



# CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT



## U SHAPE US

The fantastical game of imagination



# U Shape Us and the Australian Curriculum (Primary)

U Shape Us is a creative, card-based game that fosters connection, imagination, and inclusion in classrooms and communities. Its structure—centred on idea generation, sharing, and collaborative creation—aligns closely with the Australian Curriculum v9, particularly through the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Connections](#). This cross-curriculum resource highlights four key, interrelated aspects of learning that promote mental health and wellbeing:

- ◆ Connectedness and belonging
- ◆ Personal and social skills
- ◆ Accessing support
- ◆ Health-enhancing behaviours

These themes, central to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Connection, are designed to be embedded across multiple learning areas — including English, Health and Physical Education (HPE), Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS), Digital Technologies, and The Arts — and provide educators with a practical framework for supporting student wellbeing through everyday teaching.

U Shape Us directly supports this approach. The game invites students to reflect, imagine, and co-create ideas in small groups, fostering communication, empathy, and connection. As they play, students practise key skills such as respectful listening, inclusive thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and imaginative idea development — all of which contribute to positive mental health and social wellbeing.

The following pages map U Shape Us to specific content descriptors and elaborations across English, HPE, and HASS, demonstrating how the game supports the key themes of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Connections. This alignment includes:

- Foundational, Years 1 and 2: English
- Years 3 and 4: HASS, HPE, English
- Years 5 and 6: HASS, HPE

This curriculum alignment was prepared by U Shape Us, a Canberra-based social enterprise committed to nurturing belonging through creativity. It is not endorsed by ACARA or any curriculum authority. The mapping reflects our best efforts to align U Shape Us with the Australian Curriculum v9, based on real-world classroom testing and educator feedback. The game has been trialled across all primary school years, including with students as young as five. We welcome your insights to help us continue refining this resource.

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U Shape Us

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This mapping is based on the Australian Curriculum support resource “Mental health and wellbeing: Foundation” (ACARA, 2023). It identifies how key aspects of mental health and wellbeing are reflected across Foundation-level content descriptors and elaborations in the curriculum.

[See : Mental health and wellbeing mapping – Foundation](#)



English - Literacy  
Interacting with others  
AC9EFLY02

Interact in informal and structured situations by listening while others speak and using features of voice including volume levels

Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us Supports This
Exchanging ideas with peers in pairs and small groups, engaging in class discussions, listening to others and contributing ideas	Students take turns responding to creative prompts in small groups, listening to others' ideas and sharing their own.
Showing understanding of appropriate listening behaviour, such as listening without interrupting, and looking at the speaker, if culturally appropriate	Gameplay encourages turn-taking, listening quietly to each person's idea before responding or moving on.
Altering volume for inside and outside situations and when speaking to an audience	Students practise speaking clearly and adjusting their voice so others can hear their idea.
Participating in informal interaction situations; for example, play-based experiences that involve the imaginative use of spoken language	U Shape Us uses imaginative prompts in a play-based format where students invent and share their ideas aloud.
Listening to and following instructions	Students follow game instructions to take turns, draw cards, and participate respectfully in their group.

This mapping is based on the Australian Curriculum support resource “Mental health and wellbeing: Years 1 and 2” (ACARA, 2023). It outlines how key aspects of mental health and wellbeing are integrated within Years 1 & 2 content descriptors and elaborations.

[🔗 Mental health and wellbeing mapping – Years 1 & 2](#)



English - Literacy  
Interacting with Others  
AC9E2LY02

Use interaction skills including turn-taking, speaking clearly, using active listening behaviours and responding to the contributions of others, and contributing ideas and questions

Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us Supports This
Using turn-taking in group and pair work	Players take turns sharing their idea in small groups, using a clear sequence so everyone has a chance to speak.
Building a conversation by staying on topic, supporting other speakers, eliciting responses, listening supportively and attentively, asking relevant questions, providing useful feedback and prompting	Players listen to each other’s ideas and offer structured feedback by saying what they liked, how to improve it, and how it could be brought to life.
Participating in informal and structured discussions	The game provides a mix of structure (turn-taking and prompts) and informal play (personal storytelling and creativity).
Interacting appropriately with peers, teachers and visitors	Players practise respectful interaction in small groups, taking turns and listening actively.
Formulating different types of questions ('when', 'why', 'how')	Prompt cards model open-ended questions like “how could this happen?” and “where would this take place?”, helping students understand different question types.



English - Literacy  
Interacting with others  
AC9EFLY02

Interact in informal and structured situations by listening while others speak and using features of voice including volume levels

Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us Supports This
Exploring ways to comment on what others say, including using sentence starters such as 'I like the way you...', 'I agree that...', 'I have a different thought...', 'I'd like to say something different...'	Players respond to each other's ideas by saying what they liked, how they would improve it, and how it could be brought to life.
Demonstrating appropriate listening behaviours, responding to and paraphrasing a partner's contribution	Players listen to each idea before offering feedback in a structured round, allowing time to reflect and respond clearly.
Asking relevant questions and making connections with personal experiences	Players are invited to imagine and describe their own ideas, which are often shaped by their experiences and interests.
Understanding how to disagree or respectfully offer an alternative	Feedback is framed around improving or adapting ideas, allowing players to suggest changes in a respectful, collaborative way.

This mapping is based on the Australian Curriculum support resource “Mental health and wellbeing: Years 3–4” (ACARA, 2023). It demonstrates how key aspects of mental health and wellbeing are embedded within content descriptors and elaborations for Years 3 and 4.

[Mental health and wellbeing mapping – Years 3–4](#)

Year 3  
 Literacy – Interacting with Others  
 AC9E3LY02

Use interaction skills to contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas

Year 4  
 Literacy – Interacting with Others  
 AC9E4LY02

Listen for key points and information to carry out tasks and contribute to discussions, acknowledging another opinion, linking a response to the topic, and sharing and extending ideas and information

Code	Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us supports this
Year 3 AC9E3LY02	Building on and connecting ideas and opinions expressed by others, active listening, responding through discussion.	USU provides structured turn-taking opportunities, requiring players to actively listen, contribute, and build on ideas. Through gameplay, students respond to each other’s suggestions, explore alternative perspectives, and engage in meaningful discussions to refine connection ideas.
Year 4 AC9E4LY02	Developing speaking and listening behaviours, acknowledging others’ contributions, presenting ideas clearly.	Through USU’s reflective discussions, players express their ideas, share what they like about others’ ideas, and offer suggestions to improve them. They also hear differing perspectives from other players, encouraging them to consider multiple viewpoints and refine their thinking.



# HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES - YEAR 3 & 4



Year 3  
Skills – Concluding & Decision Making  
AC9HS3S06

Propose actions or responses to an issue or challenge that consider possible effects of actions



Year 4  
Skills – Concluding & Decision Making  
AC9HS4S06

Propose actions or responses to an issue or challenge that consider possible effects of actions

Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration		
Code		How U Shape Us supports this
AC9HS3S06	Contributing ideas to a group response to a community challenge (e.g., improving waste management, conservation).	<p>USU's Invent Prompts encourage students to develop creative solutions to real-world challenges, including social isolation in their community. By engaging in collaborative idea generation, students explore practical ways to foster connection and inclusion.</p> <p>Blank Invent Cards allow for customisation, enabling students or teachers to tailor the game to specific real-world issues, such as improving waste management, conservation, or other school or community challenges.</p>
AC9HS4S06	Participating in cooperative strategies that enable decision-making, developing plans of action.	<p>USU fosters collaborative decision-making by encouraging students to generate, assess, and refine ideas together. Through gameplay, students explore different perspectives and possible solutions to challenges, helping them develop their ability to make informed decisions. The USU Idea Planning Sheet provides a structured way for students to turn their ideas into real-world actions, using Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) principles to identify strengths, resources, and next steps.</p>



# HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION - YEAR 3 & 4



Movement & Physical Activity  
Learning Through Movement  
AC9HP4M08

Apply rules and scoring systems to promote fair play when participating or designing physical activities



Movement & Physical Activity  
Making Active Choices  
AC9HP4M05

Participate in physical activities in natural and outdoor settings to examine factors that can influence their own and others' participation

Code	Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us supports this
AC9HP4M08	Collaborating to decide rules for a new game, ensuring fairness, modifying activities for inclusion	Students use USU to invent connection ideas that involve a diverse range of people, including those with disabilities, different cultural backgrounds, age, and gender—represented on the cards. This encourages students to consider how different people might participate in the activities they design, leading to rule modifications that ensure inclusion and fairness.
AC9HP4M05	Participating in physical activities in natural settings in the local area and reflecting on enjoyable components	When students create their connection ideas their inventions often become outdoor games that everyone can play. Examples include a reinvented running tag game, a marble rolling game, and a mini wheely bin race. These activities require little to no equipment, use existing resources, an outdoor space, making them accessible and easy to implement.





# HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION - YEAR 3 & 4



Personal, Social & Community Health  
Making Healthy and Safe Choices  
AC9HP4P10

Investigate and apply behaviours that contribute to their own and others' health, safety, relationships and wellbeing



Personal, Social & Community Health  
Interacting with Others  
no code

Planning ways to celebrate the cultural diversity of students in their class, such as sharing recipes, stories and games from their cultural heritage.

Code	Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us supports this
AC9HP4P10	Discussing the importance of a sense of belonging and connection in promoting mental health and wellbeing	USU fosters a sense of belonging by engaging students in collaborative gameplay that strengthens social connections. Players explore ways to support inclusion and friendship-building through the creation of new ideas.
Interacting with others	Modifying physical activities to ensure that everyone is included, such as by changing equipment, rules, and playing space.	USU contains Invention Challenges that encourage students to explore and design activities that reflect cultural heritage and inclusivity. Prompts like "Invent a way to bring old traditions to life" or "Invent a way to connect through food" invite students to draw from their own backgrounds while learning about their peers' cultures. By modifying and adapting activities—such as creating inclusive games and celebrations—students strengthen social cohesion and appreciation for diversity.

This mapping is based on the Australian Curriculum support resource “Mental health and wellbeing: Years 5–6” (ACARA, 2023). It highlights the integration of mental health and wellbeing aspects within content descriptors and elaborations for Years 5 and 6.

## [Mental health and wellbeing mapping – Years 5–6](#)

Year 5

Literacy – Interacting with Others  
AC9E5LY02

Use appropriate interaction skills including paraphrasing and questioning to clarify meaning, make connections to own experience, and present and justify an opinion or idea

Year 6

Literacy – Interacting with Others  
AC9E6LY02

Use interaction skills and awareness of formality when paraphrasing, questioning, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, and sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions

Code	Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us supports this
AC9E5LY02	Participating in pair, group, class and school speaking and listening situations, including informal conversations, discussions and presentations.	U Shape Us is designed for small group play (2–6 players) and prompts structured turn-taking and sharing. Players are encouraged to speak, listen, respond, and reflect on ideas. The game format naturally supports active listening and conversational turn-taking through repeated peer interactions.
AC9E6LY02	Participating in pair, group, class, school and community speaking and listening situations, including informal conversations, discussions, debates and presentations.	The game involves sharing personal stories, generating ideas, and discussing them with peers. It enables students to communicate their thinking in both informal conversation and more structured discussion. As students co-create ideas for improving school or community connection, they practice verbal communication and presentation skills in a safe, low-pressure environment.



# HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION YEAR 5 & 6



Personal, Social & Community Health  
Making Healthy and Safe Choices  
AC9HP6P10

Analyse how behaviours influence the health, safety, relationships and wellbeing of individuals and communities



Movement & Physical Activity  
Making Active Choices  
AC9HP6M05

Participate in physical activities that enhance health and wellbeing in natural and outdoor settings, and analyse the steps and resources needed to promote participation



Movement & Physical Activity  
Learning Through Movement  
AC9HP6M09

Participate positively in groups and teams by contributing to group activities, encouraging others and negotiating roles and responsibilities

Code	Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us supports this
AC9HP6P10	Describing strategies to support a sense of belonging and connection, and recognising the importance of social support for enhancing mental health and wellbeing.	USU encourages players to invent connection ideas that improve a sense of belonging in their communities. By engaging in creative problem-solving, students explore ways to build relationships, foster inclusion, and create supportive environments. Through discussion and reflection, they consider how small actions can strengthen social connections, supporting mental health and overall wellbeing.
AC9HP6M05	Discussing how a connection to a community space or special place can influence the types of physical activity options people will choose to participate in.	The game encourages students to invent connection ideas based on typical spaces at home, school, and in the community. Their ideas are shaped by the possibilities and limitations of different environments—whether indoor or outdoor—helping them consider how space influences physical activity choices. By modifying activities to suit different settings, students explore how community spaces impact participation in movement-based activities.
AC9HP6M09	Exploring and performing the different roles and responsibilities in physical activities that promote enjoyment, safety and positive outcomes for participants.	Through structured gameplay, USU supports teamwork, communication, and role negotiation, helping students understand the importance of group participation.



# HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION YEAR 5 & 6



Personal, Social & Community Health  
Interacting with Others  
AC9HP6P04

Describe and demonstrate how respect and empathy can be expressed to positively influence relationships



Personal, Social & Community Health  
Interacting with Others  
AC9HP6P05

Describe and implement strategies to value diversity in their communities

Code	Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Elaboration	How U Shape Us supports this
AC9HP6P04	Exploring strategies for responding when relationships change, such as starting a new school, changing priorities or interests, family break-up, or joining a new sports team.	USU can be used as an icebreaker with new students or as a tool to deepen relationships within and across established friendship groups. The game provides a safe space where players share ideas, feel valued for their contributions, and engage in collaborative discussions. This process helps students build trust, empathy, and respect, making it easier to navigate social changes, such as starting a new school, shifting interests, or forming new friendships.
AC9HP6P05	Proposing strategies to help others understand points of view that differ from their own and to encourage discussion about individual and cultural similarities and differences to tackle discrimination such as sexism, racism and homophobia.	<p>USU encourages players to explore diverse perspectives by creating and discussing connection ideas that consider different lived experiences. The game includes prompts that invite students to design inclusive activities, ensuring that people of different backgrounds, abilities, and identities are considered.</p> <p>Through structured gameplay, students propose ways to foster understanding, challenge biases, and create welcoming spaces for all. By listening to and building on each other's ideas, players learn to appreciate alternative viewpoints and reflect on how inclusion can be actively practiced.</p> <p>Blank Invent Cards allow students or teachers to tailor challenges to issues relevant to their school or community, such as designing activities that promote cultural exchange, tackle discrimination, or celebrate diversity.</p>



# HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES YEAR 5 & 6



Year 5

Skills – Concluding & Decision Making  
AC9HS5S06

Propose actions or responses to issues or challenges and use criteria to assess the possible effects



Year 6

Skills – Concluding & Decision Making  
AC9HS6S06

Propose actions or responses to issues or challenges and use criteria to assess the possible effects

code	Mental Health and Wellbeing Curriculum	How U Shape Us supports this
Year 5 AC9HS5S06	Undertaking a project that responds to an identified challenge or issue with strategies to be used that will achieve desired outcomes; for example, a school fundraising activity, an ecological preservation project, a school-based opinion poll about a relevant issue.	<p>Invent prompts in USU encourage students to develop creative solutions to real-world challenges, including social isolation in their community. Through collaborative idea generation, students explore practical ways to foster connection and inclusion, considering who might benefit from their ideas and how they could be implemented. Blank Invent Cards allow for customisation, enabling students or teachers to tailor the game to specific real-world issues, such as environmental sustainability, school improvement projects, or local community needs. USU can support fundraising initiatives by helping students brainstorm and design engaging community ideas. For example, students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Invent a community celebration that doubles as a fundraiser for a cause they care about.</li><li>◆ Invent a connection activity that encourages participation while raising money.</li></ul>
Year 6 - AC9HS6S06	Brainstorming solutions to an issue that is significant to a group, collecting evidence to build a case for action that takes account of alternative views, minimises risks and mitigates any negative outcomes, and using negotiation to reach consensus on a preferred approach to resolving the issue.	<p>USU prompts players to generate connection ideas that address social challenges such as isolation, inclusion, and belonging. Through structured gameplay, players think creatively about solutions, expand on each other's ideas, and explore multiple perspectives to refine their thinking. Players can use blank Invent Cards to tailor challenges to real-world issues identified by their class or community, ensuring relevance and engagement. USU fosters collaborative decision-making as players discuss, adapt, and refine their ideas based on peer feedback. Teachers can extend this process using the USU Idea Planning Sheet, which supports structured decision-making based on Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) principles, helping students turn ideas into actionable solutions.</p>