

# The Impact of Positive Relationships

Staff in schools spend a significant portion of their time interacting with students, colleagues and parents. The relationships you have with these individuals has a major impact on your well-being and your ability to perform your job effectively. Positive relationships can provide support, encouragement and most importantly, a sense of belonging. These traits contribute to better mental and emotional health. On the other hand, negative relationships are stressful, draining and can lead to burnout.

One of the most important ways to cultivate positive relationships is through effective communication. This starts with actively listening to others. Often we are so busy in schools, rushing from one class to another, or one issue to the next, that we can be guilty of not *really* listening. Sometimes we can be guilty of waiting for the person who is talking, to pause, so that we leave the conversation. Really understanding the other person's perspective by being a good listener, is important in building positive relationships.

As well as being a good listener, it is important to be clear and considerate in your own communication and respectful of different perspectives and opinions. By communicating effectively, you build trust and understanding with your students, colleagues and parents.

**We can improve our relationships with others by leaps and bounds if we become encouragers instead of critics.**

Joyce Mayer

Another important aspect of positive relationships is mutual respect. This means treating others with dignity and treating them as you would like to be treated. It also means being open to feedback and accepting that everyone has their own unique perspective and way of communicating. By showing respect and understanding, you can create an environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

Creating a positive and supportive work environment can also have a major impact on teacher well-being. This means working with colleagues to create a culture of teamwork, collaboration and open communication. It also means advocating for policies and programs that support the well-being of staff in schools. New initiatives and processes need to be considered in the light of their impact on workload and the impact they will have for the time invested. A positive and supportive work environment fosters a sense of community among teachers.

Building positive relationships with students can also have a major impact on staff well-being. This means creating a classroom environment where both staff and students feel safe, respected, and valued. This comes from connection.

It's also important to understand that positive relationships are not just limited to your interactions with students, colleagues and parents. Having a strong support system outside of work can also have a major impact on your well-being. This includes having a network of family and friends that you can rely on for emotional support and encouragement. Being proactive in maintaining this network is important, even in particularly busy times of the school year.

Avoid becoming an 'island'. Invest time in connecting with people.

## Key points

The relationships we have impact on our well-being.

Be a great listener.

Respect different viewpoints.

Accept that others may have a different perspective.

Contribute to a culture of teamwork, collaboration and open communication.

Build a strong support network outside of work too.

Avoid becoming an island.



Steve Francis MScM, BEd, DipT

Steve is an expert in school leadership and work-life satisfaction. Steve was a Principal for 20 years and is the author of four books, 'Time Management For Teachers', 'A Gr8 Life...Live it Now!', 'First Semester Can Make or Break You!' and 'Attitude is Everything'. Steve lives in Brisbane with his wife and family but works with school leaders and staff in schools across Australia and internationally.

[www.SteveFrancis.net.au](http://www.SteveFrancis.net.au)