

Connecting well

Talking to others can really help to support our wellbeing. Whether it's just a chat or working with others to overcome challenges in your life, there are many people we can reach out to. It is important to remember that other people have to look after their wellbeing too.

Use a set of specially created animated videos to help learn how to cope with worries and loneliness. Use activities to explore different attitudes towards socialising and communicating with others and reflect how to connect in a way that supports wellbeing.

Learning objectives

You will:

- Build resilience, empathy and kindness
- Learn a variety of coping skills
- Reflect on how other people support your wellbeing, and how you can support theirs
- Think about other people's needs and experiences

Primary (ages 7-11)

Reflective activity: Connections

Think about the word 'connections', what does it mean to you?

We can use this word to talk about people and how we know and talk to them. Think about how connections can affect your wellbeing. How we connect with people can change how happy, healthy and comfortable you are?

- > How can it help you feel happy, healthy and comfortable?
- > How can it put your health, happiness and comfort at risk?

Draw around your hand and write 5 positive things about connecting with people on each finger. In another colour, around the finger, write 5 things you need to remember about connecting with people to stay happy, healthy and comfortable.

Starter activity: My social circle debate

Some people like to be around people and talk to people more often than others. You might want to be alone often because talking to people makes you feel tired. Your friend might feel happy and lively around people, and uncomfortable being alone too much.

It is important to share experiences so we can better understand how people feel in different situations as it might be very different from how we feel.

With family, friends or classmates, look at the statements and say how much you agree and disagree with each statement. You can number each statement, 10 being really agree and 0 being really disagree. You can do this activity individually too.

- > Being around lots of people makes me tired and uncomfortable
- > I like to talk to my friends at least everyday
- > I like talking to people face to face the most

- > I like spending time alone
- > I want to be with other people most of the time
- > I like having lots of different friends
- > If I don't talk to a friend or another person every day, I feel sad
- > I like having just one or two good friends

Compare your answers and discuss your differences. Do other people feel the same as you?

Video activity: Web of connections

[Watch the Web of connections video](#) and do the activity in the video. How many people are in your web? In what different ways can you contact them?

After writing down how your connections help you and you help them, read through and reflect. What do you know about your connections – what do they like? What needs do they have? What can you do to help them or be kind to them?

Extension activity: Understanding others

Think about the first 'My social circle' activity. What happens if one of your connections is busy or doesn't want to talk to anyone that day. Draw two friends on a piece of paper. One friend doesn't want to talk to other people today. The other friend really wants to talk to someone. How can each friend help the other and be kind to themselves at the same time? Write down your ideas around the person.

Maybe the person who wants to talk can talk to someone else, or write what they want to say down somewhere. The person who doesn't want to talk can set a time the next day to speak to their friend.

Why is it important to remember how other people feel and experience things?

Extension activity: Write a letter to a friend

Write a letter, email or postcard to your friend who is busy or far away. Think about all the things you want to say to them and write it down, or draw them a picture to show how you feel. You can show (or send) them the letter or picture when you next speak to them.

Secondary (ages 11-18)

Reflective activity: Connections

Think about the word 'connections', what does it mean to you?

We can use this word to talk about people and how we know and talk to them. Think about how connections can affect your wellbeing.

- > How can it help your physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing?
- > How can it put your physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing at risk?

Write down 5 ways connecting with others can help support your wellbeing and 5 things you need to remember when connecting with others to protect your wellbeing.

Setting boundaries of how you want to connect and interact with others can help protect your wellbeing. Likewise, respecting other people's boundaries is important for protecting their wellbeing.

Starter activity: My social circle debate

Some people like to be around people and talking to people more often than others. You might want to be alone often because talking to people makes you feel tired. Your friend might feel happy and lively around people, and exhausted being alone. Sometimes we call these kinds of people "introverted" and "extroverted" people.

It is important to share experiences so we can better understand how people feel in different situations as it might be very different from how we feel.

With family, friends or classmates, look at the statements and say how much you agree and disagree with each statement. You can number each statement, 10 being really agree and 0 being really disagree. You can also do this activity individually.

- > Being around lots of people makes me tired and uncomfortable
- > I like to talk to my friends at least everyday
- > I like talking to people face to face the most
- > Being able to connect using modern technology helps wellbeing
- > I like spending time alone
- > I want to be with other people most of the time
- > I like having lots of different friends
- > If I don't talk to a friend or other person everyday, I feel sad
- > I like having just one or two good friends
- > I enjoy going to big social events
- > I prefer doing things on my own
- > I tell the people closest to me about my feelings and problems

Compare your answers and discuss your differences. Do other people feel the same as you?

Video activity: Web of connections

[Watch the Web of connections video](#) and do the activity in the video. How many people are in your web? In what different ways can you contact them?

After writing down how your connections help you and you help them, read through and reflect. What do you know about your connections – what do they like? What needs do they have? What can you do to help them or be kind to them?

Extension activity: Understanding others

Think about the first 'My social circle' activity. What happens if one of your connections is busy or doesn't want to talk to anyone that day. Draw two friends on a piece of paper. One friend is more introverted and doesn't want to talk to other people today. The other friend is more extroverted and really wants to talk to someone. How can each friend help the other and be kind to themselves at the same time? Write down your ideas around the person.

Maybe the person who wants to talk can talk to someone else, or write what they want to say down somewhere. The person who doesn't want to talk can set a time the next day to speak to their friend.

Why is it important to remember how other people feel and experience things?

Think about the people in your web. Are they more introverted or extraverted? How do you know when they feel lonely, and what can you do to support them?

Extension activity: Write a letter to a friend

Write a letter, email, postcard or record a video or voice note to your friend who is busy or far away. Think about all the things you want to say to them. You can show them the letter when you next speak to them or send them the video or voice note when they are available again.