

Unit B Risk-taking and dealing with pressure

About the unit

In this unit, children develop their understanding of risk-taking and decision-making. They move from looking at general risk-taking activities to considering choices related to taking risks with their health. There is a specific focus on smoking. Children learn to identify factors that affect their choices, and practise skills for resisting unhelpful pressure or influences. They learn the importance of making informed choices about their health.

Other issues could be substituted for smoking, such as healthy eating, the importance of exercise, the use of other drugs or alcohol, or issues around bullying.

Children draw on their knowledge and understanding about smoking from what they have learnt in science (Sc2 2g) and links can be made with unit 2A 'Health and growth' and unit 5A 'Keeping healthy' in the key stages 1 and 2 science scheme of work. The unit also links with unit 2 'Choices' and unit 9 'Respect for property' in the key stages 1 and 2 citizenship scheme of work. It could also be linked with PE and risk-taking in outdoor and adventurous activities and with activities in English and RE. Some links are included in the 'Points to note' section.

Where the unit fits in

This unit addresses the following aspects of the key stage 2 non-statutory framework for PSHE and citizenship and the key stage 2 programme of study for science:

PSHE and citizenship

Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities

Pupils should be taught:

- 1c to face new challenges positively by collecting information, looking for help, making responsible choices, and taking action

Preparing to play an active role as citizens

Pupils should be taught:

- 2a to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
- 2e to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences

Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle

Pupils should be taught:

- 3a what makes a healthy lifestyle, including the benefits of exercise and healthy eating, what affects mental health, and how to make informed choices
- 3e to recognise the different risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly, including sensible road use, and judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable

- 3f that pressure to behave in an unacceptable or risky way can come from a variety of sources, including people they know, and how to ask for help and use basic techniques for resisting pressure to do wrong

Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

Pupils should be taught:

- 4a that their actions affect themselves and others, to care about other people's feelings and to try to see things from their points of view

Breadth of opportunities

During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through opportunities to:

- 5c participate
- 5d make real choices and decisions
- 5g consider social and moral dilemmas that they come across in life
- 5h find information and advice

Science

Pupils should be taught:

- Sc2 2c that the heart acts as a pump to circulate the blood through vessels around the body, including through the lungs
- Sc2 2d about the effect of exercise and rest on pulse rate
- Sc2 2g about the effects on the human body of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, and how these relate to their personal health

Expectations

Expectations should be adapted according to the needs, age, stage and maturity of the children. It is expected that by the end of this unit most children will: know different ways in which people take risks, and understand that risks involve choices that can have both positive and negative consequences. They understand the need for accurate information when making decisions about risk-taking, and begin to use reason to weigh up the possible consequences of taking some risks. They identify pressures and influences on us when we make decisions. They describe some of the negative consequences of smoking, and give reasons why many people decide to take this risk. They reflect on their own opinions on certain risk-taking activities, and describe or model some ways to resist unhelpful pressure to take risks. They know where to go for advice and support. They set themselves a realistic goal for taking action to improve their health.

Resources

Resources include:

- *The World of Tobacco*, a publication for key stages 1 and 2 smoking education produced by the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation and the Teacher's Advisory Council on Alcohol and Drug Education (Tacade)
- the DfES PSHE website – www.teachernet.gov.uk/PSHE (information on resources and links to other websites)

Many groups and organisations produce online resources that are relevant to drug, alcohol and tobacco education. QCA has not printed these website addresses as it recognises that they can and do change, often at short notice. So that we can monitor and maintain a reliable and useful resource, the website addresses of the following organisations can be accessed through www.qca.org.uk/pshe

- Wired for Health
- National Drugs Helpline
- Drug Education and Prevention Information Service (DEPIS) (for resources for drug education)
- Department of Health drugs website
- Tacade
- Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation (provides information and activities for children)

NB: care should be taken when encouraging children to access websites

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities

Learning outcomes

Children:

Points to note

Taking a risk

- about different sorts of risk-taking activity
 - that choices can be made in any situation involving risk
 - how to identify risk and forecast some potential consequences of risk-taking
 - that risk-taking may have both positive and negative outcomes
 - about some reasons why people take risks
- Establish ground rules for discussion.
 - The children could take part in a 'draw and write' activity to determine what they think a risk is.
 - Tell the children a simple story about a risk someone took, explaining the good and/or bad consequences.
 - Ask the children to write briefly about a risk they have taken, the consequences of taking it, how they felt, and whether they would take the same risk again. They discuss their account with a partner (someone with whom they feel comfortable).
 - In circle time, talk about the sorts of risks the children have taken and try to categorise them, thinking about, for example, their feelings, whether they risked their health, safety or belongings. Talk about what made them decide to take these risks, and whether they would take them again. Discuss the positive and negative results of taking the risks.
 - Give the children a list of general risks and ask them to discuss in pairs whether they would take them, giving reasons for their answers. The list could include:
 - trying a new, unfamiliar food
 - speaking to a new child in class
 - lending a favourite possession to a younger child
 - ringing a stranger's doorbell
 - taking a short cut through an unknown area
 - Ask the children to take a risk by talking to someone in the class they don't know very well. Help them find one or two others they don't usually talk to, and give them three minutes to find out something they have in common, *eg sharing an interest, having birthdays at a similar time of year.*
 - Individually, the children record how it felt to take that risk, and what they got out of it.
- identify the different types of risks people take
 - understand that risks may have both positive and negative consequences
 - begin to weigh up reasons for and against taking certain risks, based on possible outcomes
 - talk about their experiences, identifying how they felt and what they learnt as a result
- For ground rules, see page 20 of the *Teacher's booklet*. It is important that children understand they are not expected to disclose personal information, but that honesty is important.
 - Appendix 4 of the *Teacher's booklet* provides information about 'draw and write' activities.
 - Link with citizenship: unit 2 'Choices' in the key stages 1 and 2 scheme of work.
 - Link with PE: most children will have experienced outdoor and adventurous activities or a residential course during key stage 2. It may be useful to draw on this.
 - It is important that children learn risk-taking is not always negative. It is the type and degree of risk that needs to be considered.

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**Weighing up the pros and cons of taking risks**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the differences between the short- and long-term consequences of taking a risk • skills for weighing up the choices involved in, and the reasons for and against, taking risks • ways to resist unhelpful pressure to take risks with their health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind the children of their agreed ground rules for discussion. • During circle time, place two large signs reading 'very risky' and 'slightly risky' at opposite ends of the room, drawing a line or stretching a piece of string between them. Give the children large cards describing different health-related choices, and ask them to place them on the line between the two signs. The cards could include choices such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – eating an unhealthy diet, with lots of crisps and sweets – not washing – taking no exercise – dieting – drinking alcohol – taking someone else's medicine – smoking a cigarette – not brushing teeth • Encourage the children to give reasons for their decisions, using their prior knowledge to help them. Discuss the long- and short-term risks of the different choices, helping the children identify risks other than those to health. Ask them to record all the reasons why people might take these risks. • Give the children scenarios of ways in which people risk their health, eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a boy who can't be bothered to brush his teeth – a girl who loves chocolate so much that she eats it all the time – a boy who is overweight and too embarrassed to take part in sport with his friends – a girl who doesn't wear her spectacles • Ask the children to consider each scenario individually. Make a balance sheet by dividing a page into two columns, heading them 'What I'd gain from taking this risk' and 'What I'd lose from taking this risk'. The children write all the possible consequences on the balance sheet, indicating whether they are short-term or long-term. They then decide whether, on balance, they think the risk is worth taking. • Individually, the children think about something they do that is bad for their health, or something they could do to improve their health. They write this down, and set themselves a goal to change the way they behave. They produce a balance sheet showing all they could gain from changing their behaviour, and all they could lose – this would include any difficulties they might face. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the outcomes of risk-taking • present ways to resist unhelpful pressures or influences • reflect on their own behaviour, and make a real choice • set themselves a goal and discuss it with others • take part in a simple presentation to the class, and talk with others about how it went | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help the children talk about both immediate and longer-term risks, eg <i>immediate risks associated with not brushing your teeth include being embarrassed because you have bad breath or food stuck between your teeth, while in the longer term you may need fillings.</i> • Ensure children understand that there are different opinions about how risky something is. • Children with poor written skills may need an adult to help them record their views. Alternatively, an oral response to questions could be sought. • Link with science: Sc2 2a, 2b, 3g and 3h in the programme of study. |
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Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**Weighing up the pros and cons of taking risks (continued)**

- In pairs or groups, the children share their goals and pick one to consider in more depth. They discuss the difficulties and pressures the person whose goal it is might face, and how they could overcome these. Encourage the children to think about a range of pressures, *eg time, lack of motivation, others' comments*. Other class members review the presentations and make simple and constructive comments.
- Give the children opportunities to return to their goal periodically, and to reflect on how successful they have been in achieving it.

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**Why take risks? The pressures and influences on us**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about some reasons why people take risks • about unhelpful influences on us • that pressure comes in different forms, <i>eg what we think people expect of us</i> • that it is important to recognise the unhelpful pressures we might be putting on each other • that talking with people we trust can be helpful in dealing with risks and choices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During literacy hour, read a story about a child or young person who takes a risk (along with their friends) that has bad consequences. • The children discuss the reasons why the person took that risk. They write or role-play dialogues between the main character and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – one of the friends who took the risk with them – another friend who wasn't there – the character's parent/carer – a person from the story who was affected by the risk-taking or involved in dealing with its consequences, <i>eg an injured party, a police officer</i> The dialogues should include the different explanations the character might give for taking the risk. • Children explore and discuss all the pressures and influences the character was under. • Explain that pressure to take risks comes from a variety of sources, including our friends. This can be obvious if friends try to push us into doing something, but can also arise out of what we <i>think</i> they expect of us, even if this isn't the case. Explain that we have a right to feel safe and secure, and a responsibility to look out for each other, as well as to make our own decisions. • The children reflect on whether they have ever felt pressured by their friends into doing something they didn't want to do, giving examples, and whether they have ever put pressure on others to do certain things. Make sure that both the positive and negative results of pressure are considered. The children record their thoughts, thinking about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – when they felt under pressure – how they responded to it (positively and/or negatively) – how they wanted to respond (including their feelings if they wanted to do something they knew was wrong) – who they trust that they could talk to in this sort of situation • In pairs, ask the children to role-play a scenario where they are put under pressure, and to practise responding to this. • They also role-play a scenario where someone else is under pressure, and they help them to cope with/stand up to it. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify different reasons why people take risks • understand that they can feel pressured into taking unwanted risks, but can take steps to deal with this pressure • begin to understand that pressure can have both positive and negative outcomes • reflect on their own experiences, and on the way their behaviour might influence others – both positively and negatively • practise responding to pressure in different situations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity will be needed around the issue of the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol and tobacco at home, as this will influence children's attitudes and views. • Some of these activities and scenarios could be used to address issues around bullying. • It is important that children identify their role as positive influences on/supporters of others, and know that it is OK to intervene when someone is being put under pressure. • Link with English: En1 S&L4a, 4d, 11a in the programme of study. |
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Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**Smoking – weighing up the risks**

- about the long- and short-term risks associated with smoking
 - about the reasons why people smoke
 - about their own values and attitudes towards smoking
 - that risky situations involve making choices
- As a class, discuss what the children learnt in science about smoking and its effects on health. This could be done by drawing an outline of a human body on a large piece of paper or a white board and asking children, in turns, to write on it one effect of smoking. When all their ideas have been used, they could identify whether these effects are short-term or long-term, and add other non-physical effects of smoking, *eg financial, social, legal*.
 - Ask the children in small groups or pairs to write down three reasons why they think people start to smoke. Put up two posters, headed 'agree' and 'disagree', at opposite ends of the room. Each group or pair reads out one of their suggestions and the rest of the class get up and stand by the relevant poster. Ask a handful of children to give their reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the idea.
 - Discuss with the children why people who do smoke find it hard to stop. Use videos, print material or ICT resources to gain smokers' perspectives. The children could also ask friends or relatives who are smokers for their ideas. Talk about a range of people, including young people who haven't been smoking for long, and older people who have smoked for many years.
 - Ask the children to draw up their own list of reasons why people smoke and, alongside it, a list of the negative effects of smoking.
- use their knowledge and understanding about smoking to identify the negative effects of smoking
 - listen to a discussion and weigh up the arguments
 - offer a personal opinion, giving reasons for their views
- Be aware that some children will have smokers in their home, or may smoke themselves. Sensitivity is needed here, as some children with friends or family who smoke may find the serious effects of smoking on health upsetting.
 - Remind children of the laws about smoking, and that the age of criminal responsibility in the UK is 10.
 - Link with citizenship: unit 2 'Choices' and unit 8 'How do rules and laws affect me?' in the key stages 1 and 2 scheme of work.
 - Link with science: Sc2 2c and 2g in the programme of study and unit 5A 'Keeping healthy' in the key stages 1 and 2 scheme of work.
 - Link with English: En1 S&L2a, En2 R3f in the programme of study.
 - The children should be encouraged to challenge others' opinions, giving reasons for what they say. Explore the idea that friends can influence each other's decisions about smoking – ask how this influencing might happen. Discuss whether, in the children's opinion, friends force each other to smoke or not, or whether the pressure is more subtle. Ensure they consider a range of other pressures and influences too, *eg celebrity role models, advertising, parental or other adult behaviour, the need to relieve stress, the desire to show how mature you are*. This is also an opportunity to consider gender trends, *eg why more girls than boys choose to smoke*.

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**Resisting unhelpful pressure or influences**

- ways to deal with unhelpful pressures to smoke
 - that they have the right to feel safe and secure at all times
 - about valuing each other and respecting differences of opinion
 - that it is helpful to talk about risks and choices with people we trust
 - how to access sources of help, support and advice
- The children write realistic scenarios or letters to agony aunts/uncles about pressures to smoke, using their notes from the previous activities. Alternatively, provide scenarios or letters yourself. Ensure that the children focus on a range of pressures and influences, eg
 - a group of friends decides to start smoking together, but one of them doesn't want to*
 - a girl feels that people will respect her more if she does something 'grown-up' like smoking*
 - a boy is going through a very difficult time at home, and thinks smoking will help him cope*
 - another girl is curious about why people like smoking, and wants to try it herself*
 - a group of friends finds some cigarettes and a lighter, and some of them think it would be funny to smoke them and/or sniff the lighter fuel*
 - In small groups, the children identify what the pressure or influence to smoke is in one scenario, and discuss what the characters could do to resist it and where they could go for help and advice. They could develop their responses into short dramas, or letters offering advice.
 - The children present their work to the class and discuss any issues that arise, eg *whether they think the responses in the dramas or letters are realistic, how they think people in those situations would react to the advice*. Use their presentations to identify gaps in skills or understanding, and to plan further activities to address these gaps.
 - Use a 'draw and write' activity to encourage the children to reflect on and record what they know and understand about smoking, and to illustrate ways of resisting pressure.
- identify some ways to respond to different types of pressure to smoke
 - understand that they have a choice about whether or not to smoke
 - practise resisting pressure
 - give an opinion, with reasons
 - begin to understand and use behaviour modification in different situations
 - know where they can go for help and advice
- Skills for resisting unhelpful pressure will be addressed through a variety of other elements of PSHE, and need to be built on. These activities could also be used to look at pressures to abuse volatile substances, alcohol or other drugs.
 - Sniffing solvents can cause sudden death. It is important that if this issue is discussed, children are told about the potentially fatal consequences of solvent abuse. However, when working with older pupils and those misusing solvents, it may be more appropriate to promote informed discussion about the harm related to volatile substance misuse. Support for teachers on issues around the abuse of volatile substances is available at the Wired for Health and National Drugs Helpline websites.
 - Ensure that the scenarios provide a range of ways in which other people influence our decision whether or not to smoke. Avoid stereotypical situations where friends bully each other into smoking to help children explore more subtle pressures.
 - Children should know how to access sources of help and advice. Helpline telephone numbers and details of agencies and other sources of support could be displayed in the classroom and around the school.
 - Alternative activity: the children learn about passive, assertive and aggressive behaviour. They practise responding passively, assertively and aggressively to direct pressure to smoke, and evaluate the result of each response. How did it make them or others feel? Did it succeed?