



Kids' Connection

Session 7 *"Friends"*

FRIENDS

Goal: To identify ways to make and maintain healthy friendships.

Key Points:

- ⊗ To have good friends, we must first BE a good friend.
- ⊗ There are some positive, healthy things we can do to have the friendships we want:
 - Be yourself and like yourself.
 - Be a good listener.
 - Be reliable and trustworthy.
 - Understand that having conflict is normal. Friends can disagree and still be friends.
 - Forgive one another.
- ⊗ A true friend will respect our choice not to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Major Message: *I CAN treat others like I want to be treated.*

Pre-School

I. **Sunshine and Cloud** *(Review with the participants the process for this activity.)*

II. **Review and Introduction**

I am so glad that each of you could come back today. Let's go over our Group Promises before we start. *(Go over each promise briefly with the participants, using the poster as a visual aid.)*

Last time we talked about making healthy choices. We learned that it is important to make choices that are good for us and others. We also learned that using alcohol and other drugs is NEVER a healthy choice. Today we are going to talk about another kind of choice we make. We are going to talk about whom we choose to be our friends and what kind of friend we choose to be to others.

III. **Guided Discussion**

Put your hand on your head if you have a friend in this group. Now put your hand on your knee if you have another friend. Put your hand on your elbow if you are a good friend to others. Great – we all have friends and we can be good friends.

H **Are all of our friends the same?**

We have different friends at different places and different times. For example, you may have a great friend you meet at the swimming pool in the summertime. You may have lots of fun with them all summer, but then you don't see them during the rest of the year. You could also have a very good friend that you share all of your feelings with – you may be friends with this person all of your life.

H **What are some of the different things we do with our friends?**

Now we are going to take a “friendship” walk. Everyone come on this walk with me. *(Standing in place, slap your hands on your thighs in a walking rhythm. Encourage the participants to do the same and to keep pace with you. Continue the rhythm throughout the story.)* Here we go. We are walking along the sidewalk and who do we see? It's _____ *(Name someone from the group.)*. She has her bike stuck in the mud. What should we do? *(Allow time for suggestions.)* Good ideas! Let's help her out. *(Make motions to help her.)* Wow – you all are such good friends.

Pre-School

Let's keep walking and see what else we find. Look! There's _____ (**Name another participant from the group.**)! He is looking outside his window, but can't come out and play because he is sick. He looks so sad. How can we make him feel better? (**Take suggestions.**) Great! Let's _____ to make him feel better. (**Name an appropriate suggestion that a participant gave to help the sick boy.**) You are all showing what great friends you can be! Remember that to have a friend it is important to BE a friend.

Now that we've made him feel better, let's keep walking. Oh look, there's that older boy from our neighborhood. We don't know him very well, but let's go say "Hi." He is smoking a cigarette. He asks us if we want to smoke. He knows that it is bad for us and that we are too young to smoke. Is he being a good friend? No way! Let's say "No thanks" and get out of here fast! Remember that true friends only want good things for us. A true friend will not want us to ever choose to use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

Now we're going up a hill and back down. We are winding around the path and what do we see? A park with lots of toys and things to play on! There are lots of other boys and girls here and we don't know any of them. How could we make a new friend? (**Take suggestions.**) Yes, we could share a toy with someone or push the swings for them or just talk to them. It's fun to make new friends! Now it's time to go home. Wave goodbye to our new friend. As we walk home, let's think about being good friends. Is it easy to help someone? Does it feel good to be nice? You all are such good friends! Whew – what a great walk! Now we are finally home. (**Slow down your rhythm until you come to a stop.**)

It's fun to be a good friend. Sometimes it takes some hard work, though. To be a good friend we need to be a good listener, we need to be ourselves, and we need to say we are sorry if we fight with our friends.

You may have heard that we are supposed to treat others the way we want to be treated. Let's think about that. Do you like it when someone is nice to you? (**Allow time for responses.**) Sure, we like for people to be nice to us! And we don't like it very much when others are mean. So, the best way to HAVE friends is to BE a good friend – treat them the same way you want to be treated.

IV. Activity and Processing

(Choose an appropriate activity for your group and upon completion of the activity process what they learned and how it relates to the discussion.)

Pre-School

V. Closing Summary

H What are some things we learned today?

One of the most important things to remember about friendship is that in order to HAVE a friend, we need to BE a friend. True friends only want what is best for each other. A true friend would never want us to use alcohol or other drugs.

Our Major Message for today is: *I CAN treat others like I want to be treated.*

VI. Major Message Ritual

Elementary

I. Sunshine and Cloud

II. Review and Introduction

H Who can tell me some things we talked about last time?

Last time we talked about how even though making healthy choices can be hard, it is important to make choices that will have good consequences for us and others. We also learned that most people your age want to make healthy choices and have good reputations. Most people your age do not use alcohol or other drugs and know that using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs is NEVER a healthy choice. Today we are going to talk about another kind of choice we make – who our friends are going to be, as well as what kind of friend we choose to be to others.

III. Guided Discussion

H What are some examples of friendships we might have?

H What are some things we do with our friends?

When we talk about friendship we are not only talking about what we look for in a friend and what a true friend is, but also what it means to be a friend. Friends are people who enjoy our company and encourage, support, and care about us. We all have different kinds of friends. For example, we might have friends we enjoy playing sports with or friends we talk to about our feelings. Some friendships may last for many years and other friendships may last for only a short period of time – like for a school year or for the summer. One thing all our friendships have in common is that true friends only want what is best for each other.

H Why do you think it is important to have different kinds of friends?

As we can see from our discussion, it is important to have different types of friendships. Just like the examples you all gave, some friends may be fun to just hang out with and others may be life long friends who support and encourage us through good times and not so good times. We have best friends we play with every day and others we don't get to see very often.

H What are some qualities that we need to have in order be a good friend and that we look for in our friends?

Each person brings special qualities into friendships. These are qualities we look for in our friends and these are qualities we need to have in order to be a friend. To have friends we must first BE a friend.

H What does it mean to be a friend?

Elementary

An important part of being a friend is understanding and appreciating what is special about each other. Qualities we look for in friends and qualities we need to have to be a good friend are things like we just said: being a good listener, being reliable and trustworthy, caring about each other, sharing, and forgiving each other when we have disagreements. Friends always want what is best for each other.

An important part of friendship is treating others the way we want to be treated. An important lesson for us to remember is that we should always stop and ask ourselves – “How would I want to be treated in this situation?” It takes time and effort to have good friendships. Sometimes this is not easy. There are some positive, healthy things we can do to have the friendships that we want:

- **Be Yourself and Like Yourself:** Accept yourself and appreciate the ways in which you are different. To know how to like others, we must first like ourselves.
- **Be a Good Listener:** Listening shows that you value what the other person has to say. Really listening to someone is also a way to show respect.
- **Be Reliable and Trustworthy:** Honesty helps to create trust, which is an important part of a healthy relationship. When we are honest, we are true to the promises we make ourselves and we are true to the kind of person we want to be. When we are trustworthy, it means we are reliable and people can depend on us. When we are trustworthy, people know that we would never ask someone to do something wrong, something that might hurt them, or something that might have bad consequences.
- **Understand that Having Conflict is Normal:** It is okay to disagree at times; we won't always get along. Friends can disagree and still be friends. But it is important to always be kind, even when we disagree, and to remember to treat each other like we want to be treated.
- **Forgive One Another:** When we have done something wrong to someone, or they have done something wrong to us, it is important to forgive each other. Remember, none of us is perfect.

H **Are we being a true friend if we try to make someone else make an unhealthy choice?**

H **Is someone being a friend to us if they want us to make unhealthy choices?**

Elementary

If someone is our true friend, they will want us to make good and healthy choices. If someone wants us to do something wrong, do something that might hurt us, or do something that might have bad consequences, then they are not really a friend. A true friend will respect our choice not to do something wrong, or something that could hurt us or get us into trouble.

Drinking alcohol or using tobacco or marijuana is never a healthy choice. A true friend will respect our choices not to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

IV. Activity and Processing

(Choose an appropriate activity for your group and upon completion of the activity process what they learned and how it relates to the discussion.)

V. Closing Summary

H **What are some things we learned today?**

One of the most important things to remember about friendship is that in order to HAVE a friend, we need to BE a friend. There are positive, healthy things we can do to have the friendships we want: 1) be yourself and like yourself; 2) be a good listener; 3) be reliable and trustworthy; 4) understand that having conflict is normal; and 5) forgive one another. If we are a true friend, we will never want or ask a friend to do something that might hurt them, or do something that might have bad consequences. If we are a true friend, we will never want a friend to use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. If our friends are true friends, they will respect our choice to make healthy choices, including our choice not to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. The best kind of friend we can be to others is one that is always encouraging and supportive.

Our Major Message for today is: ***I CAN treat others like I want to be treated.***

(Make copies of the Major Message Bookmark – Handout KC 7:6 - on colored cardstock and cut them into bookmarks to distribute.)

VI. Major Message Ritual