







USING THE CO-LATE MODEL TO HELP BUILD POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

This practice guidance is an extension of the Bullying Prevention module: *Effective Interventions and Support*.

It will provide you, as an educator with practical strategies to help form stronger and positive relationships in your school community.

How to use this practice guidance:

-  Conversation starters
-  Suggested actions
-  Actions to avoid
-  Note-worthy point

The CO-LATE model helps children and young people build strong relationships. It also encourages them to seek help when they need it.

CO-LATE means:

Confidentiality

Listen

Acknowledge concerns


Talk about options


End with encouragement

Confidentiality

A child or young person needs a safe and confidential place to share their thoughts and feelings. However, it is important to explain what confidentiality means.

Discuss the types of things that can be kept confidential and explain when it might be necessary to share information with someone else like a parent or principal.

 "There are some moments when I can keep what you share between us. There may be times to share this information with your parents or the principal if I think you need more support."

 It is important to note that if you suspect abuse or neglect, or a child discloses they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, this information needs to be shared to ensure they are kept safe.

Listen

Listening demonstrates to a child or young person that they are important, that you are interested in their concerns and want to help resolve the situation.

- ✓ Allow enough time to discuss the problem. This might mean rescheduling the conversation to a more appropriate time.
- ✓ Use active listening skills (for example eye contact, open body language, undivided attention) to reassure the child or young person that you are interested in their concern and want to help the situation.
- ✓ Use non-invasive communication options such as 'walk and talk', shooting hoops and open-ended questions to encourage conversation.

- ✓ Encourage the child or young person to take personal ownership to ensure greater commitment and follow-through in solving their problems.

End with encouragement

Giving a child or young person a feeling of hope and confidence that the issues can be resolved enables them to feel that a positive resolution is possible.

Reassure the child that they can come back and talk some more if they need to.

- ✓ Follow-up with the child at a later date to ensure the issue has been resolved or to offer further assistance.
- ✓ Provide a **commitment** to the child or young person that you will do everything you can to help them.

Finish the conversation with a positive statement about what will happen next as agreed.

- ☹ "It sounds like we have a solid plan. Let's see how this works and we can work out what else needs to happen."

Acknowledge concerns

Acknowledgement can help validate a child or young person's feelings and in turn, strengthen the relationship and their sense of wellbeing.

- ☹ "It sounds like you are having a tough time" or "It's understandable that you would feel that way".
- ☹ "It can feel uncomfortable to ask for help, so thank you for being brave enough to talk to me".
- ✗ Don't use language that judges or minimises the concern, such as "You shouldn't worry about that" or "Why didn't you walk away?"
- ✗ Don't use language that implies blame like "What did you do to provoke the situation?"

Talk about options

Providing options gives the child or young person ownership over their choices and empowers them toward positive changes. Talk about the benefits and drawbacks of each option.

- ☹ "What have you tried?" and "How did that go?"
- ☹ "What other ideas do you have to resolve this situation?"
- ☹ "What support do you need to feel confident moving forward?"
- ☹ "What things might be holding you back?"
- ☹ "Who else needs to be involved?"
- ✓ Guide the child or young person toward a suitable solution.