HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Level

| F | 1 | 2 | **3** | 4 | 5 | 6 | B6 |

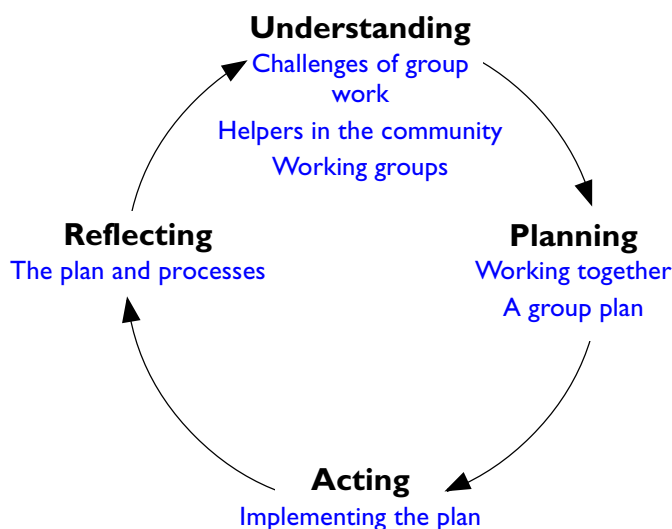# Groups in community service

> **Strands**
>
> Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities
> Enhancing Personal Development

Purpose

Students practise and develop cooperative learning skills and identify a local environmental issue that has an influence on health. In groups, students develop a plan for dealing with that issue and propose ways to support people who help keep the local environment safe and healthy.

Overview of activities

Activities in this module are based on a learner-centred approach with an emphasis on decision making and problem solving. As the following diagram shows, activities are sequenced in **understanding**, **planning**, **acting** and **reflecting** phases.

Understanding
Challenges of group work
Helpers in the community
Working groups

Planning
Working together
A group plan

Acting
Implementing the plan

Reflecting
The plan and processes

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Core learning outcomes

This module focuses on the following core learning outcomes from the Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus:

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities

3.5 Students describe features of places where they live, work and play that influence the health of themselves and others, and propose ways they can help the people who are responsible for keeping these places healthy.

Enhancing Personal Development

3.4 Students demonstrate communication, cooperation and decision-making skills to collaborate in social, team or group situations.

Core content

This module incorporates the following core content from the syllabus:

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities

- health effects of human behaviours on social and physical environments including home, work and recreation and pollution;
- creation and maintenance of environments that promote and protect health, particularly the roles of individuals and communities;

Enhancing Personal Development

- interpersonal skills, including cooperation, expressing feelings and ideas, and making decisions and solving problems.

Assessment strategy

The following are examples of assessment tasks that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the core learning outcomes identified in this module.

Promoting the Health of Individuals and Communities 3.5

- **Students present an oral, written or practical report that describes a location in the immediate environment, its features and how these may influence the health of themselves or others. Students propose ways they can help people who work or live in these environments to keep healthy.**
  - Can the student describe the features of an environment and how these can influence a person's health?
  - Can the student identify the people responsible for keeping environments healthy?
  - Can the student propose reasonable ways to help keep environments healthy?

Enhancing Personal Development 3.4

- **Students work in groups to develop a plan that supports people who are responsible for keeping places in the environment healthy.**
  - Can the student communicate appropriately within and between groups when working on a task?
  - Can the student cooperate with others within the group to complete a task?
  - Can the student collaborate with others in a group to make decisions regarding the development of a plan?

Background information

Cooperative learning

Learning to work cooperatively is a process that takes considerable time and practice. This module encourages the development of cooperative learning skills — for example, listening, solving conflicts, acting responsibly and performing different roles. These skills are developed in the context of investigating local health issues and needs. Students need to work together to develop a plan that will improve the health of the local community.

R Resource Sheet 1

The roles students take on in a group are numerous and varied — for example, clarifier, listener, encourager, praiser and recorder. An overview of some of these roles is included on Resource Sheet 1. Students should take on as many roles as possible during group activities.

Environmental health issues

Environmental health issues and needs will vary from community to community. Although some ideas are included within the module, it would be preferable for students to investigate their own community and put forward their own ideas. Whether it be a large, small, urban or rural community, there will be many ways to improve environmental health issues within it. Of most importance is that students believe they can take action and improve their community in some way as a result of their intervention. In some communities, it may be appropriate to consult with local authorities prior to engaging in this module.

Terminology

Activities in this module involve use of the following language in the context of Health and Physical Education:

community	environment	protection
concern	evaluation	roles
conflict resolution	objective	strategy
cooperate	plan	

School authority policies

Teachers need to be aware of and observe school authority policies that may be relevant to this module, particularly policies relating to student involvement in community issues.

Social justice principles

This module provides opportunities for students to increase their understanding and appreciation of supportive environments. It includes activities that encourage students to:

• recognise the home, school and community as settings for promoting health;

GROUPS IN COMMUNITY SERVICE • MIDDLE PRIMARY

GROUPS IN COMMUNITY SERVICE • MIDDLE PRIMARY

- understand the responsibilities of communities to ensure the wellbeing and safety of individuals and groups, and the responsibilities of individuals and groups to the community.

Students with disabilities or learning difficulties may require some activities to be modified in order to optimise both their participation and their ability to demonstrate the outcomes. Teachers should consult with parents/carers and specialist support staff to determine whether modification is necessary.

Support materials and references

Apackt, C. 1991, *Energizers and Other Great Cooperative Activities for All Ages*, Quest International, Newark, Ohio.

Bellanca, J. & Fogarty, R. 1991, *Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom*, 2nd edn revised in Australia by Joan Dalton, Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Vic.

Brady, L. 1989, *Feel, Value, Act*, Prentice-Hall, Sydney.

Canfield, J. & Wells, H. 1976, *100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom: A Handbook for Teachers and Parents*, Prentice-Hall International, Sydney.

Grineski, S. 1996, *Cooperative Learning in Physical Education*, Human Kinetics, Lower Mitcham, South Australia.

Jasmine, J. 1998, *Conflict Resolution: Years 5–8*, Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Vic.

Kreidler, W. 1994, *Conflict Resolution in the Middle School: A Curriculum and Teaching Guide (Field Test Version)*, Educators for Social Responsibility, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Lees, R. & Lees, A. 1996, *Personal Development, Health and Physical Education*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Sydney.

Lions Club International 1998, *Lions-Quest Skills for Growing*, 2nd edn, Quest International, Newark, Ohio.

Margetts, D., Nault, S., Selk-Yerges, L. & Smaglik, L. 1997, *Feeling Safe and Standing Strong*, Mission SA, Adelaide.

McGrath, H. & Francey, S. 1991, *Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms: Teaching Social Skills and Confidence in the Classroom*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.

Perlstein, R. & Thrall, G. 1996, *Ready-to-use Conflict Resolution Activities for Secondary Students: Strategies for Dealing with Conflict in Real-life Situations Plus Guidelines for Creating a Peer Mediation Program*, The Centre for Applied Research in Education, New York.

Pickup, M. & Sunderland, G. 1993, *In Great Shape!*, Heinemann Education, Melbourne.

Activities

Understanding

CHALLENGES OF GROUP WORK	**Exploring the challenge of working in group situations**

▶   Students identify situations in everyday life when people work in groups. They discuss and list the advantages and disadvantages of working in groups. These are noted on the board or on a chart for future reference.

▶   Students are placed in groups of four or five to complete a range of tasks. They complete the tasks as individuals and then repeat them as a group. After completing the tasks they:

- discuss whether it was quicker or easier to complete the task as a group or as an individual;
- identify the problems they had in the group — for example, arguing, not sharing tasks, non-involvement of some students, lack of organisation;
- provide suggestions for overcoming these problems.

Teaching considerations

Assign students to groups or allow them to form their own groups, depending on expectations.

Choose two students to be independent of the groups to act as observers of how the groups work. The teacher may need to guide these observers as to what things to look for within each group — for example, Is everyone participating? Is there a lot of arguing? Why?

Sample tasks may include drawing a map of the local area, making a list of local community organisations, writing a poem about a local worker who helps keep the environment safe and healthy, making a model of a local building.

HELPERS IN THE COMMUNITY	**Exploring the range of people within the local community who contribute to the health and safety of its members**

▶   In groups, students list people in the community who help keep them and their environment safe and healthy — for example, doctor, dentist, fire officer, ambulance officer, park ranger, council worker, environmental protection officer. Students categorise these people as either working in a group or working alone. They discuss reasons for this and whether each worker's job is to keep the environment or people safe and healthy. They then discuss the need for people in our communities who do both.

Focus questions could include:

- Who do you know that works with a group of people — parent, neighbour, relative?
- Who appear on television programs working in groups?
- Why do you think people choose to work in a group rather than alone?
- What are some situations when you prefer to work in a group?

Teaching considerations

Groups who work together may include a team of doctors performing surgery, the fire service, ambulance officers, school parents' organisation, State Emergency Service.

Any advantages of working in a group not previously suggested should be added to the earlier list.

Discuss the concept of environment with students. Include different types of environment — for example, local, physical, natural, built.

Assign students to groups for this activity. Remind them of the problems they may have encountered in group work previously and ask them to work to overcome these problems.

▶   Students suggest problems involved in keeping the range of environments in which they live, work and play, safe and healthy. In small groups, they list these and discuss why they believe these problems exist. They produce a group report identifying each problem, suggesting reasons for the problem and suggesting possible solutions. They then present this report to the class.

Teaching consideration

Examples of environments in which people:
- live — include house, caravan, unit block, farm;
- work — include school, shopping centre, office buildings, outdoors, factories;
- play — include sports club, swimming pool, beach, national park, backyard.

WORKING GROUPS

Forming working groups to investigate a safety and health concern in the local environment

▶   Students work in groups to identify a range of environmental issues they could investigate. Each group develops an initial plan that helps members of the local community resolve one of those issues.

Teaching considerations

Inform students that they will be responsible for and involved in implementing their plan once it is finalised.

Give students direction as to timeframes, costings (if applicable), permissions etc. based on your expectations.

Inform students that they will be given time to develop their plan as well as time to develop the skills to improve their group cohesion and effectiveness.

▶   Groups begin by determining how to plan their investigation so that all group members participate equally. They also plan how their group will function effectively. They record these initial thoughts in a diary for later referral. Each group reports to the class about their initial thoughts on group work to promote sharing of ideas.

Planning

WORKING TOGETHER	Practising skills that enhance group cooperation and decision making

▶ Students discuss the skill of listening. In their groups they identify how people show that they are listening — for example, looking at the person speaking, maintaining eye contact, leaning forward, nodding. They also suggest how a good listener may respond — for example, asking questions about what has been said, making comments, summarising. Groups role-play both good and bad listening skills. Each group lists these actions and responses, and then shares findings with other groups.

Teaching considerations

Be aware of cultural differences that may exist — for example, in some cultures maintaining eye contact is not appropriate.

Depending on the prior experiences of students, you may need to model these actions and responses and to emphasise them during other lessons. Making them explicit will prompt greater understanding.

Students could practise being a good listener, initially in pairs and then in small groups. Provide them with suitable topics to discuss — for example, park rangers should have more help in keeping parks clean, every family should dispose of its rubbish in an environmentally friendly manner.

Resource Sheet 1

▶ Students develop a 'What, When, Who, Where, How' pro-forma plan that will help them to deal with their identified issue. They practise taking different roles, which will contribute to the effective working procedures of each group. (Refer to Resource Sheet 1 for examples of group roles.) All students should participate in the activity as well as perform their designated role.

Questions on the pro-forma plan could include:
- What do we have to do?
- When can we do it?
- Who is going to do what?
- Where can we find the necessary information?
- How can we make the best use of time?

Teaching considerations

Explain which roles are to be used within the group activity (for example, chairperson, recorder, reporter, timekeeper and noise monitor) and the duties associated with those roles.

If students have not had extensive experience with these roles, model this activity using one group as an example. Take a role in the group to demonstrate both good and bad behaviours.

Give students continuing practice at participating in these and other roles in their group work.

Each group 'reporter' should report on how his or her group will develop the plan.

Debrief the class once the activity is completed.

▶ Students discuss 'what if' situations that would require a range of conflict resolution skills that all people, including those who keep the environment safe and healthy, may need — for example:

- a park ranger dealing with a camper not using park facilities correctly;
- a council worker confronting a person throwing rubbish or bottles on the ground at the local sports field;
- an environmental officer dealing with a factory owner who is disposing of chemicals in the local creek.

Students identify other situations that may hinder people who keep the local environment safe and healthy. They use these to guide their plan.

Teaching considerations

The following strategies can be practised to resolve conflict:
- Communicate — speak clearly and express feelings.
- Be truthful when communicating.
- Compromise — when necessary find a middle ground.
- Consider the other person's views and background, and why he or she may be thinking this way.
- Respect — remain respectful and courteous.
- De-escalate conflict with 'I' statements.
- Find win–win resolutions.
- Identify and differentiate between demands, needs and wants.
- Negotiate in a supportive manner.
- Use others to mediate and arbitrate.

Group roles could include recorder, praiser and timekeeper.

Some students may not have practised conflict resolution skills previously, so time may be required to explain and practise these skills.

▶ Groups role-play some of the situations identified in the previous activity. As they perform the role-plays, they practise some of the conflict resolution skills identified above.

Teaching considerations

Explain each of these skills and model them when appropriate.

The section 'Support materials and references' on page 4 of this module lists sources of information about conflict resolution skills.

Skills should be practised over several activities.

Debrief students after each role-play.

▶ Groups scan local newspapers and publications for reports on environmental health and safety issues. They collect those that relate to the issue they identified earlier and discuss the information provided in the reports.

▶ In their groups students write a letter to local environmental workers, clubs and government departments requesting:

- information about the local health issues they have identified;
- possible guest speakers who may provide further information;
- advice on how schools and students could help resolve these issues.

▶   Students prepare a group display based on their community health issue and how it relates to their local environment. In their display they include information from internet searches, research found in local newspapers and other media, drawings, posters and interviews. Each group views and responds to other group displays.

A GROUP PLAN	**Developing a group plan for improving the safety and health of the local environment**

▶   Students use the information gathered previously within their groups to propose a plan that uses the following headings — objective (what they intend to do), strategies (how they intend to do it) and evaluation (how will they know whether they had succeeded). The plan has to:

- ensure all group members participate reasonably equally;
- be realistic and achievable.

Teaching considerations

Some groups may suggest plans that involve actions out of school hours or out of school grounds. Check with your schooling authority before undertaking such activities, and ensure parental permissions have been obtained.

Resource Sheets 2, 3

Plans should also indicate timelines, task allocation, any costings and permissions required. (Refer to Resource Sheet 2, 'Sample action plan', and Resource Sheet 3, 'Plan considerations'.)

▶   Students share and explain their plans with other groups.

Teaching consideration

This will help with any fine-tuning and allow groups to provide positive feedback to others.

Acting

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN	**Implementing the plan and providing ongoing feedback**

▶   Students implement their plan and provide a daily or weekly verbal or written report.

Focus questions could include:
* How is your plan going?
* How are you overcoming your problems?
* What new things are you discovering as a result of your plan?
* Is your plan having an influence on the issue you identified? How?
* How is your group working together?
* How could your group improve its effectiveness?

Teaching considerations

Where appropriate, the report could be included in a classroom bulletin, school or community newspaper to inform the broader community of their progress.

Students should share roles of 'reporter' or 'recorder' within their groups.

Reflecting

THE PLAN AND PROCESSES	**Reflecting on the plan and the processes that led to its development**

▶ Students present an individual report that reviews what has been learnt about how the features of an area within the community can influence health and propose ways to help keep this area safe and healthy. They also report on the process of learning that has taken place. After completing the report, students share their reflections within their groups or with the class as a whole.

Questions to guide the report

Plan

– Was your plan effective? Why?

– How could you have improved your plan?

– What did you learn about your 'concern' as you developed your group plan?

Process

– Describe how well you participated in your group.

– How could the group have worked more effectively?

– What did you do in the group that you:

  (a) were proud of?

  (b) could have done better?

– What did you learn about group work during this module?

Teaching considerations

The report could be presented in a written, oral or practical format.

If students have maintained a diary during the module, they could use it to support this activity.

Group roles

The following are a sample of the many roles that students could undertake during group activities.

Chairperson	Manages the group activity ensuring everyone has the opportunity to participate equally
Checker	Checks for accuracy in group work
Clarifier	Checks that each person in the group understands the activity
Encourager	Urges each person in the group to participate
Helper	Provides assistance to members of the group who are having difficulty with the task
Noise monitor	Ensures that the noise levels are appropriate for the group activity
Praiser	Provides praise to all members of the group
Reader	Reads the necessary information for the group activity
Recorder	Records what occurs and is decided upon during the activity
Reporter	Reports decisions, findings or outcomes from the activity
Timekeeper	Ensures that the group completes the task on time or ensures each person spends an equal amount of time on a task

Sample action plan

R2

Use this form to help you as you plan to improve the safety and health of your local environment.

Group _____ **Date** _____

_____

_____

Objective (what we intend to do)

_____

_____

Strategies (how we will do it)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Evaluation (how we will know we have been successful)

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_____

_____

_____

Plan considerations

Use this form to assist you in the development of your plan.

Timelines

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Task allocation (who is going to do what)

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_____

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_____

Resources (what we need)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Other

_____

_____

_____

Resource Sheet 3

This sourcebook module should be read in conjunction with the following Queensland School Curriculum Council materials:

> *Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus*
> *Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Sourcebook: Guidelines*
> *Health and Physical Education Initial In-service Materials*