

Classroom Guidance Newsletter
Lesson Two: Friendship

Dear Parents,

In Lesson Two, the students learned the importance of friendship. The Bible gives us many examples of friendship based simply on common humanity with all the joys associated with it. Through God's word we see that to have friends, you must be a friend and that friendship brings help in the time of trouble. The Bible says that people who truly follow God will have compassion. Also, God wants us to learn how to love our enemies, just as Jesus did.

Friendship was reinforced with activities that focused on caring, compassion, sharing, qualities in a good friend, goal-setting to become a better friend, loving your enemies, and peer pressure.

What Friendship Looks Like During the Elementary School Years

- Close friendships are largely gender bound. Children's liking for opposite sex friends drops away sharply at about 7 years of age.
- The rules of friendship are tested and re-evaluated through this period. Children begin to test their social power and to find their place in the social pecking order. This is the time when bullying can begin.
- Friendships at this stage move past just having fun playing together. Children can begin to support each other and affirm each other in ways that parents cannot. These friendships help them know where they fit in the world outside their family.
- At this age gossip becomes a reality. Much of this gossip relates to discussing negative attributes of others and it seems to serve the function of defining some of their relationships.
- The average childhood friendship for this age still lasts for a year or less.
- By about 10-11 years shared values become important in friendships. Children of this age expect friends to be loyal and to stick up for them.

Ways Parents Can Help Their Children to Develop Positive and Healthy Friendships

1. Encourage your child to talk with you about his or her friendships.
2. If your child shows signs of feeling rejected or left out talk with him or her about it. Share a time when you felt the same way.
3. Be sensitive to friendships that may involve negative activities or put-downs of other kids. Discuss it with your child and let him or her know how you feel about it.
4. Encourage your child to show appreciation when a friend does something thoughtful or helpful.

Ways Parents Can Help Their Children Make Good Choices for Themselves When Faced with Peer Pressure

1. Share with your child your own memories of dealing with peer pressure.
2. Acknowledge that it's not always easy to say "no" to a friend; but sometimes it's necessary.
3. Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day. Talk about your day. Keep the channels of communication open.
4. Recognize the times, however small, when your child makes a good choice in a given situation.

Friendship Resources

http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0%2C1703%2CA%25253D168209%252526M%25253D200851%2C00.html

http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0%2C1703%2CA%25253D168129%252526M%25253D200741%2C00.html

<http://www2.focusonthefamily.com/focusmagazine/parentfamily/A000001278.cfm>

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/535591/teaching_children_about_friendship.html

Sincerely,
Heidi Jolliffe
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