

Friendship: Using your words and actions to show others you care

PARENTING WITH FRIENDSHIP:

When no one can see you smile

A few months ago, you could show someone you care with a simple grin over a shared joke, or in agreement, or as encouragement. But without using the bottom half of your face, it can be tough to offer this simple acknowledgment.

As we adjust to life in the pandemic, being intentional about our verbal and facial communication skills is a must. From the type of mask we wear (no fixed facial expressions!) to the volume with which we speak, our relationships require that we think about these seemingly unimportant things.

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FRIENDSHIP:

For parent reflection:

- How do you show friends they are important to you, as an adult? How did you do that when you were younger?
- How do you emphasize your expectations about how your kids interact with friends?

Mirror, mirror...

Use a mirror at your house to practice facial expressions with your child while wearing a mask.

- What does sarcasm feel like when you only see half a face?
- How does rolling your eyes change the conversation?
- What happens if you mumble with a mask on?
- How can you "smile with your eyes"?

Thinking through these small gestures can impact the friendships your students are navigating the next few months.

With your child:

- How easy is it for you to make friends? Why?
- Where have you experienced peer pressure? Is it like in the movies? Why or why not?
- How do you and your friends deal with conflict with each other? How do you advise each other about conflicts with other people?

FRIENDSHIP

september 2020

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WEEK ONE: Friendship and teens

So much goes into friendship at this age...

- Learning to fit in, but also needing to stand out.
- Trust and the re-building of trust
- Conflict and how to engage conflict well.
- Comparison trap - and the trust about online behavior
- Looking at how we make and keep friends can help us address these while practicing new relationships at the same time.

FOCUS: Making new friends

WEEK TWO: Peer pressure

There are good and bad sides of peer pressure: research shows that it can help students perform better in sports, in school, and in other settings when they know their friends are watching. However, we also know that teens can be convinced to make negative choices as well.

FOCUS: Being confident about yourself so you can make your own choices

WEEK THREE: Differences and diversity

What happens when all of our friends are just like us? How can we learn more and be better when we are surrounded by people with differences, including physical, experiential, racial or ethnic, or other differences?

FOCUS: Why it's important to have friends who are different than you

WEEK FOUR: Dealing with conflict

How do we face or avoid conflicts with friends? How does the online world play into our IRL conflicts?

FOCUS: Dealing with conflict in friendships