

LEARNER WORKBOOK

Unit 3 – Dealing with
Complex Situations



RSAS Training Strategy Project 2018



Activity 1: Discussion

Time required: 15 minutes

Instructions: Read and discuss the following three situations:

A. *One of your kids has been doing really well at school this year but he tells you he has to go away with his Uncle on sorry business and he doesn't know when he will be back. He wants you to tell the teacher. You explain it would be better if his Uncle could give you a time when he will be back but he says his Uncle is stressed and he doesn't want to bother him.*

What makes this a complex situation?

B. *One of the girls you are responsible for often has bruises on her arms and legs. Sometimes she misses school. She missed school yesterday and today she has a black eye and bruises around her neck. You are worried and want to know what is going on.*

You take her aside to speak with her quietly but she says she is OK. She says she got the bruises playing on an old swing with her friends.

What makes this a complex situation?

C. *A group of big kids are intimidating some of the littler ones. When you walk them to school it is OK because the big kids stay away. But if you aren't there, the little kids are too afraid to go to school. This is what the big kids want.*

You haven't seen the bullying, but you have been told about it. Some of the kids have had their new sports shoes stolen by the big kids who then "sell" them back to them. When you have approached the big kids and tell them to leave the others alone, they just laugh at you.

What makes this a complex situation?



A complex situation is any situation that is not straightforward



Activity 2: Complex issues we face in our community

Time required: 5 minutes

Instructions:

- Use a flip chart or butchers paper.
- On it make a list of the complex issues you are currently facing as a RSAS worker in your community.





Activity 3: Consult, refer or report?

Time required: 10 minutes

Instructions:

Look at the following list of connections that you might use to help you with complex situations.

Decide what sorts of situations you might contact them about, and whether you would be consulting, referring or reporting. Fill in the table using the list you have already made on complex situations to give some examples.

Contact	Consult, Refer or Report?	Example of a Situation
RSAS Supervisor		
Parents/guardian		
School Principal		
Community nurse/doctor		
Police		
Child Protection/Child Safety/Family and Community Services		
Pastor/minister of religion		
Salvation Army/Smith Family or other local charity		
Community Elders		
Others?		



Activity 4: Analysing a complex situation

Time required: 15 minutes

Instructions: As a group analyse the following situation through the 5 Step Analysis process.

Fill in the details in the chart.

The local road house owner asks to see you. He has been helpful with the RSAS program by refusing to serve kids during school hours and stop them hanging around outside when they should be at school.

Today he tells you that he caught one of your kids shop lifting. He had refused to serve him because he should have been at school, and the kid ran off with the some of the stuff without paying. He says he won't contact the police until you have a chance to speak with him and his mother and maybe get the kid to come back and pay. However, he says he can't refuse to serve kids during school hours if this happens again.

You speak to the mother. She tells you that she kept him home from school and she sent him to the roadhouse to buy some stuff because she is sick. She needs him home to help with the baby.

The mother doesn't seem very sick and you think she is just covering for her son. This kid has always been a good boy and you are worried that she is not teaching him any respect for the law.

You explain that the roadhouse owner could have called the police, but he didn't, and she should encourage her son to go and see him and say sorry and pay what he owes. You would also like to see him get back to school tomorrow if she is feeling better.

She slams the door on you.

Steps	Answers or Decisions
<p>Step 1: Unpick the situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the parts of this situation? • Who is involved directly? • Who else is affected? 	
<p>Step 2: Decide on the importance of the situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What might happen if nothing is done about this? • What might happen as a result of doing the wrong thing? 	
<p>Step 3: Decide if you should manage this situation; consult with someone else; or refer it to someone else.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this part of my role? • Do I have the skills to manage this? If not who can I talk to? • Is it part of someone else's role? If so, who should I contact? 	
<p>Step 4: What are the alternatives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What action could I take? • What could be the possible results? 	
<p>Step 5: Make a decision</p>	



Activity 5: Negotiation Role Play

Time required: 30 minutes

- 15 minutes for preparation and role play
- 5 minutes for feedback
- 10 minutes for class discussion

Instructions:

- Following on from Activity 4, divide into groups of four.
- Role play the negotiation with the roadhouse owner. The goal is to persuade him to continue supporting the RSAS project by refusing to serve kids during school hours when they should be in school.
- One person will play the part of the roadhouse owner. One person will play themselves. Two people will be observers.
- The observers will give feedback using the 10 skills chart below.
- Share this feedback with the whole group and discuss it.



Negotiation Feedback Sheet

Did your actors use these skills?

Negotiation Skills Used	Yes	No	Unsure
Analysing the Situation			
Planning			
Active Listening			
Emotional Control			
Verbal Negotiation			
Collaboration			
Creative Problem Solving			
Decision Making Ability			
Interpersonal Skills			
Ethics and Reliability			





Activity 6: Community List Update

Time required: 5 minutes

Instructions:

- Share any updates you have about new connections or programs available in your local community.
- Also consider services outside your community but available by phone, such as the Kids Helpline and the Aboriginal Legal Service in your state.
- Bring your contact list up to date.

Note Page:



MELBOURNE

Level 8, 20 -22 Albert Road
South Melbourne
VIC 3205, Australia

Phone: +61 3 9624 2300
Email: nesa@nesa.com.au

SYDNEY

Level 1, 33-35 Belmont Street
Sutherland
NSW 2232, Australia

Phone: +61 2 9119 3098
Email: rsas@nesa.com.au