

What is this Hep C thing? **Classroom Sessions**

Education + Resource Centre, The Alfred



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www.hivhepsti.info



A Victorian
Government
initiative



What is this Hep C thing?

INTRODUCTION TO CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The primary purpose of the following activities is to:

- Increase knowledge about *hepatitis C* and to reduce transmission of *hepatitis C*
- Reduce discrimination toward people carrying the *hepatitis C* virus
- Reduce the risks associated with contracting the *hepatitis C* virus.

Links to Victorian Essential Learning Standards

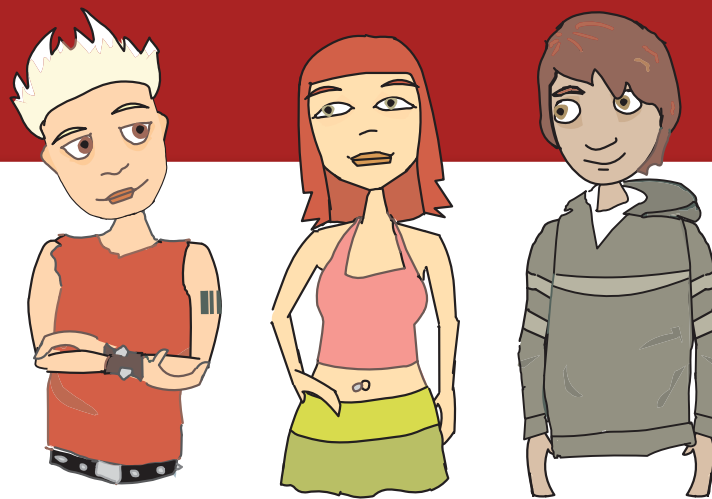
The lessons are designed in a way so they are relevant for all students. They are set at levels five and six of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. The activities are designed around the concepts of safety and risk taking (Health & Physical Education domain), relationships, peer influence, help giving and help seeking (Interpersonal Development domain) and human rights (Civics and Citizenship domain).

Links to focus statements in the Health & Physical Education domain

Level 5: Students describe the health interests and needs of young people as a group. They explore actions at personal, family and societal levels that help to meet these needs, and identify the influences of individuals and groups. They learn how to access reliable information about health issues affecting them and to identify barriers and enablers to accessing health services.

Level 6: Students examine perceptions of challenge, risk and safety in a variety of settings such as in the home, school, the workplace and the community. They contrast risks that promote personal and social growth with those that endanger health. They discuss ways to balance risk and safety, and refine and evaluate harm-minimisation strategies.

Students explore assertiveness and resilience strategies that could be used in a range of situations. Using techniques such as role play or simulation games, students are provided with opportunities to practice and reflect on the usefulness of these strategies.



Links to focus statements in the Interpersonal Development domain

Level 5: Students develop positive relationships through understanding and respecting others. They consider the needs of others and ways of responding with appropriate sensitivity, learning to adapt their behaviour and language to suit different settings.

Through experience and reflection, students come to understand the need for empathy for others. They develop and practise appropriate skills in conflict resolution. Students explore how peers may influence the way they respond to others. They continue to identify strategies to build and maintain positive social relationships.

Level 6: Students understand individual and group behaviour in the context of motivating factors when students participate in activities, including role plays, which allow them to explore the impact of peers on relationships. They explore strategies to manage peer influence and to develop positive relationships with a wide range of peers, gaining confidence in stating clearly their own views and opinions, and the rationale for these.

Civics and Citizenship

Level 5: Students research issues and events of importance to the community, recognise a range of perspectives, and propose possible solutions and actions. These issues may be related to matters such as environmental sustainability, social justice and human rights, and may have local, national and global significance. .

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The activities are designed to be thoughtful and inter-active, encouraging open and supportive communication. In this way, young people are encouraged to have a deeper:

1. Understanding and valuing of self
2. Understanding and valuing of others
3. Positive relationships

While teachers will have their own methods of managing their classrooms, it is important to establish a calm and supportive atmosphere when discussing sensitive issues. Four important rules that should be discussed and understood are:

1. Listen when others are speaking
2. The right to pass
3. Be positive (avoid put-downs)
4. Avoid divulging confidential information about self or others

Apart from the *'What is this Hep C thing?'* cartoon and follow-up activities, the sessions and activities have been developed in a way that is reasonably open-ended. In this sense, the thoughts and discussions that flow from them will tend to relate to the experiences of students. Prior to introducing these activities, the teacher should have thought about strategies for managing discussions, including how they might sensitively interrupt if a student is disclosing inappropriate information about themselves or another. For example, if a student is disclosing personal medical information. Furthermore, if a teacher has any reservations about an activity, they should seek further advice or refrain from using it. If during an activity a teacher becomes concerned about a child, they should protect the child during the session and:

- Follow up with the child privately
- Seek assistance from a suitably qualified person.

HEPATITIS C

What is hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is a virus that causes inflammation of the liver. It is estimated that about 1 in 100 people in Australia have *hepatitis C*. When a person first contracts *hepatitis C* the symptoms are usually mild or absent. They may include flu like symptoms, fatigue and jaundice. The often mild early symptoms create the possibility of a person having *hepatitis C* and not realising it until years later. In this sense, behaving in a way that reduces the risks of transmission of *hepatitis C* is relevant to everyone.

Is hepatitis C a fatal illness?

Up to half of the people that get *hepatitis C* will not develop liver damage. Others will develop mild liver damage, with around 20% developing serious liver damage. A small percentage of people will develop liver failure or liver cancer. These effects can take up to 40 years to fully develop. *hepatitis C* can be managed by taking care of your health and by having regular check ups.

How do you get hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is transmitted when the blood from one person with *hepatitis C* enters the blood stream of another person. Even amounts of blood too small to be seen can transmit the virus.

The most common way of getting *hepatitis C* in Australia is through using someone else's injecting equipment for drugs, including steroids. Tattooing or body piercing is another common way that *hepatitis C* is transmitted

In Australia it is unlikely to get *hepatitis C* from other means than those described above. However, it is possible to get *hepatitis C* from re-using someone else's personal items like razors or toothbrushes, scarring or blood rituals, mother to child transmission during child birth, unsterile medical procedures and needle stick injuries in a medical setting. *hepatitis C* is not usually transmitted through sex. There have been some extremely rare cases where it has been transmitted through having sex with someone where there has been a lot of blood involved. You cannot get *hepatitis C* from toilet seats, eating utensils or drinking glasses, coughing, sneezing, kissing or hugging, swimming pools or mosquito or other insect bites.

What is this Hep C thing?

Is there a vaccine for hepatitis C?

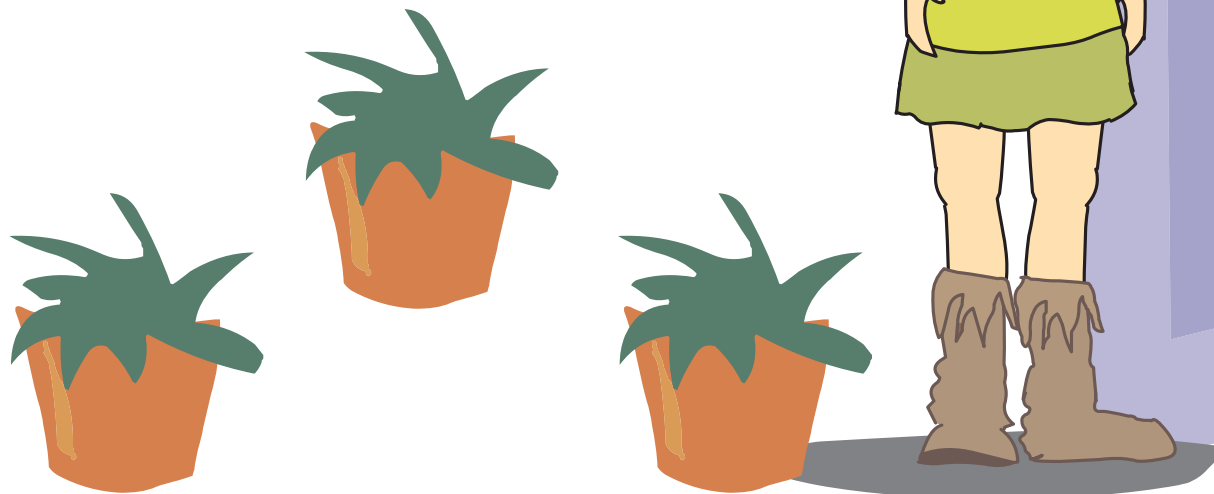
There is no vaccine for *hepatitis C*. Pharmaceutical treatments to cure *hepatitis C* are becoming more effective all the time.

How do you find out if you have hepatitis C?

The only way to find out if you have *hepatitis C* is to have a blood test.

Do you have to tell other people if you have hepatitis C?

Whether a person with *hepatitis C* confides in others is a personal decision. Unless you are to donate blood or you are a medical person performing exposure prone procedures, that is, surgical operations, you are under no obligation to reveal that you have *hepatitis C*. It is illegal to discriminate against a person who has *hepatitis C*.



What is this Hep C thing?

UNIT ONE

What is this Hep C thing? — Understanding the Risks

SESSION 1: WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT RISK?

Purpose: For students to make links with prior knowledge about risk taking

Teacher preparation: Read the background notes at the beginning of this document.

Activity 1: Silent statements

Ask students to form a circle. Explain that you want them to move to another place in the circle (*change seats if seated*), if they agree with anyone of the following statements. If they disagree, they remain in the one spot.

Change places if:

- You sometimes take risks
- You believe you learn from taking risks
- Some risks are not worth taking
- You have ever taken a risk against your better judgement
- You have ever taken a risk that you regret

Activity 2: Think + Pair + Share

Ask students to think about the last time they took a potentially dangerous risk. Share the risk with their partner. *Discuss:*

- What made the risk dangerous?
- How might you have reduced the dangers?
- Would you take that risk again?

Activity 3: Brainstorm

Becoming sick is a risk to which all people are exposed. Brainstorm some of the ways we reduce our risk of becoming sick.

E.g: Hygiene, diet, sleep, fitness, life balance, moderation, preparation, planning...

SESSION 2: WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Purpose: to provide information about *HEPATITIS C*

Teacher preparation: Provide students with computer terminals.

What is this Hep C thing?

Introduce *hepatitis C*. Explain that *hepatitis C* is a chronic illness that is becoming more widespread. About 1 in every 100 people have *hepatitis C*. It is a blood borne virus and there is no vaccine. Consequently, to prevent *hepatitis C* from spreading, people need to modify their behaviour in ways that minimise the risk of getting *hepatitis C*.

Ask students to view the cartoon strip, 'What is this Hep C thing?' on this CD. Complete the quiz. You can also view the comic strip on <http://www.hepc.com.au>

Think - Puzzle - Imagine

After viewing the 'What is this Hep C thing?' cartoon strip and completing the quiz, ask students:

- To think of 3 words that sum up what they know about *hepatitis C*
- What are 2 questions that they have about *hepatitis C*
- Create an analogy for *hepatitis C*. E.g., *hepatitis C* is like...

Optional: What is this Hep C thing?

Ask students to view the cartoon strip, 'What is this Hep C thing?' on this CD again. Once they have done this, click on the 'Write an ending' icon and follow the prompts. Once students have written their endings, ask students to share them with the rest of the class.

NB: Students may like to submit their endings on <http://www.hepc.com.au>

Discussion question

What might the characters in 'What is this Hep C thing?' do to reduce the risk of their friends contracting *hepatitis C*?

What is this Hep C thing?

SESSION 3: HOW DO I REDUCE THE RISKS OF GETTING HEPATITIS C?

Purpose: to discuss the behaviours that increase-reduce the risk of getting *hepatitis C*

Teacher preparation: Print off signs and cards. Cut the cards, so that they may be distributed among the students.

Activity 1: Rating the Risk

Ask students to stand in a horse-shoe formation. Explain they are going to discuss those behaviours that increase or reduce the risk of getting *hepatitis C*.

Place signs at each end of the room: **'HIGH RISK'** and **'LOW RISK'**. Hand out a card to each student. Explain to the students that they are standing along a continuum of risk. The closer they are to either end of the continuum corresponds with their perception of the risk associated with the behaviour printed on their card. If they think that the behaviour on their card is a high risk behaviour for getting *hepatitis C*, they should stand closer to the **'HIGH RISK'** sign. They should then explain their reason for believing this behaviour to be high risk. If they believe their behaviour is lower or no risk, then they should stand at the other end of the continuum, once again giving their reasons. Other students are invited to comment about whether they agree with where each person has placed themselves.

NB: Teachers facilitate by sensitively correcting wrong or misleading information. They also encourage deeper understanding by asking questions to fully explore important issues.

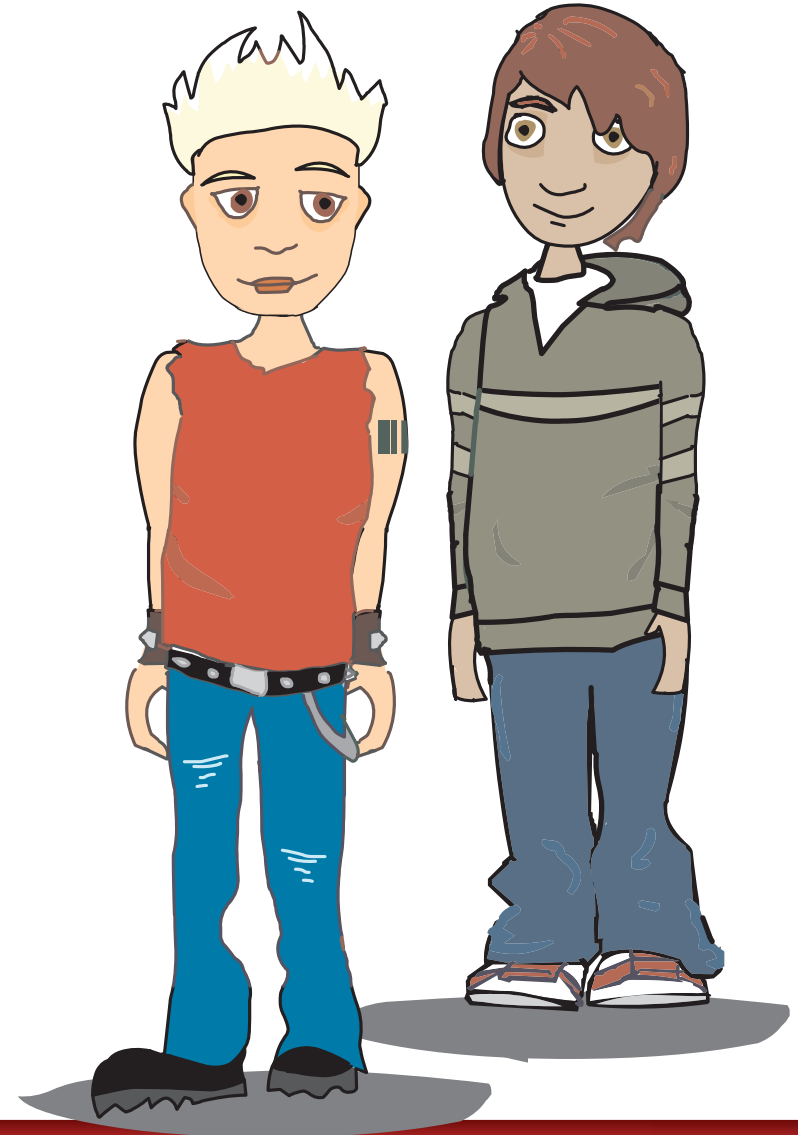
Risk Cards (See next page for cut-outs)

- Mosquito bites
- Hugging
- Kissing
- Getting a tattoo
- Sharing a needle
- Sharing a toothbrush
- Sharing a razor
- Breastfeeding
- Unprotected sex
- Using a condom when having sex
- Fighting
- Blood rituals
- Sharing food
- Sharing drinks
- Sharing cigarettes
- Sneezing on someone
- Dirty toilet seats
- Dirty hands
- Contaminated food
- Contaminated water
- Excessive alcohol use
- Poor diet
- Donating blood
- Getting a blood transfusion
- Having an operation
- Body piercing
- Swimming pools

Discussion question

What are the key factors that make a behaviour high risk for contracting *hepatitis C*? (e.g., blood to blood)

After this discussion, revisit the continuum and consider whether any cards should be moved.



 What is this Hep C thing?

MOSQUITO BITES

HUGGING

KISSING

GETTING A TATTOO

SHARING A NEEDLE

**SHARING A
TOOTHBRUSH**

SHARING A RAZOR

BREASTFEEDING

UNPROTECTED SEX

**USING A CONDOM
WHEN HAVING SEX**

FIGHTING

BLOOD RITUALS

SHARING FOOD

SHARING DRINKS

SHARING CIGARETTES

SNEEZING ON SOMEONE

DIRTY TOILET SEATS

DIRTY HANDS

CONTAMINATED FOOD

CONTAMINATED WATER

**EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL
USE**

POOR DIET

DONATING BLOOD

**GETTING A BLOOD
TRANSFUSION**

HAVING AN OPERATION

BODY PIERCING

SWIMMING POOLS

What is this Hep C thing?

SESSION 4: WHAT LIFESTYLE FACTORS INCREASE HEALTH RISKS?

Purpose: to discuss the lifestyle factors that combine with behaviour to increase-reduce the risk of getting *hepatitis C*

Teacher Preparation: Collect dice and print board games (*see next page*) so there is one for each group of students.

Activity 2: Lifestyle Risk Profile Game

Form students into groups. Distribute the 'Lifestyle Risk Profile Game' board and a dice. Instruct students to role the dice six times, once in relation to each row on the board. After each roll of the dice they should circle the relevant square that corresponds with the number they have rolled. When they have rolled the dice six times, and circled a square on each row of the 'Lifestyle Risk Profile Game' board, they should copy their risk profile onto the worksheet.

Example.

If a group of students roll 5, 6, 3, 3, 4, 1 the profile will be:

Age: 16 years

Incident: Cut skin when using a friend's razor

Family: Parents both unemployed

Lifestyle: Affectionate; often hugs and kisses

Friends: Experimenting with drugs

Interests: Sport

If a group of students roll 2, 5, 5, 1, 4, 2 in that order the profile will be:

Age: 13 years

Incident: Shared a joint with a person who injects drugs

Family: Religious

Lifestyle: Practices unprotected sex







Friends: Experimenting with drugs

Interests: Body art

Once they have outlined their 'profile' each group completes the worksheet. When they are finished, share their profiles and ideas with the class.



LIFESTYLE RISK PROFILE GAME BOARD

						
(Roll 1) Age	12	13	14	15	16	17
(Roll 2) Incident	Bitten by a mosquito	Having an operation requiring a blood transfusion	Getting ears pierced	Getting a tattoo	Shared a joint with a person who injects drugs	Cut skin when using a friend's razor
(Roll 3) Family	Lives in a caravan park	Parents wealthy	Parents both unemployed	Lives in a commune	Religious	Homeless
(Roll 4) Lifestyle	Practices unprotected sex	Swims at a public pool 4 times a week	Affectionate; often hugs and kisses	Binge drinker at parties	Recreational user of drugs	Dedicating to developing a personal talent (e.g. piano)
(Roll 5) Friends	Bikie gang	No close friends	Have similar interests	Experimenting with drugs	Diverse group of friends	Friends have left school
(Roll 6) Interests	Sport	Body art	Music	Skating	Shopping	Electronic games

WORKSHEET

Roll a dice 6 times and fill out the risk profile

Risk profile

Age:

Incident::

Family:

Lifestyle:

Friends:

Interests:

Using the profile above, list those factors that you believe increase the risks of getting a virus like *hepatitis C* (*risk factors*) and those factors that protect against getting a virus like *hepatitis C* (*protective factors*).

Risk factors	Protective factors

What steps might the person in your profile take to reduce their risk of *hepatitis C* infection?

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.....
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.....

What level of risk would you rate the person in the above profile?

— **Low Risk** — **Medium Risk** — **High Risk**

Explain your reasoning

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What additional information would you like to more accurately assess the risks in the above profile?

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Reflection

A behaviour I am going to be careful with is...

Because.....
.....
.....

UNIT TWO

What is this Hep C thing?: Giving and Seeking Support

Concepts: giving support and help seeking

SESSION 1: HOW WOULD GETTING HEPATITIS C CHANGE SOMEONE'S LIFE?

Purpose: to consider whether life would be different with *hepatitis C*

Teacher Preparation: nil

Activity 1: What if?

Break students into pairs. Ask each pair to consider the following possibilities. Each pair describes how their life would change if they suddenly discovered:

- They had *hepatitis C*
- Their best friend had *hepatitis C*
- Their boyfriend/girlfriend had *hepatitis C*

Once students have discussed how their lives would be changed, ask them to predict their greatest challenge by completing the sentence,

If I had *hepatitis C* my biggest fear would be...

SESSION 2: GIVING SUPPORT

Purpose: to encourage students to discuss how they would behave towards someone with *hepatitis C*

Teacher Preparation: write coping strategies onto a large sheet of paper so that they may be read by students standing in a circle

Activity 1: Who should you trust?

Introduce the idea of giving and seeking support by discussing:

Who do you trust when you...

- are celebrating?
- feel upset?
- feel unwell?
- need some advice?

What criteria might you use to judge if you can trust someone's advice when you are unwell?

Activity 2: What would I do?

Ask students to stand in a circle. Place the coping ideas in the middle of the circle for everyone to see. Read one of the following scenarios. Using the ideas on the coping sheet, ask students to share their thoughts.

Scenario One

One of your friends has recently travelled overseas where they received medical treatment. Lately they have been feeling unwell. They have read that medical equipment is not properly sterilised in some countries. They are concerned they may have contracted *hepatitis C*. They ask your advice about what they should do? What do you suggest?

Scenario Two

A new student has come to your school. They are a bit unusual. They are mad about body art. They have tattoos and multiple body piercings. You have also heard a rumour that they have *hepatitis C*. How might this affect your behaviour towards them?

Scenario Three

A student at your school is living away from her parents with a group of other young people. Your parents advise you to stay away from her. You are banned from going to her place. Your parents say she might be on drugs. 'When people live that sort of lifestyle, who knows what diseases they might have.' However, the student comes to school every day. She is in your class. How do you treat her?

COPING SHEET

Try to be happy

Try to solve the problem

Get upset at myself

Pretend nothing is wrong

Try to help others

Look after myself

Blame someone

Smoke

Drink alcohol

Stop eating

Get angry

Avoid the situation

Put on a brave face

Seek help

Talk to someone

Do something I enjoy

SESSION 3 – SEEKING HELP

Purpose: to inform students about the range of health sources and services available.

Teacher Preparation: Print copies of the *'Friends, Family and Community Support Sheet'*.

NB: If completing the optional activity, students will require access to the internet, phone books, local newspapers...

Activity 1: Where do I go for help?

Instructions: Ask students to form pairs. Distribute a *'Friends, Family and Community Support Sheet'* to each student. Ask students to imagine one of their friends is feeling unwell. They have been doing a lot of partying and have done a few things they would rather forget. They know they have taken some health risks. They are worried.

Questions

Using the *'Friends, Family and Community Support Sheet'* identify those sources of information and help you would use. Put them into order, from your first point of call onwards.

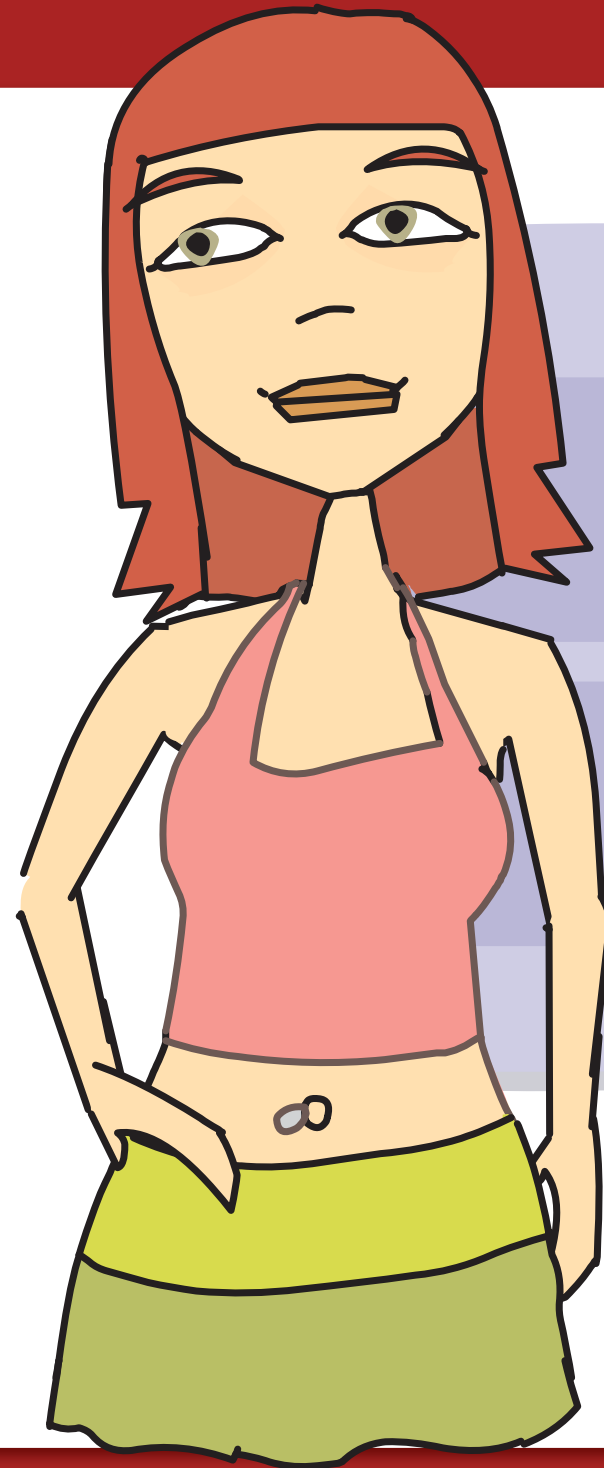
Using the *'Friends, Family and Community Support Sheet,'* ask students to choose the most reliable sources of information and the least reliable sources of information.

Optional: Each pair compiles a list of local services that provide health services for young people. They may use the internet, local phone books, local newspapers and personal knowledge. Once students have completed their research, report back to the class and compile a class list of organizations.

Discuss:

- What makes a service accessible for young people?

(E.g., Welcoming? Confidential? Level of trust. Seeing the same person? Being able to choose with whom you talk? Etc...)



FRIENDS, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SHEET

Teacher	School counsellor	School nurse	School principal	Doctor/ Health centre	Sporting coach
Another student	Another adult	Mother	Father	Brother	Friend
Parent of friend	Aunty	Uncle	Pet	Website	Youth worker
Website	Chat line	Another young carer	Support group	Self	Social worker
Religious leader	Police officer	Sister	Anonymous help line	Grandparent	Information pamphlet

RESOURCE LIST

'What is this Hep C thing?' is compatible with some other resources.

These include:

- Impact: hepatitis C Information. 4th Edition
Available through: www.hepcvic.org.au
- Get Real: A Harm Minimisation Approach to Drug Education
Available through: www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/druged
- Get Wise: A Harm Minimisation Approach to Illicit Drugs
Available through: www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/druged
- Hepatitis C + Body Art: Educators' Kit for Secondary Schools.
Available from the hepatitis C Council of Victoria, www.hepcvic.org.au
- Blood Rules, OK—Protect yourself in sport and play... Be Blood Aware!
(Information video kit about infectious diseases in sport for players, coaches, trainers, first aid personnel, officials and club administrators).
Available from the Education and Resource Centre, The Alfred, Melbourne.
Ph 9076 6993 www.hivhepsti.info
- Department of Education, Victoria's Drug Education website
See: www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/druged
- Australian Drug Foundation's drug info clearinghouse:
See: www.druginfo.adf.org.au
- Hepatitis C Council of Victoria
See: www.hepcvic.org.au
- Education and Resource Centre, The Alfred, Melbourne.
Ph 9076 6993 www.hivhepsti.info

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