



Respectful Futures

Shaping Healthy Relationships

by
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“Our teachers are grateful to have had the opportunity to both lend ideas and to pilot the (Respectful Futures) project and students have reported the modules have edified their lives.”

Daniel To, District Principal, Surrey

School will soon be back in session! It is an exciting time which can bring both anticipation and trepidation, particularly with increasing social unrest, worsening mental health concerns, and the growing angst related to safety in schools. All of this can contribute to a conflicted mind-set. Administrators live within this struggle, and must cope with the resulting emotions and behaviours of students.

One important tool to assist is the **Respectful Futures, Shaping Healthy Relationships** initiative, a comprehensive curriculum package that can assist in addressing these concerns both proactively and in real time. The materials are designed to help students understand how their thoughts and emotions contribute to their feelings and behaviours – both positive and negative – and how this understanding can be used to build healthy behaviours. In turn, schools can develop a strong, respectful community based on self-knowledge and empathy.

The **Respectful Futures** project was built on feedback from BC Corrections staff and clinicians who heard from Corrections clients that providing children and youth with tools for developing and maintaining healthy and respectful relationships might have prevented the negative and damaging relationships they experienced. This feedback led to a collaboration between the provincial government and Stroh Health Care to design a program for children and youth.

The Respectful Futures educational modules focus on helping youth to understand, recognize, and form healthy relationships. The modules allow students to bring their own thoughts and experiences to the program; in this way, they align with the BC curriculum's focus on personalized learning. The modules highlight the individual as they interact with

others. In addition, the modules were developed with the BC curriculum's core competencies in mind. The modules build capacity in positive communication, critical thinking, and personal and social identity. These core competencies run through all the courses and learning standards that form the K to 12 curriculums in BC. Further, the Respectful Futures materials are based in research and evidence, and are age-appropriate, non-judgmental, and inclusive.

Shari Henry, Vice-Principal of Chetywnd Secondary School, notes, “as educators, we often are unaware of the long-term influence we have on our students. What we can strive for is that, when students leave our schools, we have provided them the opportunity to learn whatever skills they need to meet the multitude of uncertainties that will await them in life. The **Respectful Futures** program has helped to lay a strong foundation on which the students can build strong and positive relationships.”

How can administrators use this resource? The materials are presented in modules that build one upon the other, and can be used in a classroom to develop knowledge and skill over time, but can also be pulled out to use when a particular big idea might be relevant in working with an individual student or in an emergent situation. Students with anger issues, for example, may gain insight into their behaviours through Module 4 which focuses on understanding and managing anger.

We invite you to visit our [website](#) which includes the six modules as well as resources that include a Facilitation Guide, Mindfulness Handbook, videos, and handouts related to facilitation of the modules. Our small advisory group is committed to ongoing promotion of the resource to educators and community facilitators, and is available to meet with individuals or groups seeking more information. If you are interested in adding a powerful resource to the pedagogical toolbox in your school or district, check out [Respectful Futures](#).

Respectful Futures is a not-for-profit collaboration between the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General and Stroh Health Care.