want to be in a group? Why?
3.5 Extra activity – If I were the leader...

**Learning environment**
Individual

**Preparation/materials**
- No specific requirements

1. **Discuss** how most groups have a leader or leaders, and ask students to identify those skills that characterise a good leader. Students might want to think about who they think is a good leader (at school, in their leisure activities, in their community or in the broader society) and what qualities this person has. **Record** these on the board.

2. **Ask** students to individually complete the leader statement on page 12 of their books. Nominate a specific situation for students to be the “leader”, i.e. leader of the class/year level/school/team/country etc. to complete.

   “If I were the leader of …………………I would ……………………
   because ……………………………”

3. **Ask** students who feel comfortable sharing their statements with the class to do so.

**NOTE:** This could also be the basis for a good debate. It might also be an opportunity to bring out some understanding of the senses, e.g. self-worth, control, purpose, future, etc. in terms of what qualities a good leader might have. Another discussion point might be how leaders play an important role in developing and sustaining a good sense of belonging for members of the group they are leading e.g. the captain of the football team, the president of the chess group.

3.6 Extra activity - Figuring out what other people need

**Learning environment**
Groups of 4 sitting around desks

**Preparation/materials**
- Photocopy of Resource 3.2 – Group challenge sentences [1 set of 4 sentences for each group]
- Cut up the sentences into blocks of words as indicated
- Scramble all the words for the 4 sentences and place them in an envelope (i.e. 1 envelope for each group)
- Photocopies or an OHT of Resource 3.3 – Instructions for group challenge [1 for each group or an OHT]
Procedure

1. **Explain** to the class it is now their turn to take part in a challenge.

2. **Hand out** 1 envelope to each group nominating 1 person to deal out a roughly equal number of words to each person in the team. (This person will also begin the activity by taking the first turn in the group.)

3. **Hand out or display** a copy of the instructions (Resource 3.2) and explain them to the class.

4. **Allow** a maximum of 4 - 5 minutes for the task if no team finishes earlier.

5. **Discuss** with students how they dealt with the challenge. Some discussion questions are:
   - What did they think when first given the challenge? What do they think now? How did they cope with the challenge?
   - Why was it difficult to do the task without talking?
   - What skills did they need to complete the task?
   - Did your group work as a team? Did everyone participate?
   - Is it better to work in a group or by yourself? What makes working in a group hard? What makes working in a group better?

NOTE: If the students are finding it too difficult to do you might allow them to use gestures half way through.

3.7 Out of class activity – Map to belonging  

1. **Refer** students to page 13 of their books.

2. **Instructions:**

   This week’s out of class activity involves you creating a list or a map of the groups you belong to. This can be done as a concept map, like the example in your book, with links between the groups identified. Some groups might be drawn within another group, e.g. year level group and debating team within the overall school group. Alternatively, you could just list your group memberships.