Healthy vs. Unhealthy Friendships

Many times unhealthy relationships lead students to get involved in situations that have a negative impact on their personal and academic goals. Understanding the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships helps students make informed and healthy decisions about the relationships they develop now and in the future.

**ASK:** What are some of the qualities of a healthy friendship? What makes a friendship unhealthy?

Show Discovering Projectable 3.3.1. Have students review the projectable. Ask them how their ideas of a healthy vs. unhealthy friendship compare to the chart?

Summarize by telling students that there is no such thing as a perfect friend, but healthy relationships are built on respect, honesty, trust, and communication. We know a relationship is unhealthy if there is intimidation, dishonesty, violence, or if people are trying to get you involved in situations that could cause harm to you or your loved ones.

**SAY:** It is not always easy to determine if the relationship with our peers and others is healthy or unhealthy without taking a closer look at the situations we find ourselves in with our peers. You can use a technique called “The 3Cs” to analyze how you interact with your friends and decide if the relationship is healthy or unhealthy.

Display Connecting Projectable 3.3.2 and briefly review the 3Cs with the class. Then read the following scenario and invite students to discuss it using the 3Cs as discussion prompts.

**SAY:** You are a cashier at a major sporting goods store. Your best friend wants to come to your register to make purchases for the two of you with a stolen credit card.
**Community Connection**

Encourage students to create posters extending friendship to new students and visitors to the school. Have students find translations for the word “friendship” in multiple languages and write them on the posters. Then students can add clippings from magazines or newspapers displaying examples of friendship from all over the world.

**Family Connection**

Have students use the Family Connection Worksheet to have a discussion with a parent or caregiver about the importance of healthy friendships.

**Applying Across the Curriculum**

**ART** Create a bulletin board with the theme of healthy relationships. Have students use the space to educate the rest of the school about the qualities of healthy relationships and the 3Cs Technique for analyzing situations.

**MATH** Survey a random sample of students on the qualities they most value in a friend. Develop a colorful bar graph to display in a school hallway. Ask for permission to announce the results over the school public address system, especially any surprising results.

**PRACTICING 20 MINUTES**

Explain to students that they are going to have the opportunity to practice analyzing situations using what they know about healthy and unhealthy relationships and the 3Cs technique.

Distribute the **Student Handout Practicing**. Assign each student a scenario. Tell students they will take 5 minutes to review the scenario on their own using the 3Cs technique to clarify what is being asked of them, consider one or two possible outcomes and consequences, and choose if they think this situation represents a healthy or an unhealthy relationship. After the five minutes are up, lead a group discussion for the first scenario using the following prompts. Repeat until all scenarios have been discussed.

- What did you clarify about the situation?
- What outcomes and consequences did you consider? Besides yourself, who did you consider in these outcomes and consequences?
- Describe the healthy or unhealthy relationship qualities the best friend is demonstrating?
- Would this situation make you question the relationship you had with your best friend?
- Based on this situation, what advice would you expect from a responsible adult?

**ASK:** *Can a relationship shift from being healthy to unhealthy or vice versa?*

Summarize by telling students that there will be times when they have to say no to their friends, and understanding how to analyze a situation may also help them discourage their friends from getting into risky situations.
Display Reflecting Projectable 3.3.3. Students use their class notebooks to reflect individually and as a class on what they learned in this lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What?</th>
<th>What are three healthy qualities that you value in a relationship?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So What?</td>
<td>What is a benefit of analyzing a situation before you decide to get involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now What?</td>
<td>How can you apply the 3Cs to be a better friend?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPLYING 5 MINUTES**

Have students analyze a time when they had to suffer consequences because a friend led them into a bad situation. Have students use the 3Cs to describe the scenario and offer their reflections about how their behavior might be different after this lesson.

**ASSESSING**

**PRACTICING (INFORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)** Review the Reflecting Activity to assess how well students understand the 3Cs techniques and if they are able to identify qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

**APPLYING (FORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)** Have students use their own words to describe the 3Cs technique and how it helps them determine if a relationship is healthy or unhealthy. Invite students to reflect on a past situation that would have turned out differently if they had applied the 3Cs technique.

**BUILDING SKILLS BEYOND THE LESSON**

**Note It!**

**APPLYING** Write a note of advice to a student that may be feeling pressure from a friend to get involved in a situation that could have negative consequences. Remind students to use complete sentences and reference the 3Cs technique, and qualities of a healthy relationship in their letter.

**Picture It!**

**PRACTICING** Take photos of all your friends. Make a grouping or collage of the photos and find a word or phrase to place under each picture describing how you demonstrate the qualities of a healthy relationship.

**Write it!**

**APPLYING** Have students write a short story with two different endings about two friends contemplating getting involved in a risky situation. In one ending, the friends decide to go ahead with their risky plans. In the alternate ending, one friend uses the 3Cs technique to convince the friend that the plan is too risky.

**Be Encouraged!**

**PRACTICING** Work with several students to come up with morning announcements that encourage students and staff to demonstrate the qualities of a good relationship. Ask the principal if the announcements can be made once a day for a month.