



Professional Practice  
Standard 4 – Environment

## Significant Episode: Relationships

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### *Finding 4.1: Connections*

*Recognise that learning happens most effectively when relationships between learners and teachers are positive, and when connections between family and school are mutually supportive.*

### Introduction

Throughout our *Make It Count* journey we, the *Make It Count* team, have identified that relationships have played a major part in the successful implementation of the 'Monday Maths Mob' program. One of the key components to being able to successfully implement the 'Monday Maths Mob' program has been the development of relationships. As depicted in the diagram (below) relationships refer to relationships with staff, students and parents. Within each circle it is clear how relationships work within in each sector as well as how these relationships intertwine.

Below is a diagram of the interconnections between relationships, as well as some of the most significant moments highlighting the impact of relationships on learning.

**“In the best interests of the program, one teacher would be assigned this role to ensure relationships between staff, students and parents could be maintained.”**

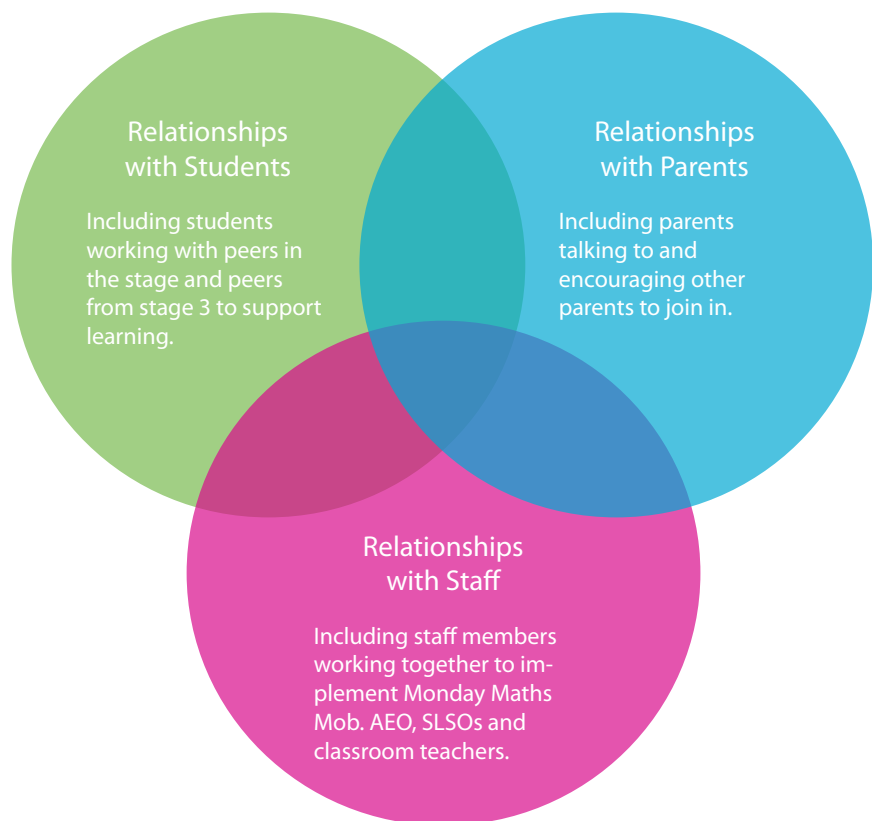


Diagram: Interconnections of relationships Dharug Cluster, 2012

Some of the key significant moments that led us to value the impact of successful relationships are outlined below.

### **Relationships with parents**

Initially, the Hebersham PS school plan intended for 'Monday Maths Mob' to be implemented by Kindergarten teachers on a rotational roster – each week a different teacher would teach the group. It was soon evident that the teacher implementing the program in the initial weeks of the program had built a strong rapport with the students and had made connections with the parents who were attending each week. It was therefore decided by the team that in the best interests of the program, one teacher would be assigned this role to ensure relationships between staff, students and parents could be maintained.

### **Relationships with staff**

Following the decision to assign one teacher to the 'Monday Maths Mob' program Dani Upton was asked to implement the program along with Mona McFarlane (AEO). Since 2010 Dani and Mona have worked collaboratively to share expertise and plan culturally responsive learning experiences for students. Furthermore they have worked closely with SLSOs and Kindergarten teachers to monitor the effectiveness of the program and design learning experiences which best suit the learning needs of the students.

### **Relationships with students**

One of the best examples of the impact of student relationships was during a 'Monday Maths Mob' lesson that focused on totems. One of the Stage 3 students led a group of students in their numeracy activity which involved using possums (Dharug totem) to add and subtract. Whilst leading the group, this student began to discuss with the supporting teacher and group of Kindergarten students what his totem was and talked about the members of his family.

This was not only a great opportunity for Kindergarten students to build their understanding of what a totem is but was also a great opportunity for the Stage 3 student to share and celebrate his culture with other students.

### **Some questions to prompt discussion:**

- 1. What can you draw out of this story that has implications for how you teach?*
- 2. How do relationships between teachers and Aboriginal educators, parents and family impact teaching practice?*
- 3. What other interesting or important aspects are in this Significant Episode?*

