



Overview & General Information

Childhood friendships give kids a sense of *acceptance and belonging*, which is key to well-being and positive self-esteem. Friendships also provide an important training ground for kids to develop healthy relational skills. But because children develop skills at different paces, friendships can be painful and confusing, especially in elementary and middle school.

Project Friendships teaches children the skills that help relationships thrive. The curriculum focuses on qualities associated with healthy friendships and helps kids navigate their social world with more confidence and awareness.

What is Project Friendships?

Project Friendships is a curriculum that helps kids develop social awareness and skills that support healthy friendships. The program is designed for kids ages 8-12. Interactive lessons focus on the following key points:

- Healthy friendships require a set of **skills** that kids develop at different paces (*which explains why friendships can be painful and confusing at times*)
- Friendships **change** over time
- Everyone makes **mistakes**
- We teach others how we want to be treated by **speaking up** effectively
- Close friendships can be **hard to find** and may not happen until middle school or even later
- We **choose** which of our friendships to grow...Grow the healthy ones!

How Does Project Friendships Differ From Other Programs?

Project Friendship differs from other social/emotional programs in several ways, including:

- A clear focus on healthy friendship skills
- A simple framework, the Friendship Pyramid, that helps kids understand their social world
- Engaging, hands on activities and role plays/skits to practice skills
- Recognition that kindness and respect are important in all relationships, as are speaking up and healthy boundaries when others not treating you with respect

General Planning Tips:

We understand that you need the flexibility to adjust the curriculum to best meet the needs of your group. The following tips describe how the curriculum is typically shared. Please adjust the group size, group make-up, program length and other program elements as needed to best accommodate your group.

Ideal Group Size: 10-14 kids

Ideal Group Make-up: Ideally kids are close in age, such as ages 8-10 or ages 11-12. All girl or all boy groups work well, however mixed groups are effective too. In mixed groups, pairing girls with girls and boys with boys for activities helps kids work through scenarios typical for their gender.

Ideal Program Length: The curriculum is divided into four lessons. Each lesson is about 75-90 minutes in length.

Project Friendship Kit Include:

- Printable program flyers for promotions
- General overview and tips to guide program planning
- Easy to follow instructions for all lessons and activities
- Printable handouts
- Pre and Post-program participant survey

Curriculum Outline:

LESSON 1: The Friendship Pyramid – Understanding the Phases & Skills of Friendship
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Friendship Pyramid• Six Friendship Truths• QUIZ- <i>How Healthy is My Friendship?</i>• Qualities I Like in Friendship• QUIZ – <i>How are My Friendship Skills? (optional and/or take home activity)</i>
LESSON 2: Using “I Power” to Speak Up in Friendships
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using “I Power” to Speak Up and Resolve Conflict• Skits – Tricky Friendship Scenarios• Managing Big Emotions in a Healthy Way
LESSON 3: Understanding Bullying and How Respond
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to Stand Up to Bullying• Skits – Bullying Scenarios• Why are Kids “Mean on Purpose” Sometimes?
LESSON 4: How to Make New Friends & Be a Friendship Star
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making New Friends• Skits – Making New Friends• Taking Care of Ourselves During Rough Patches• How to be a Friendship Star

Requirements for Curriculum Use:

- **Create a Supportive Space:** Program leaders delivering curriculum should lead without judgment, foster a welcoming environment and accept kids as they are. Ideally program leaders create a supportive space that encourages positive behaviors and individual growth.
- **Offer Program for Free:** Project Friendships should be offered at no cost to encourage participation. Schools and groups may not charge a fee to participate.
- **Copyright:** Schools and community groups may repeatedly use the Project Friendships kit they purchase for their school or group. Kits may not be shared with other schools, across school districts or with other groups.

Healthy relationships are foundational to a *happy, connected life*. Children with positive friendships *perform better in school, have more confidence and stronger self-esteem*. Our goal is to help kids grow the awareness and skills that foster healthy relationships now and throughout life.

**Thank you for your time and commitment
to helping kids!**

We welcome your feedback and suggestions to help make this program as effective as possible. Please email JessicaBSpeer@gmail.com comments, testimonials and feedback.