

WHAT IS LOVE BITES RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION?



Love Bites is a well established respectful relationship program that has been facilitated in schools across Australia since 2003. It began on the Mid North Coast of NSW in response to a local high school where teachers had become concerned about their young people who appeared to be becoming involved in abusive and unhealthy relationships. Love Bites began as a community and grassroots response to this issue with workers from various agencies such as health, police, domestic violence services and education coming together to write a prevention program for their young people. It was shaped by the needs of the community and young people with little funding but much enthusiasm and commitment from all involved.

Since this time Love Bites has reached many young people across Australia. Feedback from young people, service providers and the development of Best Practice Standards has seen Love Bites develop and evolve. This Love Bites Manual is the latest development in the Love Bites journey. From its beginning as a one day workshop Love Bites is now a multi sessioned respectful relationship education program. It has been developed as a flexible model which allows for those working with young people to utilise the programming to fit with their setting and meet their young people's needs at a local level.

LOVE BITES HAS SIX COMPONENTS:

- Love Bites Full day workshop (ages 15-17) including pre and post lesson plans
- Love Bites Multi sessioned education (ages 15-17)
- Love Bites Whole of school approach
- Love Bites Community campaigns
- Evaluation
- Parent Information

HOW CAN LOVE BITES BE IMPLEMENTED?

NAPCAN appreciates that schools have many competing demands and levels of capacity to implement respectful relationship education. Love Bites allows for flexibility in how respectful relationship programs are delivered.

NAPCAN RECOMMENDS that any respectful relationship education is supported by a Whole of School Approach and that young people have access to multiple lesson plans rather than a one off workshop. It is clear from the literature and best practice standards that there is an association between program intensity or duration and program impact (Vic Health, 2007). To achieve real attitude and behaviour change young people need to be exposed to respectful relationship education multiple times to reinforce learning and skill development.

The flexibility with Love Bites is that schools/ communities can decide how to implement the programming.

- For example a school may only have capacity to start with the one day workshop and do 4 education modules from Love Bites Junior prior to the workshop in small class settings.
- Another school may prefer to have all their students do the multi lessoned Love Bites in their PDHPE lessons over a term.
- A youth service may decide to facilitate Love Bites Junior lesson plans over a full year with their young people in small groups.

It is important to note that the fidelity of the Love Bites Program and its outcomes are best maintained by completing all of the content in each component. Dropping a couple of lesson plans or leaving out the creative sessions will have an impact on fidelity and outcomes.