



LESSON PLAN

Lesson 4: Safe Friends and Brave Voices

LESSON SUMMARY

In this lesson, students explore what it means to be a safe and supportive friend while travelling in their community. They learn that protective behaviours aren't just for keeping themselves safe - they also protect and support others. Through inclusive discussions, scenario-based games and creative activities, students practise how to look out for peers, speak up respectfully and include others in shared travel situations. They learn to recognise when someone might need help, such as feeling left out, unsure or unsafe, and how to respond with kindness and responsibility. The lesson emphasises diversity and inclusion, encouraging students to notice and support peers who may have different needs, backgrounds or ways of communicating. By designing their own "Safe Travel Friend" badges and pledges, students commit to using protective behaviours to create safer, more inclusive journeys for everyone.

SEQUENCE TITLE: Protective Behaviours - Pathways to Staying Safe



LEVELS

Years 3–4



LESSON NUMBER

4 of 6



LESSON LENGTH

60 minutes

CURRICULUM AREAS



LEARNING AREAS

· Health and Physical Education



CAPABILITIES

· Personal and Social Capability

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Creating a Safe Social Space for Participation and Learning



In line with delivery of respectful relationships education, it's important to ensure that discussions about safe and unsafe situations happen in a supportive, caring classroom environment. Additional guidance on creating a safe classroom space can be found in the Department of Education's **Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR)** and **Building Respectful Relationships (BRR)** teaching and learning materials.

Staff should practise protective interrupting as part of their safeguarding responsibilities. If a student begins to share personal, traumatic, or sensitive information (such as abuse) in front of others, the teacher should calmly and respectfully interrupt where necessary to protect the child's privacy and wellbeing. For example, you might say, "Thank you for contributing, but I think we need to stop there. I'll follow up with you later."

It is essential to follow up with the student afterwards in a private setting. Reassure them that they have not done anything wrong and thank them for speaking up. Ask if there is anything they would like to talk about further, and gently remind them that if they share information indicating they may be unsafe, you have a duty to report this in line with safeguarding procedures.

This approach should be used consistently alongside other protective strategies, such as encouraging students to use "my friend" statements (for example, "My friend once..." or "Someone I know...") instead of sharing personal details. This allows students to explore ideas with greater emotional distance. Providing a question box for private queries or concerns after the lesson can also help students seek support safely.

Achievement Standard (Extract)



Health and Physical Education:

By the end of Level 4, students apply personal and social skills and strategies to interact respectfully with others. They describe and apply protective behaviours and help-seeking strategies that can help keep themselves and others safe in online and offline situations.

Personal and Social Capability:

By the end of Level 4, students explain a range of ways to support themselves and others in personal and social contexts, including consideration of the outcomes of behaviour and actions. They explain the importance of inclusion, collaboration and different perspectives in different contexts.

Victorian Curriculum 2.0 Content Descriptions



LEARNING AREAS

Health and Physical Education

VC2HP4P05 Describe how valuing diversity influences wellbeing and identify actions that promote inclusion in their communities.

VC2HP4P08 Describe and apply protective behaviours and help-seeking strategies in a range of online and offline situations at home, school and in the community.

CAPABILITIES

Personal and Social Capability

VC2CP4S02 Strategies for providing peer support, an extended range of help-seeking and other productive coping strategies, and when and how to use them.

VC2CP4S05 Strategies that support working independently and responsible decision-making.

VC2CP4O03 The importance of including others in activities, groups and games, and how this can be enabled.

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PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

- Students understand the concept of trusted adults and safe places.
- Students have explored personal boundaries and protective behaviours.
- Students have experience travelling with peers or in groups.

VOCABULARY

Safe friend – someone who helps others feel safe and supported.

Inclusive – making sure everyone feels welcome and involved.

Speak up – using kind and clear words to help or protect others.

Peer support – helping friends when they need it.

Protective behaviour – actions that help keep you and others safe.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Whiteboard and markers.
- Student journals or notebooks.
- [Safe Friend \(Travel Dilemma\) Scenario Cards](#)
- [Friendship Footprints](#) worksheet
- Video: [Bruno Mars – Count on Me \(Official Lyric Video\)](#)



LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will learn how to be a safe and supportive friend while travelling. They will explore how to look out for others, speak up respectfully and include peers in shared travel situations. They will practise protective behaviours that promote kindness, responsibility and peer safety, recognising that being a safe friend means protecting others, especially those who may feel left out, unsafe or unheard.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- I can describe what a safe friend does while travelling.
- I can explain how to support someone who feels unsafe or left out.
- I can act out ways to include others and speak up respectfully.
- I can identify protective behaviours that help me and others stay safe.
- I can recognise when someone might need extra support and include them in safe ways.

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

- Be mindful that students may travel in different ways – some independently, others with carers or support workers. Ensure examples reflect walking, riding, public transport, and assisted travel (e.g., mobility aids, interpreters).
- Avoid assumptions about who students travel with or what “normal” looks like.
- Some students may have experienced exclusion, bullying, or unsafe travel situations. Frame discussions around empathy and empowerment, not blame or shame.
- Encourage students to notice not just their own early warning signs, but also signs that a peer might need help (e.g., withdrawn body language, nervous expression, silence).
- Be aware of friendship groups and social hierarchies. Use mixed pairings or small groups to foster inclusion and reduce cliques during activities.

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Enable

- Use illustrated cards or picture sequences to model safe friend behaviours. Allow students to point, match, or describe.
- Offer pre-drawn badge outlines with symbols and slogans to colour and label.
- Pair students with supportive peers during group work and freeze-frame activities.

Extend

- Design posters encouraging safe friendship during travel. Include slogans like "Kindness on the Move" or "We've Got Each Other's Back."
- Write a short story or script where a character uses protective behaviours to support a peer. Reflect on how it changed the outcome.



USEFUL LINKS

[Vic Dept. of Education: Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Level 3-4](#)

Topic #2 – Personal and Cultural Strengths

Activity #1: How we use our personal and cultural strengths

Activity #3: Using strengths to grow respect

Activity #4: Using our strengths in different situations

Activity #5: Respect for diversity



ASSESSMENT

- Completed "Friendship Footprints" worksheet with thoughtful peer support strategies.
- Designed "Badge of Honour" with inclusive protective behaviour.
- Contributions to scenario discussions and freeze-frame activities.
- Verbal reflection during circle time.



LEARNING CONTINUUM

Focus: Understanding and practising protective behaviours by being a safe and supportive friend when travelling; recognising and responding to peers' needs to promote safety, inclusion and wellbeing for all.

Learning Continuum	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Students explore how to be a safe and supportive friend when travelling in their community. They learn that protective behaviours help keep everyone safe, and that kindness, inclusion and speaking up with a brave voice are key to creating safe, shared journeys.	Students identify what a safe friend looks and sounds like with teacher support. They name one or two simple actions (e.g. helping, waiting, asking if someone is okay) that show kindness or help others feel safe. They begin to recognise when someone might need help and understand that telling an adult is part of being a safe friend.	Students describe several ways to be a safe and supportive friend when travelling. They can explain how actions such as including others, speaking kindly, or seeking help protect and support peers. They begin to connect protective behaviours with fairness, inclusion and responsibility for others' safety.	Students confidently explain how being a safe friend promotes inclusion, wellbeing and community safety. They demonstrate protective behaviours independently and suggest ways to support peers with different needs. They use a brave voice to act or speak up respectfully.

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ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Organising Element	Action	Insufficient Evidence	Quality Criteria		
Understanding of protective behaviours	1. Describe what a 'safe friend' does when travelling.	1.0 No response or unclear idea of what a safe friend is.	1.1 Identifies one simple behaviour of a safe friend when prompted (e.g., "helps someone").	1.2 Describes several actions or words a safe friend might use to keep others safe and included.	1.3 Explains how being a safe friend helps protect and support others, connecting to wellbeing and safety outcomes.
Application of inclusion and empathy	2. Recognise and describe ways to support peers who feel unsafe or left out.	2.0 No relevant suggestion or shows limited awareness of others' feelings.	2.1 Names one way to help a peer with teacher support (e.g., "ask if they're okay").	2.2 Describes actions that show empathy or inclusion (e.g., "invite them to walk with me" or "tell a teacher").	2.3 Explains how their action can change how someone feels or make travel safer for everyone.
Understanding of protective behaviours and brave voice strategies to help self and others	3. Demonstrate ways to speak up respectfully or seek help.	3.0 Does not participate or gives unrelated response.	3.1 Suggests a basic way to tell someone or speak up when prompted.	3.2 Shows or describes a respectful way to use their voice to support themselves or a peer.	3.3 Explains why speaking up or telling a trusted adult is a protective behaviour that supports community safety.
Personal and social capability	4. Suggest and commit to an action that promotes safe and inclusive travel for all.	4.0 No suggestion or off-topic response.	4.1 Suggests a simple action they could take (e.g., "wait for someone").	4.2 Describes a realistic and inclusive action and its positive effect on others.	4.3 Proposes and justifies a specific, inclusive action and explains how it supports diversity, respect and peer safety.

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Structure of lesson:

1

LESSON PHASE: Introduction (Hook)



TIMING: 10 mins

Play video [Bruno Mars - Count on Me \(Official Lyric Video\)](#) to set a warm, positive tone.

Introduce the idea that being kind and reliable helps everyone feel safer when travelling.

Explain that today we'll link the song's message about friendship to encourage everyone to be brave and use our voices and protective behaviours to keep ourselves and each other safe when travelling.

Reinforce: *When we're **aware** of what's happening around us, such as people, places, sounds and feelings, we can make **safe choices** and speak up for ourselves and others.*

Brainstorm: What kinds of minor problems or challenges can happen when we travel to and from school or elsewhere in our community, that stop us being safe or having fun?

Record a list on the board.

Examples:

• **Walking**

- Arguing with a friend about which way to walk
- A group leaving someone out when walking together.
- A dog barking or running up unexpectedly
- Strong winds making it hard to ride or walk.
- Sudden rain and no raincoat.

• **Bike Riding**

- A bike chain comes off or tyre goes flat on the way.
- Friends daring each other to go too fast or do tricks.
- Sharing a narrow path with walkers and prams or dogs.
- A bag or scooter left in the way.
- Loose gravel, potholes or uneven paths making it hard to ride

• **Public Transport**

- Feeling squashed or uncomfortable on a crowded bus.
- Someone being noisy, rude or pushing to get on.
- A stranger trying to start a conversation.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- Provide students with printed lyric excerpts or key phrases from Count on Me with simple icons (e.g., heart = kindness, helping hand = support).

Extend

- Ask why do students think being kind and reliable makes travel safer? Encourage deeper reasoning that connects friendship behaviours to community wellbeing.
- Invite students to share real examples from their own travel experiences, explaining what they did and how it made others feel.

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LESSON PHASE: Explicit Teaching & Modelled Learning



TIMING: 15 mins

Introduce the idea of being a **Safe Friend** during travel.

Explain that just like we have trusted adults that we can rely on, we can also be a trusted peer or a safe friend that others can count on.

Write on the board: What does a safe friend look like, sound like and feel like?

Record student ideas under three columns. For example:

- **Looks like:** a helping hand, walking together, checking in, waiting for someone who's left behind.
- **Sounds like:** "Are you okay?", "Let's wait for them", "You can sit with us."
- **Feels like:** safe, included, supported, welcome.

Emphasise:

- Safe friends notice when someone might feel left out because of their ability, language, culture or confidence, and takes action to include them.
- A safe friend uses protective behaviours to keep others safe - not just themselves.
This includes noticing early warning signs in others (e.g., someone looking nervous or unsure) and offering help or speaking up.
- Some friends may need extra support like help understanding directions, navigating steps or feeling confident to speak.
- Being a safe friend means noticing these needs and responding with kindness and respect. Sometimes this means being brave and standing up for others even though you may be the only one.

Friendship Footprints

Introduce the concept of 'Friendship Footprint' as a simple, visual metaphor.

Explain: *Imagine the places we go as a path everyone is walking on. When we do something that helps another person on that path, like asking if they're okay, giving them space or telling a trusted adult if something is wrong, we leave a Friendship Footprint. Footprints don't have to be big to help. Small, kind actions add up and make journeys better for everyone.*

Share these three clear examples:

1. **Quiet check-in:** "Are you okay?" – the footprint is that the person feels noticed/seen.
2. **Provide safe space:** Stepping to the side so someone can pass – the footprint is the path becomes easier to use and the person feels their personal space is respected.
3. **Tell an adult:** Letting a teacher or parent/carer know when someone seems lost – the footprint is that the person gets the right help, quickly.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- Provide scaffolded prompts such as:
"A safe friend looks like _____."
"A safe friend sounds like _____."
"A safe friend feels like _____."
- Students can complete these orally, with drawings or short phrases.

Extend

- Have students share an additional example of a "Friendship Footprint" not discussed by the teacher - explaining its impact on others' safety and feelings.
- Invite students to share real examples from their own travel experiences, explaining what they did and how it made others feel.

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LESSON PHASE: Guided Practice



TIMING: 15 mins

Safe Friend (Travel Dilemma) Scenarios

Students work in pairs or small groups with scenario cards showing travel dilemmas. For example:

- someone is crying at the bus stop.
- someone is being teased.
- someone is lost.

Handout to each group 1-2 scenario cards (provided). Each group then:

1. Reads their dilemma card/s together.
2. Discusses the two questions on each card as a group.
3. Gets ready to share their ideas with the class
4. Act out a short role play showing a *safe and respectful response*.

Bring the class back together and invite a few groups to share or perform their role plays. Highlight examples where students:

- **Used a brave voice** to protect or support someone,
- **Showed kindness and respect**, or
- **Made choices that helped others feel safe and included.**

Finish by reminding students that being a *safe friend* means looking out for others, using your voice when something doesn't feel right and making choices that keep everyone safe on their journey to and from school.

Key message: Actions, like speaking up, waiting for friends, or asking for help can make a big difference in helping everyone feel protected and cared for.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- Pre-assign clear roles (helper, person needing help, bystander) and provide cue cards with key phrases such as "Are you okay?", "I can help you find a teacher."

Extend

- Ask students to add a twist to their scenario. For example, "What if your friend says, 'Don't tell anyone?'" Focus on protective behaviours reasoning around secrecy and bravery to challenge their friend.

4

LESSON PHASE: Independent Application



TIMING: 15 mins

Handout to each student a Friendship Footprints worksheet.

Inside the footprint, students write or draw one way they've been a safe friend during travel. For example:

- I waited for someone who was scared to cross the road.
- I invited someone to sit with me on the bus.

Around the footprint, students add words that describe how their actions made others feel. For example:

- Safe
- Included
- Happy
- Calm

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Create a classroom "Path of Friendship" display by lining up the footprints to show how safe friends help others move forward safely.

Badge of Honour

Students design a badge for a "Safe Friend" with:

- A symbol (e.g., heart, shield, helping hand)
- A slogan (e.g., "Kindness Counts", "I've Got Your Back", "Safe Friends Unite!")
- One action they promise to take as a safe friend.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- Allow students to draw their "Friendship Footprint" rather than write. They can label feelings with emojis or simple words.
- Provide pre-drawn badge outlines with optional words or symbols to trace or colour (e.g., heart, helping hand). Offer verbal prompts: "What could your badge mean?"

Extend

- Ask students to compose a short pledge using persuasive or expressive language, e.g., "As a Safe Friend, I will include everyone, even if they are different from me."
- Invite students to create a mini "Safe Friend" poster or digital message encouraging others to use brave voices - extending the concept to community advocacy.

5

LESSON PHASE: Review / Reflection



TIMING: 5 mins

Friendship Circle

Sit in a circle with a talking object.

Each student shares one way they've been (or plan to be) a safe friend during travel. For example:

- "I can wait for someone who's behind."
- "I can speak up if someone is being teased."
- "I can invite someone to sit with me."
- "I can help someone who uses a wheelchair."

Teacher Wrap-Up

- Reinforce: Safe friends notice when someone might feel left out or unsure and take action to include and support them.
- Protective behaviours help us look after ourselves and others - especially when someone needs help, feels unsafe or is treated unfairly.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- Students can choose to share *verbally*, by *showing their drawing*, or by having the teacher read their idea aloud for them.

Extend

- Ask students to respond to this prompt: "What's one new thing you learned today that you didn't know before?"