

Prevention Activities

AIM: As our society races ahead in leaps and bounds, it can become very confusing for young people who are trying to interpret the world and develop skills to grow into healthy functional adults. With bullying having an effect on a student's mental health, skills and awareness are needed to minimise the impact of such events and reduce the potential bullying from occurring. Students need effective communication skills, problem solving skills, self discipline and connectedness to act as a buffer and help build resilience.

Level A – Prep to Grade 3

Post a Letter

This activity is designed to help students gain a common awareness of what is expected from them as a class group and what to expect from each other. As the student gains an understanding on what is expected of them, the more confident the student becomes. Knowing what to expect from others also helps a student to decipher situations that might just be a simple misunderstanding or when it might be more of a bullying problem. For this activity, students identify behaviours and place them into either the important letterbox or the not very important letter box.

Taking time to think.

This activity uses some principles from mindfulness by having students begin to focus on their thinking and breathing as a strategy; a tool to help them with their thoughts. This will assist the students on a psychological level if they are involved in a bullying incident as well as assisting the student to think before a potential incident, thereby preventing a potential bullying incident or a misunderstanding. The activity demonstrates clarity through an experiment conducted by the teacher and then has the students complete an exercise where they hop on the spot and recite a nursery rhyme.

Level B – Grade 4 to Grade 6/7

Close your eyes and hold tight

Students are to choose an activity they would like to do on the weekend and devise the steps they will need to take to make it happen. Students also need to identify obstacles to achieving the activity and finding solutions around these obstacles. This activity is to help students identify and define what they have some control and influence over and what they can't change. Separating the control allows students to differentiate between what is their responsibility and what is not. The activity also provides for shared experiences of problem solving in small groups.

I am not alone

This activity provides students with a concrete visualisation of the support networks in the student's lives.

This is done to reinforce to students the fact that they are not alone and have people around to assist them when they are troubled by events in their lives. In this activity, students draw a picture of themselves and either record or draw people who are important to them into three separate circles. These circles represent the different levels of intimacy or closeness they have with the people selected. Students then cut out these circles and glue the circles onto the picture of themselves.

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Level C – Grade 6/7 to Grade 9

Pull me ups and put me downs

This activity helps students separate their thoughts into those that are helpful and those that are unhelpful. The activity highlights to students the power of positive thinking. In small groups, students select a particular event or situation and then devise three (3) helpful and three (3) unhelpful thoughts about it. A whole class group discussion is held at the end.

Tower of Strength

The aim of this activity is to show students that while negative events can happen to them, there are also many positive events that can happen as well. Students record on the handout sheet, positive events that have occurred over their 9/10 years of schooling and 1 negative event. This handout sheet is then folded in half and placed on the desk. The students then have a race to see who can be the fastest at blowing over the folded handout sheet to knock over the bad situation/circumstance.

Level D – Grade 10 to Grade 12

Pieces of the Pie

The aim behind this activity is: 1) to increase students' awareness of possible alternatives to their initial thought processes, and 2) for students to reframe events from a negative interpretation to a positive interpretation. Students are provided with three scenarios from which they must identify five (5) possible interpretations of the events. Students discuss in small groups the range of possibilities which are then presented to the larger class group.

Getting through the hard times

This activity is designed to highlight the importance of having support from others and how such support makes adversity more tolerable and easier to cope with. Trying to decipher the best course of action requires much thought and discussion. The activity involves small group work with students being stranded at sea and having to prioritise salvaged items that are critical for their survival.

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Material Required

3 photocopies of Pieces of the pie handout for each student, pens

Step One

Talk to students about how easy it is to judge something without knowing all the facts. Sometimes we can be biased in our judgement so that we see only one side of the story. At times we can be so tough on ourselves that we only see one aspect of a problem and the reason we can find it hard to work out a solution is due to the fact we have blinkers on.

Step Two

Ask students to divide into groups of 4 to 5 and then provide the 3 copies of the 'Pieces of the Pie' handout to each group. Read out scenario 1 to the class and ask the groups to record in each segment of the pie a possible interpretation of the event. Use one handout sheet for each scenario. Read out the scenarios one at a time and allow group discussion and recording on the pie handout for each scenario.

Step Three

Scenario 1- Jodie, a year 10 student is standing in line at the tuckshop and someone pushes into her.

Scenario 2 – Josh has received 5 texts from someone he doesn't know saying the same thing.

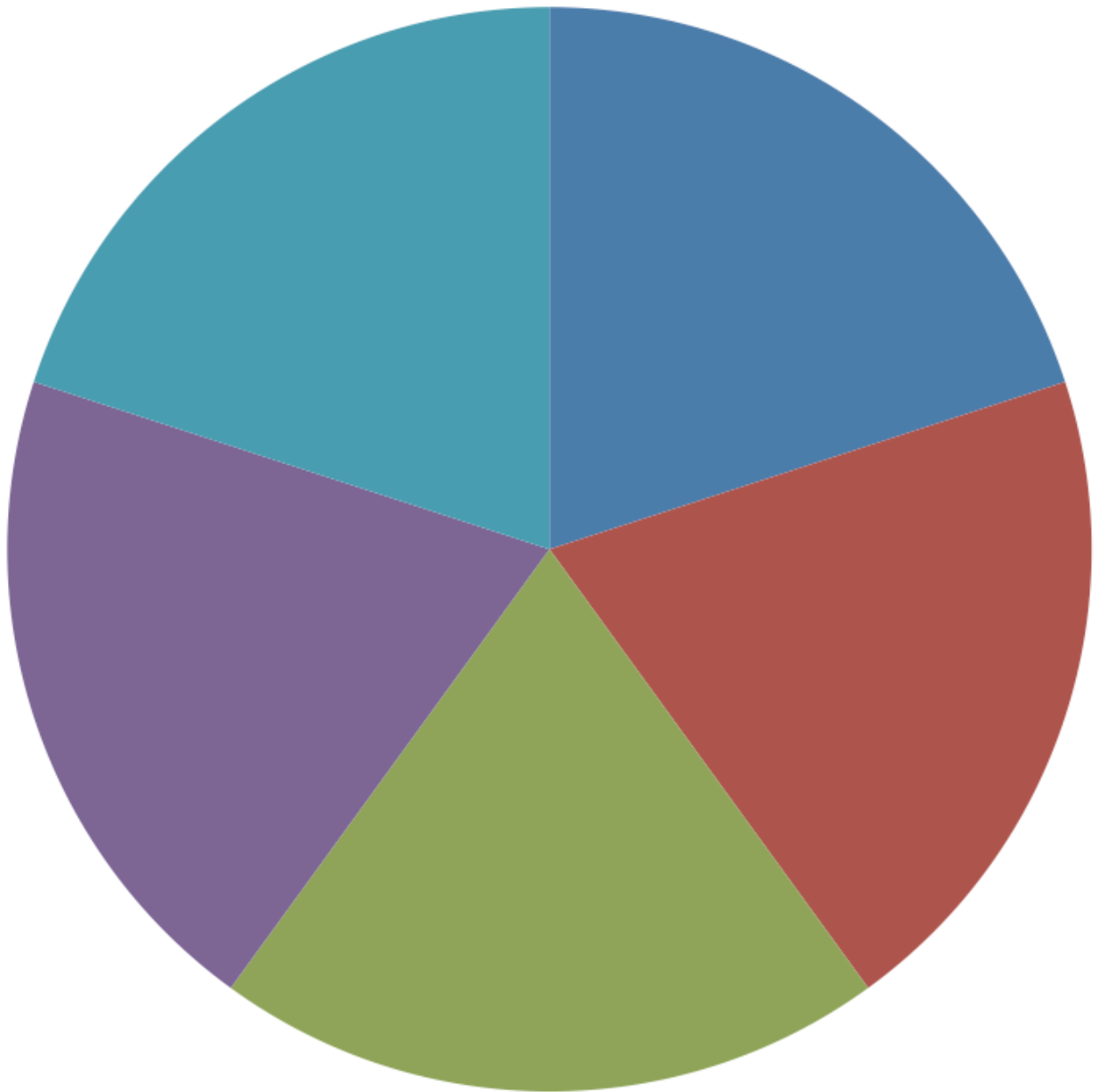
Scenario 3 – Sara was organising the stretch Hummer for the formal and now Jess and Luke are not going.

Step Four

Have each group present their interpretations to the class. As the interpretations are presented, count up on the board how many interpretations are negative and how many are positive. Have a discussion about who felt they were very limited in their thoughts and who felt that looking at a number of alternatives came naturally. Ask the students, 'Do people naturally lean towards more positive interpretations than negative interpretations? What do you think that tells us about people?'



Pieces of the pie



Getting through the hard times

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Material Required

Sufficient photocopies of Lost at Sea handout, Ranking sheet handout, Coast Guard handout for all students, pens

Step One

Provide the handout - lost at sea - for students. Read the handout aloud to the class and then ask the students to divide into groups of 4 to 5.

Step Two

Hand out the 'lost at sea ranking chart' to every student. Ask each of the students to rank the order of importance for each item listed on the ranking sheet. Give students 10 minutes to complete this task. Then ask the small groups to discuss the rankings and come up with a group ranking for the items. Ask each student to record the group ranking on the handout sheet.

Step Three

Inform the students that according to the experts such as the US Coast Guard, if someone is stranded mid ocean the priorities in terms of basic supplies need to attract attention and aid survival until rescue arrives. There is no point using items to help navigate because you could not store sufficient water and food in a little raft for the time it would take to reach land. The only hope of being spotted and rescued is with signalling devices. Provide coastguard handout sheet.

Step Four

For each item, mark the number of points that your score differs from the Coastguard ranking and then add up all the points. Disregard plus or minus differences. The lower the total, the better your score. Read out to the class the following:

With a score of

0 - 25 Excellent. You demonstrated great survival skills. Rescued!

26 - 32 Good. Above average results. Good survival skills. Rescued!

33 - 45 Average. Seasick, hungry and tired. Rescued!

46 - 55 Fair. Dehydrated and barely alive. It was tough, but rescued!

56 - 70 Poor. Rescued, but only just in time!

71 - 112 Very poor. Oh dear, your empty raft is washed up on a beach, weeks after the search was called off.

Step Five

Ask the students if the group rankings gave them a greater chance of survival than their individual rankings. Presumably this is so. Discuss with the students that to increase their survival and happiness in life generally and specifically to work against bullying among school students we need to work together.



Lost at Sea Handout

You have chartered a yacht with three friends, for the holiday trip of a lifetime across the Atlantic Ocean. Because none of you have any previous sailing experience, you have hired an experienced skipper and two-person crew. Unfortunately in the mid Atlantic, a fierce fire breaks out in the ship's galley and the skipper and crew have been lost whilst trying to fight the blaze. Much of the yacht is destroyed and is slowly sinking. Your location is unclear because vital navigational and radio equipment has been damaged in the fire. Your best estimate is that you are many hundreds of miles from the nearest land. You and your friends have managed to save 15 items, undamaged and intact after the fire. In addition, you have salvaged a four man rubber life craft and a box of matches. Your task is to rank the 15 items in terms of their importance for you, as you wait to be rescued. Place the number 1 by the most important item, the number 2 by the second most important, and so on through to number 15 for the least important.

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Salvaged items	My ranking	Team ranking
A sextant		
Shaving mirror		
Mosquito netting		
25 litre container of water		
A case of army rations		
Maps of the Pacific Ocean		
A floating seat cushion		
10 litre can of oil/ petrol mixture		
Small transistor radio		
2 square metres of opaque plastic sheeting		
A can of shark repellent		
One bottle of 160 per cent proof Rum		
4.5 metres of nylon rope		
2 boxes of chocolate bars		
A fishing kit		

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Coast Guard Handout

The list below is the ranking order of the items according to their importance to your survival:

Items	Coastguard ranking	Coastguard reasoning
A sextant	15	Useless without the relevant tables and a chronometer.
Shaving mirror	1	Critical for signaling.
Mosquito netting	14	There are NO mosquitoes in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and the netting is useless for anything else.
25 litre container of water	3	Vital to restore fluids lost through perspiration.
A case of army rations	4	This is your basic food intake
Maps of the Pacific Ocean	13	Worthless without navigation equipment.
A floating seat cushion	9	Useful as a life preserver if someone fell overboard.
10 litre can of oil/ petrol mixture	2	Critical for signaling. The mixture will float on water and could be ignited using the matches.
Small transistor radio	12	You would be out of range of any radio station.
2 square metres of opaque plastic sheeting	5	Can be used to collect rain water and shelter from the wind and waves.
A can of shark repellent	10	To repel sharks, of course!
One bottle of 160 per cent proof Rum	11	Contains 80% alcohol, which means it can be used as an antiseptic for any injuries, otherwise of little value. It would cause dehydration if drunk.
4.5 metres of nylon rope	8	Could be used to lash people or equipment together to prevent being washed overboard in a storm.
2 boxes of chocolate bars	6	Your reserve food supply
A fishing kit	7	Ranked lower than the chocolate as there is no guarantee you will catch any fish.

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