

## LESSON PLAN

# Peer Influences & Developing Assertive Behaviour



STAGE

**Years 5 - 6**



DURATION

**50 minutes**



SUBJECT

**Health &  
Physical  
Education**



### RESOURCE OVERVIEW

Walking has considerable benefits for health, the community, and the environment. A healthy and active lifestyle including walking to school, sporting facilities and local shops is strongly encouraged and results in a range of positive outcomes for students, families and the community.

As students in Years 5 and 6 will be walking and cycling more independently, they need to understand the risks pedestrians face and strategies for staying safe. Children of this age may also be travelling with (and more influenced by) peers which could result in increased risk taking. They need to understand that risks can have serious consequences, and to develop the skills and understanding to make safer decisions.

In this lesson, students consider what makes a situation risky. They identify assertive communication strategies for handling risky situations and then apply these in a role-play.

# Resource Details

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## CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

This lesson supports:

- Plan and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (VCHPEP108)
- Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour, relationships, and health and wellbeing (VCHPEP110)

## CAPABILITIES ALIGNMENT

This lesson supports:

- Personal and social capability
- Describe the various causes of conflict and evaluate possible strategies to address conflict (VCPSCSO033)

## RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

In this lesson, teacher/s will need:

- Assertive communication worksheet
- Scenario cards

## LEARNING INTENTION

In this lesson, students will:

- Identify and apply assertive communication strategies for potentially risky situations.

## SUCCESS CRITERIA

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Identify situation where they may need to use assertive communication.
- Identify what assertive communication is and isn't.
- Show assertive communication in a role-play.

# Lesson Plan



## Tuning in

APPROX. 10 MINUTES

In a large space, draw a continuum line with a “1” down one end (Low Risk) and a “10” on the other end (Extremely Risky).

Read some of the statements below one at a time. Invite students to position themselves along the continuum somewhere between “1” and “10”, depending on where they view the level of riskiness to be for each statement.

- Crossing a railway line after a train has passed but before the warning bells and lights have stopped.
- Crossing a road near, but not on a pedestrian crossing.
- Crossing the road from between parked vehicles.
- Crossing the road between vehicles that are queued up along the road waiting for traffic signals to change.
- Walking home from school with friends.
- Walking home with friends after a fun activity.
- Crossing the road while using a phone or listening to music through headphones
- Crossing a multi-lane highway where there is no pedestrian crossing.
- Crossing the road between vehicles that are stopped at railway tracks.
- Standing in the middle of the road, waiting for a clear gap to finish crossing.

Ask some students to explain why they positioned themselves as they did. Ask others whether this would change their position on the continuum.

Invite students to reposition themselves along the continuum after hearing different opinions.

Ask students if they can think of their own situations that have an element of risk. Students again place themselves along the continuum.

Inform students that this lesson will be about developing strategies for handling risky situations.

## Main activity: Assertive communication

APPROX. 30 MINUTES

Have a discussion with students about peer influences around roads. Use the following questions:

- How do friends influence the ways in which you behave around roads and train tracks?
- Are all influences negative?
- How can friends influence each other to recognise dangers and increase safety?
- Why might young people do risky things when walking?

Discuss the concept of assertive communication:

Assertive communication involves:

- Active listening (following what is being said – as opposed to guessing, mind reading or interrupting).
- Staying calm and strong to communicate without causing conflict – being direct about what you want or will do, saying how you feel and matching your body language and voice tone with what you are actually saying.

Ask students to work with a partner and list types of behaviour and things to say that show assertive communication and those that don't. Students can write their responses on the Assertive communication worksheet. Here are some example responses:

Assertive communication is...

- Speaking firmly
- Using 'I' statements
- Standing strong
- Staying calm
- Saying how you feel

Assertive communication is not...

- Apologising or say sorry
- Whispering or speaking softly
- Getting angry
- Bullying others
- Looking guilty or scared

Have students share their responses.

Read through the three scenarios on Scenario Cards (included below).

Working in small groups, have students role play one of the scenarios showing how they could use assertive communication to make the situation less risky.

**Extension:** Students write scripts and film themselves performing their role plays. The videos could be shown at assembly or placed on the school website.

## Reflecting activity

APPROX. 10 MINUTES

Ask students to form pairs and discuss the following questions:

- How do you know when a situation is risky?
- Which assertive communication techniques would work for you?

## Assertive behaviour

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION IS...	ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION IS NOT...
Speaking firmly	Whispering or speaking softly

## Scenario cards

**A group of students is running late for school and as they approach a railway crossing, the bells start to ring and lights flash. There is no train in sight so the students in front of the group jump the gate at the crossing.**

**Role-play the scenario showing how you could use assertive communication to make the situation less risky.**

**A group of young people are walking beside the road. Several of them start to playfully push and shove each other. Cars have to brake and swerve.**

**Role-play the scenario showing how you could use assertive communication to make the situation less risky.**

**Children getting off the bus decide to walk to the back of the bus and cross the road in front of traffic coming the other way.**

**Role-play the scenario showing how you could use assertive communication to make the situation less risky.**



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