

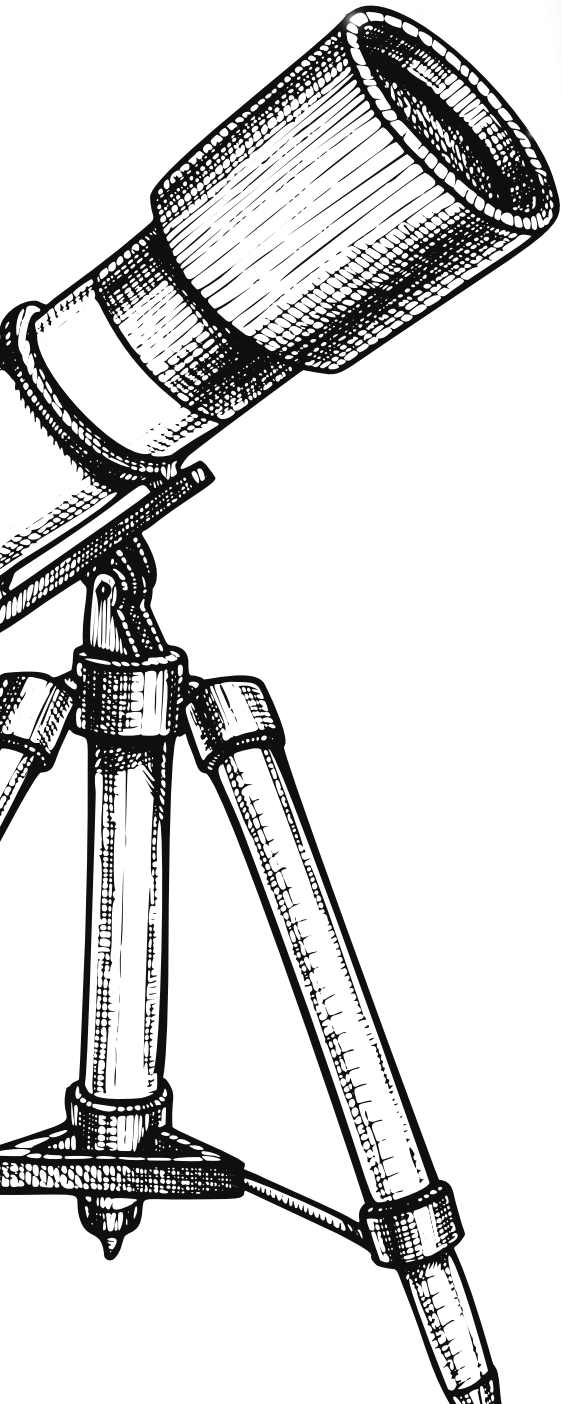
**Future Ready Pathways for
School, Work and Life**

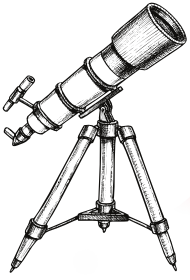
Building Better Connections

Healthy Relationships & Empathy

*Lessons for high school
students, aged 14-19*

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*Lessons for high school students,
aged 14-19*

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Teacher/Parent Guide

Building Better Connections

Learning Objectives

By the end of these lessons, students will be able to:

- Recognize the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships across friendships, peer groups, romantic relationships, and professional or authority-based contexts
- Understand and practice boundaries and consent in physical, emotional, and digital interactions, including situations involving pressure or power imbalance
- Use empathy and perspective-taking to consider how their words, actions, and choices impact others
- Identify social influence and peer pressure, including subtle, indirect, and relational forms
- Respond to gossip, exclusion, and conflict in ways that reduce harm and protect dignity
- Practice upstander behaviors that support others while respecting personal boundaries and safety
- Apply strategies for resolving conflict, repairing harm, and rebuilding trust when appropriate
- Develop confidence in making thoughtful, self-respecting choices that align with personal values and boundaries



Teacher/Parent Guide

Learning Rationale

As students prepare for life beyond school, they are expected to manage relationships with peers, partners, teachers, employers, and community members—often with limited explicit guidance.

During this stage, relationships are no longer limited to peer interactions alone. Power dynamics, emotional intimacy, social influence, and long-term consequences become more pronounced. Students may experience increased pressure related to belonging, loyalty, reputation, and expectations, both in person and online. At the same time, they are developing a stronger sense of personal values, autonomy, and responsibility for their choices.

The workbook emphasizes student agency and positions learners as active decision-makers capable of shaping healthy, respectful, and future-ready relationships across personal, social, and professional contexts.

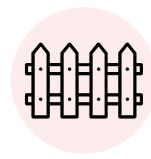
The workbook is grounded in the understanding that:



Healthy relationships require awareness, communication, and intentional choices



Peer influence is powerful, and students can choose how they respond to it



Boundaries and consent help relationships feel safe, respectful, and sustainable



Empathy includes considering impact, not just intent



Conflict is a normal part of relationships and can be addressed with respect and accountability



Mistakes do not define students or their relationships; repair and growth are possible



An Introduction for Teachers & Parents

These lessons are designed for high school students (ages 14–19) and can be used in classrooms, advisory periods, counseling groups, or small-group discussions. Each lesson includes a concise guided reading to introduce key concepts, followed by structured activities that invite students to analyze realistic social and relational situations and practice skills they will use beyond school—in friendships, romantic relationships, online spaces, and future professional environments.

The lessons are:

Flexible – Each lesson can be completed in approximately 30–40 minutes or expanded with optional discussion prompts, reflection tasks, scenario analysis, or real-world application activities. Lessons may be taught sequentially to build depth over time or selected individually to address specific relational or community needs.

Relevant – Scenarios and examples reflect the lived experiences of high school students, including evolving friendships, romantic relationships, social influence, digital communication, peer pressure, boundaries and consent, conflict, and changing power dynamics. Activities encourage thoughtful discussion and critical reflection without oversimplifying complex situations or relying on scripted responses.

Practical – Students develop concrete strategies they can apply immediately, such as communicating boundaries, navigating consent, responding to pressure, addressing conflict constructively, repairing harm, and making choices that align with personal values. The emphasis is on transferable skills that support healthy relationships in academic, social, digital, and future workplace settings.

The goal of this pack is to empower students to approach relationships with awareness, intention, and responsibility. Healthy relationships are not defined by the absence of conflict, but by how individuals communicate, respect boundaries, respond to challenges, and take accountability for their impact on others. By developing these skills during the high school years, students are better prepared to build respectful, sustainable connections that support personal growth, collaboration, and well-being in life beyond school.



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Universal Design for Learning

Overview

This workbook is designed using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to ensure that all students—across diverse strengths, needs, learning preferences, and backgrounds—can access, engage with, and benefit from the lessons.

UDL recognizes that students learn in different ways. Some learn best through discussion, others through visuals, movement, or hands-on practice. Rather than relying on a single method, this pack intentionally offers multiple pathways for engagement, understanding, and skill practice, allowing adults to adapt lessons while keeping learning goals consistent.

The activities and structures in this workbook support flexibility without sacrificing rigor. Lessons can be adjusted in pacing, format, and delivery to meet the needs of individual students, small groups, or full classrooms.

Multiple Means of Engagement

How students connect with the learning

Students vary in how they process information, especially when concepts involve emotions, relationships, or abstract social dynamics. To support comprehension, lessons offer multiple ways to introduce and reinforce key ideas.

Teachers and parents may:

- Provide guided readings in print or digital formats, or read passages aloud for shared understanding
- Offer audio versions of readings or allow text-to-speech tools when available
- Preview key vocabulary and concepts before lessons using examples, visuals, or brief discussions
- Use graphic organizers, anchor charts, or checklists to break down complex topics such as boundaries, consent, influence, or conflict
- Rephrase or summarize ideas using concrete, real-life scenarios to support understanding
- Allow students to revisit readings or concepts over multiple sessions as needed

These options help ensure students can access the content regardless of reading level, processing speed, or prior experience with the topic.



Universal Design for Learning

Multiple Means of Engagement

How students connect with the learning

Students differ in what motivates them, how comfortable they feel participating, and how they engage with sensitive topics. The lessons are designed to offer choice, relevance, and emotional safety.

Teachers and parents may:

- Provide options for participation, such as whole-group discussion, small groups, partner work, or independent reflection
- Use scenario-based discussions to allow students to analyze situations without sharing personal experiences
- Offer choice in topics, prompts, or examples so students can engage with situations that feel relevant but manageable
- Establish clear discussion norms that emphasize respect, listening, and non-judgment
- Include quiet reflection or journaling time for students who process internally
- Encourage connections to future contexts (college, work, leadership, teamwork) to increase relevance and motivation

These strategies help students engage without pressure and support sustained attention, curiosity, and meaningful participation.

Multiple Means of Action and Expression

How students show understanding

Students express understanding in different ways. Some communicate best through writing, others through discussion, visuals, or structured analysis. Lessons provide multiple pathways for demonstrating learning.

Teachers and parents may:

- Allow students to respond through written reflections, scenario analysis, charts, or concept maps
- Offer optional role-play activities with clear structure, roles, and opt-out alternatives
- Provide sentence starters, communication frames, or guiding questions to support expression
- Encourage private self-assessments or goal-setting activities instead of public sharing
- Allow students to demonstrate understanding through creative formats such as diagrams, timelines, or planning tools
- Adjust expectations for length or format while keeping learning goals consistent

These options ensure students can show what they know in ways that align with their strengths and comfort levels.



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Pre-Assessment



Lesson Plan: Pre-Assessment

Learning Objectives

By the end of the pre-assessment activity, students will:

1. Reflect on their current understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationship dynamics
2. Consider how they currently approach boundaries, consent, and communication in different situations
3. Recognize how empathy, perspective-taking, and influence affect their interactions with others
4. Identify personal tendencies when facing conflict, peer pressure, or social discomfort
5. Increase awareness of how values and choices shape relationships across social, digital, and future professional contexts

Learning Rationale

Before developing new skills, students benefit from understanding where they currently stand. High school students bring a wide range of experiences, assumptions, and comfort levels into conversations about relationships, boundaries, and social influence. A pre-assessment creates space for reflection without pressure, allowing students to engage honestly with the material.

This pre-assessment is designed to:

- Establish a baseline of student understanding and perspectives
- Encourage self-awareness rather than evaluation or judgment
- Surface common themes, questions, or misconceptions that can guide instruction
- Help students recognize that relationship skills develop over time through reflection and practice

Rather than testing knowledge, the pre-assessment invites students to examine their own thinking, reactions, and decision-making patterns. By reflecting on their current approaches to empathy, boundaries, conflict, and influence, students are better prepared to engage thoughtfully with the lessons that follow.

The pre-assessment also reinforces a key message of this pack: building healthy relationships is an ongoing process. Growth begins with awareness, and awareness creates the foundation for intentional, responsible choices in relationships now and in the future.



Lesson Plan: Pre-Assessment

Step 1: Introduce the Activity

- Explain: “This activity helps us understand how you currently think about and handle relationships — including things like communication, boundaries, empathy, peer pressure, and conflict. There are no right or wrong answers. Everyone comes in with different experiences and perspectives. Your responses will help guide what we focus on in the lessons.”
- Encourage honesty and self-reflection — this is about noticing personal starting points, not grades.

Step 2: Clarify the Format

- Students read each statement and mark their response in the rating column.
- If working one-on-one or in a small group, you may also read the statements aloud.
- Remind students to respond quickly and honestly, without overthinking.

Step 3: Optional Discussion

- After a few selected statements, invite quick, low-pressure sharing.
 - “Which types of situations feel hardest to navigate right now — and why do you think that is?”
 - “When there’s tension or disagreement, what’s usually your first reaction?”
 - “What makes it easier or harder to speak up about boundaries or concerns?”
 - “Where do you feel the most pressure to go along with others?”
- Keep it light — don’t correct or explain. The goal is to listen and observe.

Step 4: Record Insights

- Teachers/parents jot down notes on patterns you notice:
 - Areas where students show confidence or clarity
 - Areas where responses suggest uncertainty, discomfort, or mixed feelings
 - Common themes related to boundaries, empathy, conflict, or influence
 - Differences in how students describe social vs. digital vs. group situations
- These notes create a baseline snapshot of students’ current relationship skills and perspectives and can be revisited during the post-assessment.

Step 5: Set the Tone

- Reassure students that this is a starting point: “This is just a starting point. Over the next lessons, you’ll explore strategies for communication, boundaries, empathy, handling pressure, and resolving conflict. If your answers change by the end of the pack, that doesn’t mean you were wrong — it means you’ve learned and grown.”
- Keep the atmosphere reflective, respectful, and supportive. Frame the pre-assessment as exploration, not evaluation, and reinforce that growth is expected.



Pre-Assessment

Read each statement carefully. For each one, choose the response that best describes how true the statement feels for you right now. There are no right or wrong answers. Respond honestly and without overthinking. If a statement doesn't fully apply to you, choose the option that feels closest.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I can recognize the difference between healthy and unhealthy behaviors in friendships or peer groups.				
I feel confident setting boundaries when something makes me uncomfortable.				
I understand that consent applies to emotional, physical, and digital interactions.				
I can respect other people's boundaries, even when I feel disappointed or pressured.				
I consider how my words or actions might impact others, not just what I intend.				
I can recognize when peer pressure or social influence is affecting my decisions.				
I feel comfortable saying no or speaking up when something doesn't feel right.				
I know how I usually respond when there is conflict or tension with others.				
I have strategies for handling conflict in a calm and respectful way.				



Pre-Assessment

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I can tell when a situation might require setting a boundary, speaking up, or stepping away.				
I understand how gossip, exclusion, or social media can impact people and relationships.				
I feel confident making choices that align with my values, even if others disagree.				

Which statements felt easiest to agree with?

Which statements felt hardest or most uncertain?

Are there areas you'd like to feel more confident in by the end of this pack?



Lesson 1

The Architecture of Healthy Relationships

Essential Question

What makes a relationship healthy—and how do different contexts shape what that looks like?

Core Idea

Healthy relationships are built intentionally through mutual respect, communication, boundaries, and accountability.



Lesson Plan: The Architecture of Healthy Relationships

Learning Objectives

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

1. Analyze the core structures that support healthy relationships, including respect, communication, boundaries, accountability, and trust
2. Compare how relationship expectations and responsibilities shift across different contexts, such as friendships, romantic relationships, group settings, and professional or authority-based relationships
3. Evaluate subtle relationship dynamics—such as power, pressure, imbalance, or inconsistency—that may affect safety, trust, or well-being over time
4. Explain how individual choices and patterns of behavior contribute to the overall health or strain of a relationship
5. Reflect on their role as active participants in shaping relationship dynamics rather than passive recipients of others' behavior

Learning Rationale

High school students navigate relationships that are more complex, emotionally layered, and consequential than those of earlier years. Friendships deepen, romantic relationships emerge, social influence intensifies, and interactions increasingly involve power dynamics related to age, status, authority, or digital visibility. At the same time, students are expected to manage these relationships with greater independence and accountability.

Many students enter these situations with limited language or frameworks for evaluating relationship health. As a result, they may rely on assumptions, social norms, or emotional intensity rather than intentional decision-making. This lesson addresses that gap by treating relationship health as a learnable, analyzable system, not a matter of instinct or luck.

Healthy relationships function effectively because they are built on shared structures—clear communication, mutual respect, appropriate boundaries, and responsibility for impact. When these structures are weak or missing, relationships often feel confusing, unstable, or emotionally draining, even when no obvious harm is present. By examining both healthy and unhealthy dynamics, including subtle or normalized behaviors, students learn to recognize early indicators of imbalance or strain.



Lesson Plan: The Architecture of Healthy Relationships

Read the **Student Lesson** out loud. Ask students to share their ideas after reading the Reflection Question, if they wish.

Activity 1: Relationship Architecture Breakdown

- Read the directions with your students.
- Emphasize that multiple interpretations are valid if supported by reasoning
- Redirect students away from labeling people as “toxic” and toward identifying patterns
- If the discussion gets personal, bring it back to the structures
- This is a diagnostic activity — observe how students naturally reason

Activity 2: Same Behavior, Different Context

- Read the directions with your students.
- Push students to explain why context matters, not just that it does
- Highlight power dynamics explicitly
- Avoid absolute answers — this is about evaluation, not rules
- Encourage students to notice gray areas

Activity 3: Subtle Red Flags or Growing Pains?

Students will need some colored pencils, markers, crayons, or highlighters for this activity.

- Read through the directions with your students.
- Remind students that context and repetition matter
- Expect disagreement — that’s the goal
- Redirect “always/never” language
- Emphasize that labeling behaviors does not mean labeling people
- Reinforce that growth is possible when patterns are addressed

Activity 4: Choice Mapping – The Ripple Effect

- Read the directions with your students.
- Encourage realistic outcomes, not ideal ones
- Emphasize that inaction is also a choice
- Connect this to future contexts (college, work)
- This activity supports executive decision-making

Activity 5: Scenario Revision Challenge

- Read the directions with your students.
- Encourage specific revisions, not idealized solutions
- Redirect students who jump straight to blaming one person
- Remind students that consistency over time matters more than one conversation
- This activity is about intentional choices, not fixing people



Lesson Plan: The Architecture of Healthy Relationships

Activity 6: Build a Healthy Relationship Framework

- Read the directions with your students.
- Encourage comparison between contexts
- Push students to be concrete, not idealistic
- This is a synthesis activity — expect deeper thinking
- Emphasize transferability to life beyond school