

Your Social Health



Your social health is just as important as your emotional and physical health. **Social health** is developed through your relationships and communication with others. A person's social health influences his/her self-image and self-esteem. Self-esteem and social health are also related to how you feel about yourself and how you feel others perceive you. Your social health can affect the way you feel and behave, so it is important that you develop skills to support this part of your health.

The best way to support your social health is to have many healthy relationships in your life. A **healthy relationship** is one that has honest and open communication, and both people in the relationship strive to work through their conflicts and problems effectively. It is important to have healthy relationships in your life that you can turn to if you need support, guidance, or just need to talk to someone. An **unhealthy relationship** can be stressful and can negatively affect a person's self-esteem.



Good communication is important for maintaining and supporting your social health. Below are some tips to help you develop good communication skills:

-  Make eye contact with the person you are talking to.
-  Listen carefully. Be sure to listen to everything the other person is saying, instead of thinking about what you will say next.
-  Use your body language to show that you are interested in the conversation and listening.
-  Watch the body language of others to better understand what they are trying to say.
-  Be sure to speak up and share your thoughts and feelings when it is your turn.



Discussion Questions

What factors might affect a person's social health?

What characteristics do you look for in a friend?

Activities

1. With your teacher leading this activity, make a chart and write as many words as you can think of that are related to a person's social health.

2. In groups, make a list of ways to keep a relationship healthy. Use the relationship with your parents, a sibling, or a friend as an example.

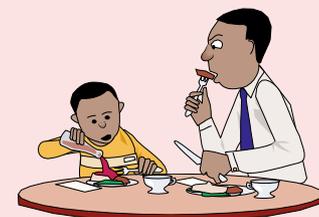


3. In groups, create a skit that illustrates the good communication skills from the article. Then, discuss in your group different types of communication, such as passive communication, passive-aggressive, aggressive communication, and assertive communication. Can you give an example of each communication style?



4. Make a list of your accomplishments and reasons you should feel good about yourself. List your achievements, school activities, your hobbies, and healthy relationships in your life. Place this assignment in your health portfolio.

5. Describe how peer pressure can negatively and positively influence a person's social health. How can peer pressure affect a person's decisions?



Home Connection Talk about your relationships within your family. How can you use the communication skills in the article to enhance your relationships with other family members? Write your thoughts down and place them in your health portfolio.