Types of Relationships

A group of people standing

Description automatically generated with low confidenceThere are many things your child needs to learn about relationships.

First they need to learn about the different types of relationships.

Learning about the different types of relationships will help your child to:

* understand how they should act with different people
* understand the types of touch that are OK in relationships
* have healthy relationships

A person holding a sign

Description automatically generatedWhat is on this page?

This page is about how you can teach your child about different types of relationships.

It has information about:

* the different types of relationships
* how you can talk to your child about different types of relationships
* things you can try when teaching your child about the different types of relationships

Types of relationships

There are 6 types of relationships.

* Strangers: These are people you do not know.

For example, people on the bus or people walking down the street

* A doctor with a stethoscope around her neck

  Description automatically generatedAcquaintances: These are people you only know a little bit.

For example, the person who works at the local supermarket or your neighbour from down the road

* A group of people posing for a photo

  Description automatically generatedProfessional helpers: These are people whose job it is to help you.

For example, doctors, teachers and support workers

* A group of people sitting together smiling

  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceFriends: These are people you like and know well.

For example, friends from school or sport

* Family: These are people like mum and dad, brothers and sisters, grandmothers and grandfathers
* A person and person hugging

  Description automatically generated with low confidenceIntimate partners: For example, boyfriends and girlfriends, husbands and wives

All relationships are different.

This is OK.

Some people have many friends.

Some people have a few.

Some people have big families.

Some people have small families.

It is important to teach your child that different people have different relationships.

Talking about types of relationships

A person with a hat and a cigarette in his mouth

Description automatically generated with low confidenceHere are some things you can say to start talking to your child about different relationships:

* “You seem to get along well with the new student in your class.
* What type of relationship do you think that is?
* “Do you see those two people over there?

Do you think they know each other?”

* “Those characters seem to know each other well.

What type of relationship do you think they have with each other?”

Chart, sunburst chart

Description automatically generatedThings for you to try

*Who is in my orbit worksheet*

Use the ‘Who is in my orbit’ worksheet to help your child learn about the different types of relationships. You can find the worksheet [here](https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/relationships/relationships-relationships/types-of-relationships/).

Ask your child to put the people they know if one of the circles.

Ask them what type of touch might be OK.

Remind them that both people must say ‘yes’ to any type of touch.

Hang the finished worksheet on your child’s bedroom wall.

Use it to remind them what types of touch are OK with a person they know.

Teachable moments

Two people holding plates

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceA teachable moment is when you use an event or experience to teach something.

You can use teachable moments to teach your child about relationships.

For example:

* when you introduce a new person to your child, say the person’s name and their relationship to you
* when you see somebody you know at the shops, ask your child to tell you who they are.

You can then ask them what type of relationship they have with them

Resources for you to use

Chart

Description automatically generatedWho is in my orbit worksheet

Planet Puberty

<https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Whos-in-my-Orbit-F.pdf>

Diagram

Description automatically generatedAll About Sex factsheet - Relationships

Family Planning NSW

<https://www.fpnsw.org.au/sites/default/files/assets/factsheet_09_relationships.pdf>

A picture containing diagram

Description automatically generatedCircles – Intimacy and Relationships program

A close-up of a book

Description automatically generated with medium confidence<http://bciu22.angelfire.com/Circles.html#:~:text=CIRCLES%C2%AE:%20Intimacy%20&%20Relationships%20Education>

Relationship Skills: A Photo Resource

Liz Dore – relationships and private stuff

<https://www.relationshipsandprivatestuff.com/>

A computer with a logo on the screen

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceWhat to read next?

* [Things people do in relationships](https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/relationships/relationships-relationships/things-people-do-in-relationships/)
* [Consent in relationships](https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/relationships/consent/consent-in-relationships/)
* [Feelings in relationships](https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/relationships/feelings-in-relationships/)

**For more information go to the Planet Puberty website**

Planetpuberty.org.au