Friendship Support Group
Grades Third – Fifth

SPPS Elementary School Counseling Program

Activities from various sources
The activities in this group help to develop skills for intermediate grade students to make and sustain healthy friendships in school.

The purpose of this support group is to identify specific friendship / social skills that need to be developed or improved upon in each child and to provide group time to introduce and practice those skills so they can be transferred to other settings. Friendship skills can vary dramatically from child to child. Some friendship issues during the intermediate grades can be shyness, aggressiveness, communication skills, the ability to handle common friendship problems, knowing when to be a leader and when to be a follower, or the ability to deal with peer pressure.

The activities are organized into 8 sessions:

Session 1    Introductions / Friendship Road Activity
Session 2    Friendship Qualities / What is a Friend?
Session 3    Making Connections
Session 4    Communication Skills
Session 5    Friendly Behaviors / Leading and Following
Session 6    Friendship Blockers / Reputations
Session 7    Saying No to Friends / Handling Rejection
Session 8    Friendship Stars / Closure

**Support Group Sessions:**
The support group will meet for a total of eight, 30-minute sessions with not more than 4 students in a group. The students will be pre-assessed and post-assessed on skills being taught in the group to determine effectiveness of the intervention.

*Pre-group:*
Each participating classroom teacher and each student will complete an assessment.

*Post-group:*
Each participating classroom teacher and each student will complete an assessment after the 8-session intervention.

**Counselor** will compare pre- and post- assessment scores to determine effectiveness of the friendship group on each participant’s observed friendship skills. It will then be determined whether each student will continue in support group to strengthen skills, end support group because skills have been acquired, or end support group because group was not an effective intervention.
Intermediate Friendship Support Group
Needs Assessment

Teacher______________________________ Grade________________________
Student______________________________ Date_________________________

Please complete needs assessment for your student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. is a likeable person with good friendship qualities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. knows how to greet classmates in the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. knows how to make a new friend</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4. is a good listener to others in the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. is able to read and react properly to others feelings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. is able to handle common friendship problems (rejection, saying no, gossip / rumors, sharing)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. shows positive friendship skills in getting along with others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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This student’s greatest friendship challenge in the classroom is:
________________________________________________________________________

This student’s greatest friendship strength in the classroom is:
________________________________________________________________________
Student Needs Assessment for Friendships

Name______________________________________ Date____________________

**Directions:**
Complete the needs assessment and mark your answers honestly. Your counselor will collect the forms, no names or answers will be shared with the group. Your counselor will use this information to plan future friendship sessions.

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<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. I am a likeable person with good friendship qualities.</td>
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<td>2. I know how to greet classmates in my classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I show positive friendship skills in getting along with others.</td>
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My greatest friendship challenge is: ________________________________________

My greatest friendship strength is: ________________________________________
Session 1 Intermediate Friendship Group

Introductions / Friendship Road

Objective:
Students will complete the friendship needs assessment.

Materials:
Student needs assessment for each group member, cards / bricks for Friendship Road Activity, Describing Myself sheet for each group member.

Introduction:
Introduce the topic of the group – Friendship- and go over support group rules:

1. One person talks at a time.
2. Everything we say and do in group is private (explain mandated reporting).
3. No put-downs.
4. Everyone has a right to pass.

Activity 1:
Describing Myself Sheet – Have each group member fill out the sheet and take turns sharing the responses.

Activity 2:
We are here to talk and learn about making and keeping friends and how to be a good friend. Think about the story of the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy had to “follow the yellow brick road” to get herself home. Along the way she made some friends and she made some enemies. It wasn’t always easy for her and the others. They had to learn who to trust and whom they could rely on. They had to forgive each other for mistakes. They had to work at being good friends. We will be following our own Yellow Brick Road the next 7 weeks and trying to get better at being friends.

Give each student a copy of the Student Needs Assessment. And place the cards/bricks on the table. Tell students that these are the bricks of friendship that we will need to build our Yellow Brick Road. Have students take turns drawing a card and reading it to the group. Counselor then elaborates on each card with examples. As the cards are drawn each student can then fill out the corresponding item on the needs assessment. Collect needs assessments.

Remind students that next week the session will be about what makes a good friend.
Session 1

Describing Myself Activity

Name________________________________

*Put an X on the line that best describes you.

SAD *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---*---* HAPPY
BORED *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---* EXCITED
NERVOUS *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---* RELAXED
NEGATIVE *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---* POSITIVE
TIRED *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---* ENERGETIC
SHY *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---* TALKATIVE
QUIET *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---* LOUD
MEAN *--*---*--*---*--*---*---*---* NICE

Choose 3 traits that describe you that you can share with the group. You do not have to share everything. You can choose to share something positive that you are proud of OR something that you would like to improve on.

*Three words that describe me in a positive way are:
_______________________, ___________________________, ____________________

*Three words that describe things I need to work on are:
______________________, ____________________________, ____________
Session 1

**Friendship Road Activity**
Cut out each Brick (YELLOW PAPER) to use when filling out student needs assessment.

Brick 1
To Be a Friend…
It is important to be a likeable person with good friendship qualities.

Brick 2
To Be a Friend…
It is important to know how to greet classmates in a friendly way.

Brick 3
To Be a Friend…
It is important to know how to make new friends.

Brick 4
To Be a Friend…
It is important to be a good listener with friends.

Brick 5
To Be a Friend…
It is important to read other’s feelings and know what to do.

Brick 6
To Be a Friend…
It is important to be able to handle common friendship problems.

Brick 7
To Be a Friend…
It is important to show positive friendship skills to get along with others.
Friendship Qualities / What is a Friend?

**Objective:**
Students will learn the definition of friendship and identify 3 friendship qualities they have and 3 friendship qualities they treasure in a friend while practicing group interaction skills.

**Materials:**
A copy of the Judith Viorst poem *Harvey*, a copy of FRIENDSHIP JEWELS sheet, 3-5 colored stones for each student, fine line permanent marker for each student, a small bag for each student, chart paper and marker to record responses.

**Introduction:**
Quick review of group rules. *Ball Toss Go Around:* Tell your name and what your favorite ice cream flavor is.

**Activity 1:**
Counselor reads the poem *Harvey* by Judith Viorst aloud to students. Discuss the following questions: Who is Harvey? Would you like to be Harvey’s friend? Why? What things does Harvey do that make him a good friend? On the chart paper you can write down student responses. What are 5 things you want in a good friend? Then as a group if there are a lot of responses, circle the 5 MOST IMPORTANT friendship qualities.

Can we write a definition together of what a friend is?
* A person attached to another by affection or regard, a supporter, a pal, a companion, a person who knows and likes another.

**Activity 2:**
*Friendship Jewels* – Show students the FRIENDSHIP JEWELS chart with words describing good friendship qualities. Pass out the colored stones and markers. Have each student choose 3 to 5 of the qualities they ALREADY have or want to get better at and have them write those on the stones. Share with the group what each student chooses to write. Then remind them to keep their bag of jewels to remind them that THEY are a friendship treasure too. What they look for in a good friend is often what they have to offer themselves as a good friend.
Session 2

HARVEY
By Judith Viorst

Harvey doesn’t laugh about how I stay short while everybody grows.

Harvey remembers I like jellybeans – except black.

Harvey lends me shirts I don’t have to give back.

I’m scared of ghosts and only Harvey knows.

Harvey thinks I will when I say someday I will marry Margie Rose.

Harvey shares his lemonade – sip for sip.

He whispers “zip” when I forget to zip.

He swears I don’t have funny looking toes.

Harvey calls me up when I’m in bed with a sore throat and a runny nose.

Harvey says I’m nice – but not too nice.

And if there is a train to Paradise,

I won’t get on it unless Harvey goes.
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<td><strong>RESPECTFUL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CARING</strong></td>
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<td><strong>KIND</strong></td>
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<td><strong>FUNNY</strong></td>
<td><strong>HELPFUL</strong></td>
<td><strong>HONEST</strong></td>
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<td><strong>BRAVE</strong></td>
<td><strong>SINCERE</strong></td>
<td><strong>NEAT</strong></td>
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<td><strong>LOYAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>FORGIVING</strong></td>
<td><strong>CAREFUL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CHEERFUL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>GOOD TALKER</strong></td>
<td><strong>GOOD LISTENER</strong></td>
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<td><strong>GOOD STORYTELLER</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SECRET KEEPER</strong></td>
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Objective:
Student will gain skills in meeting and connecting with others.

Materials:
Two large paper clips, cards from the Connecting With Others Activity Sheet from Small Group Counseling for Children: Grades 2-5 by Diane Senn, Ed. S., 2006

Introduction:
Today we will partner up and do the “Opening Fist” activity to begin. The first person will make a tight fist and his/her partner will try to get him/her to open their fist WITHOUT talking. You can use anything but words: HUMOR, PLAYFULNESS, PLEADING, etc. You may not force the other person or hurt them. I will set the timer for 3 minutes, then we will switch roles. Discuss feelings about this activity and what worked and what didn’t work. Also emphasize that we all communicate many things even when we don’t use words.

Activity 1:
Discuss times when students have been somewhere where they didn’t know anyone: birthday party, big family reunion, new school, etc. Explain that everyone has a hard time knowing what to say or what to do in these situations. Hold 2 paper clips in your hand and explain that they can be like people. Two people can pass by each other and keep going right along but make NO CONTACT. Or two people can pass along and with little effort they can CONNECT. Connect the two paper clips together as they pass. Share with the group that the first step to making friends is to CONNECT.

Activity 2:
Put the cards from Role Play and RePlay activity on the table. Each student chooses one of the situations to act out as the role play then goes back and acts out the RePlay using more appropriate responses to the situation. Talk with the students on how to change body language, voice tone, gestures, etc. to have a more appealing effect when meeting new people. Record responses on a chart.

Sample Roleplays/RePlays:
Roleplay: Come into the room with your head down and no eye contact.
RePlay: Come into the room with your head up, pleasant look on your face and good eye contact.
Session 4 Intermediate Friendship Group

Communication Skills

Objective:
Student will identify good listening skills, practice listening skills and realize how important listening is to good friendships.

Materials:
LEARNING ABOUT EACH OTHER worksheet, pencils

Introduction:
Initiate the TELEPHONE GAME. Choose a student to start with and whisper a message into their ear.
Example: The black cat had a long, fat tail. Ask each student to whisper it, by turn, to their neighbor. Ask the last student to repeat the message they heard. Is it accurate? Try the activity several times.

Activity 1:
Review last lesson on making connections and practicing good body language, voice tone and eye contact. Have each student, by turn, turn away from the group and share an important event that happened to them. When each person is done they turn back to the group. When all have shared ask the group how it felt to talk about something important and not get feedback from the group. As human beings we need to see each other and pick up information from all of our senses to feel good about our friendships.

Can we make a list of good listening skills? Think of a person you know who really listens well and makes you feel heard. What do they do?

Write out responses. (Eye contact, leans forward when I talk, sits quietly, nods head, say “uh huh” or “yes”, smiles, has body facing mine, doesn’t interrupt me, asks me questions about my story, is patient, etc.)

Activity 2:
Learning About Each Other interview is next. Pair up the group and give each a copy of interview sheet to record their answers. Each person takes a turn being interviewed and recording the interview. Then each person will report back to the group about their PARTNER’s answers. Practice all of the good listening skills while you interview.

Have each person report back to the group about their partner. Ask if it was easy or hard to use good listening skills in this activity. Ask partners if they felt they were being listened to and why.
LEARNING ABOUT EACH OTHER

Ask your partner these questions and record their answers. Remember to practice good listening skills.

Partner’s name____________________

1. What is your favorite food?

2. What is your favorite T.V. Show?

3. What is your favorite color?

4. If you could travel anywhere where would you go?

5. What month were you born in?

6. What do you want to be when you grow up?

7. What is your favorite thing to do on Saturdays?

8. Who is your hero, or person you admire?

9. Who do you like to spend time with the most?

10. What would you rather eat: a pickle or a banana?
Session 5 Intermediate Friendship Group

Friendly Behaviors / Leading and Following

Objective:
To identify good leadership skills and what it means to be a leader and a follower in a friendship.

Materials:
Chart paper, markers

Introduction:
Start group by playing a short game of SIMON SAYS with counselor as the leader. On purpose play the game by giving directions too fast and loudly or softly. Don’t use eye contact, hum a tune or sing a song while you play the game (be distracting). Stop the game abruptly and have the students sit down at their seat. Process what happened. Ask them questions such as: Was it fun to play this with me as the leader? What did I do that was frustrating? (talked too loudly or softly, didn’t wait to see if everyone understood the rules, didn’t pay attention to what the group needed, didn’t seem to care if others were enjoying the game, etc.)

Activity 1:
Write down LEADER on top of chart paper or on the white board. With students make a list of what a good leader does. Think about the SIMON SAYS game for clues. (listens to all the people in the group, compromises, encourages others if they are having trouble, has all of the group in sight and checks whether everyone is understanding, doesn’t act bossy just because they are the leader, makes good choices about what to do next, etc.)

Write down FOLLOWER on top of another chart paper. Discuss what a good follower does in a game like SIMON SAYS. Make a list of responses. (Listens to the leader, doesn’t shout out, doesn’t start a fight or argue, asks by raising a hand or uses another signal, supports the leader, etc.)

Activity 2:
Counselor plays a round of SIMON SAYS using the new LEADER list of behaviors. Ask students if things went better. Remind them they had to be good followers for the game to work as well. Give each student in the group a chance to LEAD Simon Says. Process at the end. Did some of you prefer to be the leader? The follower? What did you need to remember to do when you were the leader? Was it hard to remember? Remember all of us have to be leaders and followers in our friendships too. Use these skills next week with your friends and family and we will talk about how it went next week.
Session 6 Intermediate Friendship Group

Friendship Blockers / REPUTATION

Objective:
Students will examine traits that harm friendships and how to avoid them.

Materials:
A ball to toss, copies of REPUTATION ACTION PLAN sheet (from Small Group Counseling for Children: Grades 2-5 by Diane Senn, Ed.S.)

Introduction:
Ask the group to remember a time when a friend treated them in a way that really upset them. It could be recent or something that happened a while ago. Ask students to volunteer to share (briefly). Remind students that they cannot control what their friends say to them but they CAN control their reaction to it.

Activity 1:
Play the IF…THEN game with the group. Use the ball toss to determine who will complete each phrase. By turn, the counselor reads the IF statement and the ball toss student completes the THEN phrase. Allow time for a discussion on what works and what doesn’t.

STATEMENTS:
IF you brag about yourself THEN…
IF you act like a bully to get what you want THEN…
IF you are always tattling on your siblings or friends THEN…
IF you are always acting like a clown THEN…
IF you start every school day in a down mood THEN…
IF you are a bad sport in gym when the other team wins THEN…
IF you always bring candy to lunch and never share it THEN…

SWITCH TO POSITIVE STATEMENTS:
IF you share small things with your friends often THEN…
IF you congratulate the other team when you lose THEN…
IF you do your best to smile each morning THEN…

Activity 2:
Discuss the meaning of the word REPUTATION. How do you get a reputation? Can you influence what your reputation is at home? At school? In the neighborhood? Can you have a different reputation at home then you do at school? Why? Ask students to choose a positive part of their reputation they would like to work on at school. For instance, they may want to have a reputation of being friendlier or being responsible or being funny, etc. Have them fill out a copy of REPUTATION ACTION PLAN sheet. What do I have to THINK, SAY, and DO to influence this reputation? Challenge them to put the task into action.
Session 6

**REPUTATION ACTION PLAN**

Name ___________________________________________

The reputation I want to improve is:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

*Remember reputations are based on what people see you DO. What repeated actions can you do so people will form a good reputation of you?*

Things I need to THINK to have this reputation:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Things I need to SAY to have this reputation:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Things I need to DO to have this reputation:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Draw a picture of you doing something to show your new reputation:


Adapted from Small Group Counseling for Children: Grades 2-5, Diane Senn, Ed. S.
Session 7 Intermediate Friendship Group

Saying No to Friends / Handling Rejection

Objective:
Students will learn when and how to say NO to friends and how to deal with rejection in friendships

Materials:
REJECTION ROLE PLAY popsicle sticks, puppets, Warning Flags for each student, Saying NO Activity sheet.

Introduction:
Start by asking students to remember a time when they wanted to be friends with someone who DID NOT want to be their friend. Allow time to have students volunteer to share (briefly). How did you feel when this happened? (Sad, mad, embarrassed, etc)

Activity 1:
Explain what happens when we get rejected.
We feel SAD…we may think something is wrong with us and we are no good.
We feel MAD…we might want to do something mean to them or get back at them.
We feel EMBARRASSED… we might not want to try again.

Everyone has to deal with these unpleasant feelings at different times, there is nothing WRONG with you if this happens to you. But we can practice what to do to get past these feelings and move ahead.

PRATICE: Ask yourself if you did anything wrong or say something you could have said differently?
If the answer is YES, then you can make a change the next time you try this. For example if the kids wouldn’t let you play a game is because the last time you threw a fit or cheated, then you have to be sure not to do that the next time. If the answer is NO, then think positive thoughts about yourself like “Oh well, I guess they miss out on my great friendship this time!”

Activity 2:
Pull out the Popsicle Stick role play sticks and take turns practicing how to end on a good note if you face rejection.

Stick Solutions:
“I will find something else to do.”
“They don’t want to play with me but I will keep looking for someone else to play with.”
“They may still like me but have other reasons why they can’t play with me now.”
“They may have other things on their mind and may be in a bad mood so I’ll just give them some space.”
“I can use my good manners even if they aren’t using theirs.”
“I can survive this, it won’t be the first or the last time I get rejected. It happens to everyone.”

Activity 3:
Switch gears and talk about times when students may have to REJECT one of their friends because they want them to do something wrong, risky or dangerous. This is a special case of rejection, and a hard choice to make.
Examples to put on the white board:
Copying homework, misbehaving for a sub, spreading gossip, smoking, drinking alcohol, shoplifting, etc.
Hand out WARNING FLAGS sheet and BRIGHT IDEAS sheet. Go through each and practice responses.
Session 7

**WARNING FLAGS and BRIGHT IDEAS**

Saying to NO to friends around risky and wrong situations can be hard. Use these steps to help you.

**First:** Recognize when a situation is wrong or risky. Does it break the law? Would my parent get angry?

**Second:** Be smart about warning flags.

**Third:** Use a bright idea to say NO.

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**Warning Flags:**

- Come on, no one will know.
- If you were my friend, you would do this for me.
- What are you-chicken?
- We won’t get caught!
- I dare you.

**Bright Ideas:**

- **Just say NO:** NO WAY! I CAN’T!
- **Make an excuse:** My mom will ground me if I’m not home on time.
- **Act shocked:** Are you CRAZY!
- **Ignore** or just leave abruptly.
- **Better idea:** Hey let’s go to the court and shoot hoops instead.
- **Get help** from someone you trust.
- **Change the topic:** Oh, did I tell you what I get to do this weekend?
- **Use humor:** Oh man, you always make me laugh with your crazy things!

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Adapted from *Small Group Counseling for Children: Grades 2-5* by Diane Senn, Ed. S.
Session 8 Intermediate Friendship Group

Friendship Stars

Objective:
Student will complete post assessment and give and receive compliments graciously from group members.

Materials:
Star sheet for each student, pencils

Introduction:
Play the Human Sculpture activity with the whole group. Counselor will have all students stand up and listen for directions. Each time they will be asked to form a Human Sculpture with only a certain number of their body parts making contact with the floor. The counselor announces 4, then if there are 4 people in group only one of each of their feet can be on the floor, while they connect and make a sculpture. If the counselor says 2, then the 4 people have to figure out how to have just 2 feet on the floor. If the counselor says 10, then the group has to figure out what other body parts need to be on the floor (knees, hands, etc.). Try 5-6 sculptures and stop. Process what worked in this game and what was difficult.

Activity 1:
Discuss skills that were learned in the group in the last 7 sessions: how to make connections with new people, how to use good body language and eye contact, how to be a good leader and follower in a friendship, how to deal with rejection, how to make a friendly reputation with repeated actions, how to use positive emotions to show the best of me.

Have each student write their name on their STAR SHEET. On each turn, the group will pass their sheet to the right and another member will read the name and write one character trait or compliment to that person. We will pass the star sheets until all the points are filled, then return them to their owner. Each student will take time to read the sheet and share any other comments with the group.

Activity 2:
Students will fill out the post group assessment and turn it into the counselor.

Closure:
Game of choice or art activity
Draw a large star in the space below. Leave room for group members to write comments.

Adapted from *Small Group Counseling for Children: Grades 2-5* by Diane Senn, Ed. S.