

YEAR LEVEL	3 & 4
TITLE	Family and Relationships (CEPD)
STRAND	CHRISTIAN MORALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
SUGGESTED DURATION	4 - 6 weeks



Unit Focus

The unit focuses on the development of relationships within a family context and the importance of understanding ourselves in relation to the way we feel and respond in given situations.

N.B. In teaching this unit, it is important to acknowledge that some students will be in 'out of home' care, in a blended family or generational family. The term family applies to all carers in these situations.

Achievement Standards

By the end of Year 4, students should be able to:

Investigate how Christians make loving choices that are informed by the example of Jesus.

Unit Outcomes

By the end of the unit students should be able to:

1. Understand and appreciate the relationships within a family.
2. Understand how relationships in our family shape and develop our identity and sense of self-worth.

Key Understandings for Students

- As Christians we recognise that life is a special gift that God shares with us. Part of healthy growth means developing a positive regard for all human persons, beginning with self.
- Human life has distinct stages of development, which involve growth and change.
- As Christians, we are called to live in a relationship. Developing positive relationships requires generosity, respect and forgiveness.
- As human beings made in the image and likeness of God, we have the freedom to make choices. Our choices have consequences, and we are called to respect the rights of self and others in all our choices.

Student Context

Students differ from each other in temperament, abilities, achievements, maturity, styles of learning and in many other ways. They share a common journey towards maturity, passing through recognisable levels of growth.

The developmental levels from early childhood to late adolescence approximately coincide with the six levels around which the general curriculum is organised in Victoria/Tasmania.

In each level, individual development results from the interplay of maturation and experience, occurring in the context of a particular society and culture. Descriptions of typical characteristics of learners in the different levels can often stimulate identification of desirable teaching practice.

The dominant form of learning in Years 3 and 4 is hands-on experience: collecting, matching, contrasting, grouping, predicting and drawing conclusions. Language, a great tool of learning, now displays greater variation in vocabulary and syntax.

They develop an understanding of human development across the lifespan. Students at this level are beginning to understand and articulate the factors that contribute to healthy relationships and emotional and physical safety.

Theological Background for Teachers

- It is in families that we first learn what it means to love and to be loved, and thus what it actually means to be a person. There are many different types of families living in Australia today. When people speak of traditional families, nuclear families, sole-parent families, step families, blended families, and so on they recognise that all these different communities have life and love in common.
- The message of this statement is that families are treasures in our community: they are the foundations of social, cultural and economic life. In the scriptures, Jesus likens discovering the Kingdom of God to the story of a merchant who finds treasures hidden in a field... reminding us that we are truly worth a great deal.
- Why do we say that families are like *hidden* treasures? Because often the contribution they make to well-being of Australian society is unrecognised or undervalued

Role of the Educator:

- *This sacred synod likewise declares that children and young people have a right to be motivated to appraise moral values with a right conscience, to embrace them with a personal adherence, together with a deeper knowledge and love of God. Consequently, it earnestly entreats all those who hold a position of public authority or who are in charge of education to see to it that youth is never deprived of this sacred right.* (Declaration on Christian Education, n. 1).
- This validates the CEPD belief statement that Christian Education for Personal Development is the responsibility of the whole community – parents, teachers, students, Parishes and the wider community. *The marriage between the planned programs and the fostering of high-quality interpersonal relationships among teachers, students, parents and ancillary staff sets the tone and priority of CEPD* (SSEB CEPD Policy, 1999). It also places an imperative on schools to ensure that teachers are developed in their knowledge and understanding and that they are supported with appropriate resources in supporting parents in the development of their children across all stages, especially adolescence.

Dignity of Human Life:

- The centrality of the Catholic belief of the dignity of all human life is fundamental in Christian Education for Personal Development, which enables students to understand their personal development across the various dimensions – spiritual, physical, moral, psychological, social and cultural.
- *“At the heart of the quest for human flourishing is the fundamental moral understanding of the dignity of human persons. Created in the image of God, persons experience themselves as free agents of thought and action, among other human agents and in the non-human environment. The subject of inalienable rights to liberty, social engagement and self-expression, the person bears responsibility towards self and others for the full realization of human potential. As creatures, human persons also experience limits, frustrations and failures in achieving the goals that attract them. So, the quest for the realization of human potential involves the experience of human frailty and invites a continual participation in the gracious creativity of God”.* (Source of Life Religious Education Curriculum Core Document p. 69)
- *God, the Lord of life has entrusted to us the noble mission of safeguarding life and we should carry it out in a manner worthy of ourselves.* (#5, Church in the Modern World, n. 51)
- *We are all equal in the eyes of God... there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus* (Galatians 3:28).
- *Forms of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God’s design* (#5, Church in the Modern World, n. 29)

Informed Conscience:

- Individuals have a responsibility to themselves and others for making informed decisions. Increasingly due to the media and pervading consumerism, students are faced with very real moral and ethical decisions that affect not only their own, but others’ lives.
- *Conscience is the judgement of our reason about the morality of an act. It is the most sacred core and sanctuary of the human person and needs to be informed and followed.* (Romans 14:22; Church in the Modern World, n. 16)
- *Conscience binds and must be followed. However, one must equally strive to develop an informed conscience based on the teachings of Christ. Conscience is not simply a still, small voice within us, but the ultimate judgement every person is required to make as to whether this or that action is right, wrong or acceptable.* (Church in the Modern World, n. 16)
- *All conscience formation and decision-making should be free from coercion for ‘freedom is the exceptional sign of the image of God in the human person’.* (Church in the Modern World, n. 17; Declaration on Religious Freedom, n. 1 and Religious Liberty, n. 2)
- Catholic theology stresses the important role that conscience exercises in determining right from wrong. It enables us to recognize what is loving and what is not, what helps growth and what inhibits it. It is the final norm for judging the morality of our actions. It can be defined as the attempt to discern the moral values at stake within particular situations. No one else’s judgement can take its place.
- In order to be fully moral, that is truly human, we need to continue to form our conscience with the assistance of Church teachings. It is an approach that respects human choosing in the midst of the

believing faith community. Moreover, a Christian person may, after listening to the Church's teaching and reflecting seriously on his or her own situation, decide that the right action for him or her is in conflict with aspects of Church teaching.

- 'Catholic education concerns the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, mental and affective domains of individuals and is permeated with values of the Catholic Tradition. Catholic schools have a particular responsibility to present authentic Church teaching in ways that ensure students are able to critically engage and take up this teaching and the values which underpin it. Students ought to be encouraged to reflect on it in the context of their experience and, with an informed conscience, make choices in its light. For Catholic Education to operate at the intersection of faith and life, the breadth of student experience must be acknowledged and contemporary issues that are socially and personally sensitive must be examined.' (*Teaching Contemporary Issues: Catholic Education Office. Archdiocese Canberra & Goulburn.*)
- 'We are moulded and re-moulded by those who have loved us. And though that love may pass, we are their work for better or worse... The love - or lack of it - especially by our early carers but also by later ones. is absorbed into our psychological systems as easily and effortlessly as the air we breathe. We are not conscious of breathing. Nor are we conscious of the pervasive effect of the love of those who nurture us.' ('Inform' Current thinking on Catholic issues October 1997)
- Relationships and sexuality education could be defined as the process whereby young people acquire knowledge, understanding and skills and develop beliefs, attitudes and values about their sexuality within a moral and ethical framework. It includes acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs and values about identity and intimacy. It encompasses sexual development, reproductive health, mental health, interpersonal relationships, affection, intimacy and gender roles. (Guidelines for Sexuality Education in Brigidine Schools)

The Catholic Church teaches that:

- Sexuality is a gift for the human person to enhance self and relationships.
 - Sexual intimacy finds its fullness in the commitment of a marriage relationship.
 - Sexual intimacy integrates the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of the human person.
 - Sexual acts have two functions: They are both unitive and procreative.
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- Unitive means that the couple are brought together in a special way through intercourse. Procreative means that sexual intercourse has the potential to start a new life. Artificial contraception divides these two functions and therefore makes sexual intercourse incomplete.
 - Homosexual acts cannot be procreative.
 - Sexual acts that do not respect the value of each person, diminish the dignity and wellbeing of individuals and affect the wider community.

The Church teaches this because:

- We are created with dignity that gives us rights, responsibilities and uniqueness.
- Every human act, sexual and otherwise, should enhance the image, dignity and respect of individuals.
- Of the need to maintain standards, to protect and promote these values.

Our Faith Community understands:

- While we are called to life giving relationships, commitments and responsibilities, our failures do not condemn us, but through forgiveness and amendment, we continue to seek fullness of life.

- While Church laws and teachings serve the community and present values and standards for all, each individual must conscientiously live one's faith in real life situations.
- The spirit of God is within each one of us.

Major Assessment Task

Students create a mural, using some of their responses from the unit, that explores the elements of family relationships and how our identity is shaped by these.

The visual should include:

- The identification of who is in the student's family
- Examples of relationships among family members
- Feelings and behaviours
- Growth and change

Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

Focussing Activity

Explain to the students that they are going to create an exhibition in the classroom titled, '*All About Family*'. Students make an artwork depicting their family. These are displayed in the exhibition space. On a strip of card or paper, students describe their family in a couple of words. My Family is ...

Ask the students to think about why they chose particular words to describe their family. What example could they give? (e.g. My family is good fun. Why? Because we do lots of things together that are good fun like playing board games.)

Relationship-building describes the process of establishing emotional connections with others, starting from birth, which are based on trust and intimacy. Through relationships, children **discover who they are and learn to understand others.**

- Make a set of feelings or emotions cards. Examples of emotions include Happy, Sad, Angry, serious, shy, dreamy, gloomy, afraid, excited, anxious, peaceful, hopeful, relieved, worried etc. Discuss these.
- Ask children to recall times when they have felt particularly loved. Draw/write about that situation, identifying the people and feelings involved. Children then sort class responses into categories according to whether the situation involves children and parents, other family members or friends.
- Ask students to consider the feelings they have toward their family. How does my family support me when I am sad, angry, anxious, worried, gloomy? How does my family make me happy, excited, safe, loved?
- What do I say and/or do for my family when they feel sad, angry, anxious, worried, gloomy? How do I help my family feel happy, excited, safe, loved?
- Read '*Let's Eat*' by Ana <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVuZYxei4ko> Draw your family at your Dinner table. Does anyone have special seats, do you have a special meal that you all like to eat?

- Each student writes their family's surname in decorated bubble or graffiti style writing. This may be done using technology or by hand. Students decorate inside and around their name with images, words and colours that reflect the unique identity of their family members. (eg. What they like to do together, shared talents, favourite foods etc.). When this is complete, students in small groups share their work.
- Reinforce the fact that families are a group of people who love and care for each other and that group may have many combinations. A family can mean the one we were born into, or one we or others have chosen for us. Have students reflect on a series of questions that are connected to the formation of their own identity (eg. I am terrific at... ; I like myself when I need to learn something new; My favourite way to solve a problem is ...; I am the best at ...). These responses may be written around a self-portrait of the student.
- What are the ingredients necessary for a healthy relationship? Brainstorm a list of necessary ingredients. In pairs, students write a recipe using these ingredients (eg. 3 cups of listening ears, 2 tablespoons of kindness etc).
- Use the list of ingredients for a healthy relationship to place on a continuum to reflect their importance and value. Encourage student voice to justify placement of the ingredients on the continuum.
- How does my family show me love? (eg. They help me learn new things, take me places, encourage me to try my best, help me celebrate special achievements, etc).
- What qualities are important in a great relationship with family? Students make a list of these qualities; this can be done in pairs or in small groups. Students then pick a quality from the list and an advertisement using Prezi or Piccollage.
- As we grow our responsibilities change. Ask students to create a timeline or growth from being a baby to adulthood. Label each element of growth.
- Identify situations where students have needed to listen, compromise and forgive (e.g. arguments over the TV, bedtime, keeping school rules, bedtimes, clothes allowance, pets). Answer the following questions verbally, in written form or picture/diagram:
 - How did you feel?
 - How do you think the other person felt?
 - What was the outcome?
 - What would happen if you or your friends did not listen, compromise or forgive?

Note: The concept of 'compromising' will need to be explored as a class.

- Introduce the concept of conflict by giving examples of conflict (eg. in the media, the classroom, and playground etc.). Identify the choices and actions that have led to this conflict. Explain to the students that conflict needs to be resolved through a process of reconciliation. Explore the notion of reconciliation, creating a Y chart. (Feels like; Looks like; Sounds like).
- delete as is repeated below
- Make a comic strip showing how, as they have grown older, they show their love for family and friends in different ways.
- Relationships within families are a series of different connections, strengthened by showing love and care. Using the ideas and images shared from the previous learning experiences, students stand in a circle with a ball of

string. Each time a person calls out a way to strengthen connections and relationships the ball is passed to that person, creating eventually a web of connections.