

A young woman with dark, curly hair is shown in profile, looking out of a window. The background is a blurred view of a city street with buildings and a railing. The image has a blue and white geometric overlay on the left side.

TEACHING RESOURCE: YEARS 9–12

# REACH OUT BEFORE YOU FREAK OUT

Twenty-minute video-based activities that show how reaching out for support can change students' experience of everyday issues.

**REACH  
OUT.COM**

# About ReachOut Australia

ReachOut is Australia's leading online mental health organisation for young people and their parents. Our practical support, tools and tips help young people get through anything from everyday issues to tough times – and the information we offer parents makes it easier for them to help their teenagers, too.

We've been changing the way people access help since we launched the world's first online mental health service nearly 20 years ago. Everything we create is based on the latest evidence and is designed with experts, and young people or their parents. This is why our digital self-help tools are trusted, relevant and easy to use.

Available for free anytime and pretty much anywhere, ReachOut is accessed by 132,000 people in Australia every month. That's more than 1.58 million people each year.



# Teaching resource

## Reach Out Before You Freak Out

### What's inside

About ReachOut Schools	4
About this resource	5
Links to curriculum areas	6
Getting help	7

### Activities

School life	8
Life online	10
The future	12
Friendships	14

# About ReachOut Schools

**ReachOut Schools helps your school take a whole-of-community approach to developing student mental health and wellbeing.**

ReachOut Schools provides free educational resources, digital tools and practical tips to encourage the development of positive mental health and wellbeing across schools, and to extend the impact of existing programs.

The service features easy-to-understand information on a full range of mental health and wellbeing issues. Our school resources include innovative digital apps and online games to help students learn to take control of their mental health.

Staff and parents can use ReachOut to better understand the issues young people face and as a safe place they can recommend and refer students to.

School professionals can also access a range of professional development webinars and information, with resources added throughout the year.



If you haven't already registered, sign up to receive our weekly update with practical wellbeing activities and resources at <https://schools.au.reachout.com/sign-up>



# About this resource

**At ReachOut, we believe that schools are one of the best environments for supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people. Normalising help-seeking, understanding that help is available for every type of experience, and knowing that informal and formal interventions can make them feel better are powerful messages to send to young people.**

Most young people don't even know that help is available to assist them to cope with every type of experience, or that interventions can make them feel better. But what do we mean by 'help-seeking'? It starts with understanding that things can be better, and includes everything from self-help (such as watching a video, reading some tips, or trying an app to build skills) to talking to a mate or a professional about what's going on. That's where the video series *Reach Out Before You Freak Out* comes in.

## Understanding this resource

This resource is designed to facilitate classroom conversations and activities around normalising self-help and help-seeking for students in Years 9–12. It uses a series of short documentaries that delve into young people's worlds to show them that things can be better, and that they have the power to help themselves. Young people we talked with identified true stories as one of the best ways to help them feel connected – giving them a sense of hope, optimism and positivity.

These classroom activities are designed to promote critical thinking and problem solving in safe, respectful and connected classroom environments.

For more info on developing a safe and respectful classroom environment, download our poster *10 Tips for a Safe and Respectful Classroom*: [ReachOut.click/ROBYFO1](https://reachout.click/ROBYFO1)

## Visible Thinking

The classroom activities are based on Ron Ritchart's *Visible Thinking* framework: [ReachOut.click/ROBYFO2](https://reachout.click/ROBYFO2)

*Visible Thinking* is a broad and flexible framework for enriching classroom learning and fostering students' intellectual development. It's designed to create an environment that improves a student's learning and wellbeing outcomes. A 'thinking classroom':

- deepens students' understanding of content
- creates greater motivation for learning
- develops students' learning abilities
- shifts the classroom culture towards a community of thinkers and learners.



### Appropriate for Years 9–12

This series of mini-documentaries was created for young people aged 15 years and older (Years 9–12). Some of the videos deal with tough, sophisticated topics, so we recommend you don't use this teaching resource for students in Year 8 or below.

As with all mental health and wellbeing topics, make sure your students understand the help and support options available to them in your school. Also, always link them to further free, anonymous help options by printing the 'Getting help' handout on page 7 and/or by sharing this link with them: [ReachOut.click/GettingHelp](https://reachout.click/GettingHelp)



## Links to curriculum areas

The activities in this teaching resource have been designed to be used in a flexible way across a range of school settings. They map to the HPE Curriculum, but are also an ideal activity to use as part of a school's wellbeing lessons, homeroom time or pastoral care days.

### Links to the Australian HPE Curriculum and NSW PDHPE Curriculum: Years 9 and 10

Australian HPE Curriculum	NSW PDHPE Curriculum <i>This will be updated in 2019.</i>
<p><b>Personal, Social and Community Health</b></p> <p>Evaluate factors that shape identities and critically analyse how individuals impact the identities of others (ACPPS089).</p> <p>Examine the impact of changes and transitions on relationships (ACPPS090).</p> <p>Propose, practise and evaluate responses in situations where external influences may impact on their ability to make healthy and safe choices (ACPPS092).</p> <p>Plan, implement and critique strategies to enhance health, safety and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPS096).</p>	<p><b>Strand 1: Self and relationships</b></p> <p>Outcome 5.1: A student analyses how they can support their own and others' sense of self.</p> <p>Outcome 5.2: A student evaluates their capacity to reflect on and respond positively to challenges.</p> <p><b>Strand 3: Individual and community health</b></p> <p>Outcome 5.6: A student analyses attitudes, behaviours and consequences related to health issues affecting young people.</p>

### Links to the Australian Curriculum: General capabilities

- Personal and social capability
- Ethical understanding
- Critical and creative thinking







## HANDOUT

# Getting help

When something comes up, one of the best and most effective things you can do to feel better is to talk to someone. Here are a few ways you can talk to someone anonymously and for free.



<p><b>Lifeline</b> For all ages</p>		<p>Provides all Australians access to crisis support and suicide prevention services.</p>	<p><b>13 11 14</b> Available 24/7 <b>Chat with us online</b> Visit <a href="https://lifeline.org.au">lifeline.org.au</a> Available 7 pm – 12 am AEST</p>
<p><b>Kids Helpline</b> For ages 5–25</p>		<p>Free 24/7 phone and online counselling service.</p>	<p><b>1800 55 1800</b> Available 24/7 <b>Chat with us online</b> Visit <a href="https://kidshelpline.com.au">kidshelpline.com.au</a> Available 8–12 am AEST</p>
<p><b>Suicide Call Back Service</b> For ages 15+</p>		<p>Provides immediate telephone counselling and support in a crisis.</p>	<p><b>1300 659 467</b> Available 24/7 <b>Chat with us online</b> Available 24/7 Visit <a href="https://suicidecallbackservice.org.au">suicidecallbackservice.org.au</a></p>
<p><b>ReachOut Forums</b> For ages 14–25</p>		<p>Supportive, safe and anonymous forums for talking with other young people.</p>	<p><b>Chat with others online</b> Available 24/7 Visit <a href="https://ReachOut.click/Forums">ReachOut.click/Forums</a></p>

## ACTIVITY

# School life

School can be a source of many amazing experiences for young people, but it can also be a place where they can experience difficulties. The video clip 'School Life' considers the experiences of a diverse group of young people, the challenges they faced at school (including bullying, exam stress, racism and fitting in) and the ways they approached help-seeking.

### Equipment needed

- access to the video clip:  
[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity01](https://reachout.click/SchoolLifeActivity01)
- copy of the 'School life' worksheet for each student

Alternatively, you can download a copy of the video file:  
[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity02](https://reachout.click/SchoolLifeActivity02)

### Time

20 minutes



### Instructions

1. Ask the students to individually brainstorm examples of difficult experiences young people at their school commonly experience. (Students may use the ideas in the video to help get them started, but encourage them to think of new ideas.)
2. Ask the students to pair with a partner, then to share their ideas and collate them into one list.
3. Ask the students to work with their partner to choose one difficulty from their shared list.
4. For this difficulty, ask the students to write down three practical strategies that a student who is experiencing this difficulty could use to help them feel better. Encourage the students to check out this page for ideas: [ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity03](https://reachout.click/SchoolLifeActivity03)
5. Invite the students to share their ideas as a class.
6. Collate the students' ideas on the whiteboard as a class.
7. Ask the students to write down from the class list three strategies that they think would be most helpful in their own life.

### Debrief

School life can be a source of many positive and negative experiences. It's important that all students know practical ways to seek help for any difficulty they are experiencing, no matter how big or small they think their problem is.

### Further resources to share with your school community

#### Students

- Slowing down at school:  
[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity04](https://reachout.click/SchoolLifeActivity04)
- 5 apps you need for when school starts:  
[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity05](https://reachout.click/SchoolLifeActivity05)

#### Parents

- Tips for supporting your child with stress:  
[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity06](https://reachout.click/SchoolLifeActivity06)

#### Teachers

- *Managing Exam Stress* Action Pack:  
[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity07](https://reachout.click/SchoolLifeActivity07)



School life can be a source of many amazing experiences, but it also presents heaps of challenges. Remember that no matter how big or small a problem seems, there is always some kind of help available. Knowing practical ways to seek help and feel better can make a big difference to your mental health and wellbeing.

*Write your answers in the spaces provided*

1. What difficulties do young people experience at your school?	
2. Add any new ideas from your partner's list.	
3. Choose one difficulty from your combined list.	
4. Describe three practical strategies for feeling better about this difficulty	
5. Choose three practical strategies from the class list that you would find most helpful.	



### School life: Reach out before you tune out.

From making friends and stressing about exams, to bullying and racism, we're here for whatever life throws at you:

[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity03](https://ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity03)

### Take-away activity

Take a moment to check how you're currently feeling, with our simple online quiz. You'll get a good sense of how you're going right now, plus you'll identify some good options for next steps that suit you.

[ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity08](https://ReachOut.click/SchoolLifeActivity08)

## ACTIVITY

# Life online

Life online can result in both positive and negative experiences in a young person's life. Giving young people an opportunity to discuss what life online means to them can be an engaging, empowering and helpful experience.

## Equipment needed

- access to the video clip:  
[ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity01](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity01)
- copy of the 'Life online' worksheet for each student
- butcher's paper and coloured textas for each group

Alternatively, you can download a copy of the video file:  
[ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity02](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity02)

## Time

20 minutes

## Instructions

As a group, watch the video clip 'Life Online'. The clip looks at how life online can be both harmful and helpful to young people, and suggests practical ways to seek help. After watching the video clip, students will work in groups of 3–4 to complete the following activity.

## Activity:

### Generate, sort, connect and elaborate

1. Divide the students into groups of 3–4. Ask them to reflect on the topic 'Life online', and to generate a list of ideas, initial thoughts and reflections that come to mind about this topic.
2. Ask the students to sort their ideas on butcher's paper according to how central or tangential they are. Place central ideas near the centre of the sheet of paper and related ideas on the outer edges.
3. Ask the students to draw connecting lines between ideas that have something in common.
4. Ask the students to re-watch the video clip 'Life Online'.
5. Ask the students to elaborate on their initial ideas/ thoughts and to add any new ideas that expand on, extend or add to those initial ideas.
6. Ask each group to share their mind map with the whole class and to explain how the ideas are connected to each other.

## Debrief

Life online can result in many positive and negative experiences in a young person's life. Providing opportunities for them to consider this topic, draw connections and elaborate on these thoughts can be an empowering experience for young people.

## Further resources to share with your school community

### Students

- 7 reasons to use the ReachOut forums:  
[ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity03](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity03)
- 5 strategies for dealing with cyberbullying:  
[ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity04](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity04)

### Parents

- Keep your teenager safe from cyberbullying:  
[ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity05](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity05)

### Teachers

- Talking about online safety:  
[ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity06](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity06)



This activity will give you a chance to discuss with others how life online can be both helpful and harmful, and to identify ways to keep yourself well and safe when hanging out there.



## Life online: Reach out before you opt out.

From learning to love the skin you're in, to finding an online support squad, we're here for whatever life throws at you:

[ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity08](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity08)

### Take-away activity

Go to ReachOut.com's Tools and Apps section via [ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity07](https://ReachOut.click/LifeOnlineActivity07) to check out things that can help you to achieve your goals in life.

1. Download one of the tools or apps suggested and set a goal to use it three times this week.
2. Reflect on how effective you found this app or tool in improving or supporting your mental health and wellbeing.

Watch the video 'Life Online' and write down any ideas, thoughts and reflections that come to mind.

## ACTIVITY

# The future

Thinking about the future can generate a mix of emotions in young people, such as excitement, fear, anxiety, happiness and sadness – sometimes all at once. Giving young people time to discuss how they think and feel about the future is important for their mental health and wellbeing.

## Equipment needed

- access to the video clip:  
[ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity01](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity01)
- copy of the worksheet 'The future' for each student

Alternatively, you can download a copy of the video file:  
[ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity02](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity02)

## Time

20 minutes

## Instructions

As a group, watch the video clip 'The Future'. The clip examines the thoughts and feelings of a group of young people about their future, and how these impact on their mental health and wellbeing.



## Activity: Colour, symbol and image

Working individually

1. As you are watching the video clip 'The Future', make a note of the things you find interesting, important or insightful. When you finish, choose the three things that most stand out for you.
  - For the first one, choose a colour that you feel best represents or captures its essence.
  - For the second one, choose a symbol that you feel best represents or captures its essence.
  - For the third one, choose an image that you feel best represents or captures its essence.

Working with a partner

2. With your partner, share your colour, symbol and image one at a time, and describe what each one represents from the video clip. Explain why you chose each one to represent that idea.

## Debrief

Thoughts of the future can generate mixed emotions in young people, including excitement, fear, anxiety, happiness and sadness. Sometimes they experience all these emotions at once. Young people value being in control of their futures. Providing tools and strategies to help with this process is a great way to empower our young people.

## Further resources to share with your school community

### Students

- Setting goals:  
[ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity03](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity03)
- The inside scoop on studying at TAFE:  
[ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity04](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity04)

### Parents

- Supportive parenting and teenagers:  
[ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity05](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity05)

### Teachers

- Building self-efficacy at school:  
[ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity06](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity06)



# The future

As you watch the video clip 'The Future', make a note of the things you find interesting, important or insightful.

Choose three of these things that most stand out for you.

For the first one, choose a colour that you feel best represents or captures its essence.	
For the second one, choose a symbol that you feel best represents or captures its essence.	
For the third one, choose an image that you feel best represents or captures its essence.	



### The future: Reach out before you flip out.

From deciding what you want to do, to feeling overwhelmed and/or low, we're here for whatever life throws at you:

[ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity08](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity08)

### Take-away activity

Setting goals is a great way to give yourself direction, focus and motivation. Whether your goals are big or small, the first step in achieving them is deciding what they are. Learn how to define your goals and to put together a plan for how you'll achieve them by checking out this article: [ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity07](https://ReachOut.click/TheFutureActivity07)

## ACTIVITY

# Friendships

Friendships are an extremely important and influential factor in a young person's life. Good friends are there for each other in both good and bad times and can bring out the best in each other. Providing an opportunity for young people to discuss what makes a good friend and ways to manage their friendships is a great way to empower, support and engage them.

### Equipment needed

- access to the video clip:  
[ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity01](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity01)
- copy of the 'Friendships' worksheet for each student

Alternatively, you can download a copy of the video file:  
[ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity02](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity02)

### Time

20 minutes

### Instructions

As a group, watch the video clip 'Friendships'. The clip examines the thoughts and feelings young people have about friendships. They consider how friends can have both a good and a bad influence in their life, and what to look for in a good friend. After watching the video clip, students will work in groups of 3–4 to complete the following activity.



### Activity: 'Question starts'

1. After watching the video clip, groups of 3–4 students brainstorm at least 12 interesting questions they have about this topic. Here are some suggestions to help your students get started:
  - Why ...?
  - How would it be different if ...?
  - What are the reasons ...?
  - Suppose that ...?
  - What if ...?
  - What if we knew ...?
  - What is the purpose of ...?
  - What would change if ...?
2. As a group, review the brainstormed list and put a star next to five questions that seem the most interesting to explore. Ask the students to select one or more of the starred questions to discuss in groups for the next five minutes.
3. As a class group, share some of the questions that were discussed and explain why they were interesting to explore.
4. Discuss as a class group new ideas, strategies or ways of thinking that you now have about this topic that you didn't have before the activity.

### Debrief

Friendships play a very important role in the life of a young person. Providing opportunities for young people to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills in this area can make a big difference to their experience of life.

### Further resources to share with your school community

#### Students

- What makes a good friend:  
[ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity03](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity03)
- Dealing with a toxic friendship:  
[ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity04](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity04)

#### Parents

- Teach your teenager how to be a good friend:  
[ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity05](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity05)

#### vtvvvv

- Empathy for resilience:  
[ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity06](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity06)

WORKSHEET  
**Friendships**



Good mates are there for you in both good times and bad, and they can definitely come in handy when you're bored on a Sunday. But remember that not every friend is the right friend for you. During this activity, reflect on what are positive and negative qualities in friendships, and suggest ways to find friends that bring out the best in you.

In groups of 3–4 students, brainstorm at least 12 questions you have about friendships.

Here are some suggestions to help get you started:

- Why ...?*
- How would it be different if ...?*
- What are the reasons ...?*
- Suppose that ...?*
- What if ...?*
- What if we knew ...?*
- What is the purpose of ...?*
- What would change if ...?*

Write your 12 questions below.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	

What new ideas, strategies or insights have you gained from this activity?

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**Friendships: Reach out before you bail out.**

From finding your people, to identifying a toxic friendship, we're here for whatever life throws at you: [ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity08](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity08)

**Take-away activity**

Do you have, or have you had, a friend who hasn't brought out the best in you? Check out this quiz to suss out whether that friendship is toxic: [ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity07](https://ReachOut.click/FriendshipsActivity07)

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