THE EDUCATION STATE

SCHOOLS

Respectful Relationships

Primary years

We are making Victoria the Education State – a state renowned for its world-leading education system that gives our children the best start to a healthy, happy and prosperous life.

The Victorian Government is investing $21.8 million to support Respectful Relationships in all Victorian schools, because the best relationships are respectful ones.

ABOUT RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Respectful Relationships is a wide ranging initiative to help young Victorians deal with a range of challenges they may face and covers topics including being respectful, resilient and engaged at school and confident in themselves.

Respectful Relationships promotes equality and helps boys as well as girls learn how to build healthy relationships. The initiative prepares them to face challenges by developing problem-solving skills and building empathy, resilience and confidence.

Family violence has a devastating impact on our community and affects people from all walks of life. The Royal Commission into Family Violence recommended Respectful Relationships be introduced to all schools to change attitudes and prevent the prevalence of family violence in future generations.

In 2016 Respectful Relationships became a core component of the Victorian Curriculum and is being taught in all government and Catholic schools and many independent schools.

Respectful Relationships is underpinned by evidence that shows schools can play a key role in preventing family violence by helping students develop an understanding of healthy relationships and respect.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIP LEADING AND PARTNER SCHOOLS

In 2017, more than 120 Victorian Schools are receiving funding and intensive professional development training to become Respectful Relationships Leading Schools and over 900 schools are being mentored by the Leading schools to become Respectful Relationships Partner schools.

These schools are being supported to implement a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships. Schools will look at their culture, practices and policies relating to gender and drive meaningful change, building an enhanced culture of respect and equality as schools and as workplaces.

Leading and Partner Schools are provided with targeted assistance to support and refer students and families who are affected by family violence.

RESILIENCE, RIGHTS & RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships teaching and learning materials for Prep-to-Year 12. They are available online for all schools to use.

The resources have been developed by world-leading experts from Deakin University and the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. These age-appropriate resources for the curriculum delivery and include lesson plans and activities that help students learn and practice social skills and apply them in a positive way to learning, life and relationships.

WHAT IS TAUGHT IN THE PRIMARY YEARS?

In the primary years, the focus of Respectful Relationships is on treating everyone with respect and dignity. The teaching resources provide tailored learning materials for Prep to year 6, including age appropriate lesson plans and activities that help students learn new skills and build confidence and resilience.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CHILDREN LEARNING ABOUT RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS?

We know that a good education is about more than simply getting good marks, it is about supporting children to become contributing members of our communities, with productive and healthy adult lives.

Evidence shows that respectful relationships education:

- helps equip children with the skills to communicate positively and respectfully, build positive relationships and challenge stereotypes that don't support equality
- positively impacts overall academic outcomes, mental health, classroom behaviour and student-teacher relationships (Our Watch, 2016).

HOW CAN RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS HELP ADDRESS FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Family violence is complex and multifaceted but research shows that gender inequality is a key driver (VicHealth, 2007).

More than one in three Australian women aged over 18 has experienced violence since the age of 15 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). A 2013 VicHealth study found that of Australian young people aged 16-24:

- Almost a quarter believe that partner violence can be excused if the person is so angry they lose control
- Only half knew where to get help if they were faced with a problem about violence against women (VicHealth, 2013).

The evidence supporting Respectful Relationships is overwhelming and comes from respected institutions such as the World Health Organization and The Royal Commission into Family Violence. Helping children develop an understanding of healthy relationships and respect is key to preventing family violence in the future.

The Respectful Relationships Education in Schools (RREiS) trialled across 19 schools, and reaching 1,700 teachers and 4,000 students was found to have had a positive effect on; students' attitudes, knowledge and skills, and school policies, culture and ethos.

MORE INFORMATION:

For more information visit:
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