

HOW TO BE A GOOD FRIEND

Activity Guide



Rise Above Colorado's How to Be a Good Friend resource provides tips and guidance for young people about how to listen, connect, and be a good friend to their peers when they're going through a hard time, including reaching out for help. This complementary activity guide can be used to structure a lesson around applying and practicing How to Be A Good Friend.



LISTEN TO LEARN

ACTIVITY: LISTENING DYIAD

Assign youth into groups of 2 (the dyad). Provide the prompt of: "What's it like to be you lately?" and give each person on the dyad 2 minutes to share while the other person listens, and then switch listener / speakers for another 2 minutes. The listener during each turn should do nothing other than provide body language and cues (i.e. "active listening") that they are listening – no speaking! Consider brainstorming active listening techniques together before forming dyads.

DISCUSSION/DEBRIEF

What does it feel like when you feel heard? Who are the types of people you know are usually good at listening to you? What do they do that makes you feel that way?



HAVE A CONVO

ACTIVITY: INTERVIEWING

Divide into groups of 2 (or dyads). Each group gets 15 minutes total for each person to interview the other (so, about 7 minutes for each person). The goal is for the interviewer to learn as much as possible about a hobby or passion of the interviewee. Be curious: ask what they like, why they like it, how it makes them feel, how often they get to do it, what gets in their way, etc. Keep an open mind and learn things you never knew before. Try asking "why" or use drawings / pictures to provide more descriptions.

ACTIVITY: DEBATE

Pose a controversial (but simple) statement to the group (like, super speed is the most powerful super power.) Evenly assign everyone in the group as a "1" or a "2," corresponding with different positions on the statement, and everyone then pairs up with a partner of the opposite number / position. The partners then defend and debate their respective positions. Each person gets 2 minutes to describe their support for their own position and why they disagree with the other person's position. The goal is to do this respectfully, objectively, and kindly, and to understand each other's position. Remember: understanding someone's position does not have to mean agreeing with it. If time allows, ask each person to summarize their partner's position to the rest of the group. At the end, find out if anyone has changed their stance!

DISCUSSION/DEBRIEF

What are some of the things you might be worried about if you have a disagreement, or different opinion, from a friend? How would you try to tell them you don't agree about something?



BE A GOOD FRIEND ONLINE

ACTIVITY: JOURNALING

Ask youth to think about a time that something they shared or posted online might have had an unintended negative consequence, or hurt someone else's feelings. Ask them to journal about how they would have liked to have been approached or told about it, so that they could make it better. Ask them to also consider how they would have corrected the situation. If they can't think of a personal example of this, ask them to think of something they saw someone else post that had negative consequences and hurt someone's feelings and imagine it as their own.

DISCUSSION/DEBRIEF

What are the barriers to standing up for other people online? What are some of the benefits? Why is it important to stand up for others and yourself?



GET HELP

ACTIVITY: RESOURCE SHARING

Provide youth with sticky notes and ask them to write down as many resources in the school, community, or online that they find helpful. This could include informational websites, supportive organizations, or trusted adults or peers, for example. Then have youth anonymously share the sticky notes on a permanent space in the room (like a poster board, wall, etc.).

ACTIVITY: WEB OF CONNECTIONS

Share your own web of connections (people, places, resources, activities) that gives you strength and helps you rise above. Then ask youth to draw their own web of connections that they can rely on for themselves or on behalf of a friend.

DISCUSSION/DEBRIEF

What are some other resources in our school and community, including online, where you or your friends can go for help if you need it?

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

ACTIVITY: SCENARIO ROLE PLAY

Ask for 2 volunteers to demonstrate listening and speaking skills. They can come up with their own scenario, or you can offer these prompts:

1. How to TALK to a friend when you are concerned their partner is being controlling
2. How to TELL a friend you are feeling overwhelmed/stressed/depressed because your parents are putting so much pressure on you about grades
3. How to TALK to a friend you are worried is misusing prescription medication
4. How to STAND UP and intervene when you see someone getting bullied

For a larger group role play, use a “fishbowl” method in which the whole group forms a large circle around the room, and a smaller circle of volunteers proceed to the middle of the circle (the fishbowl) to act out various scenarios.

DISCUSSION/DEBRIEF

What things in particular (body language, words, etc.) did you notice that made it more or less comfortable to either offer help or receive it? How did it feel when you were playing various roles in the scenarios? What does it mean to be a trusted friend? What does it mean to trust a friend?

These discussions and activities can generate many emotions for participants. Be sure to thank participants for their courage and willingness to engage in this conversation, remind them that they are not alone, and show them how to seek help and reach out if they need it.