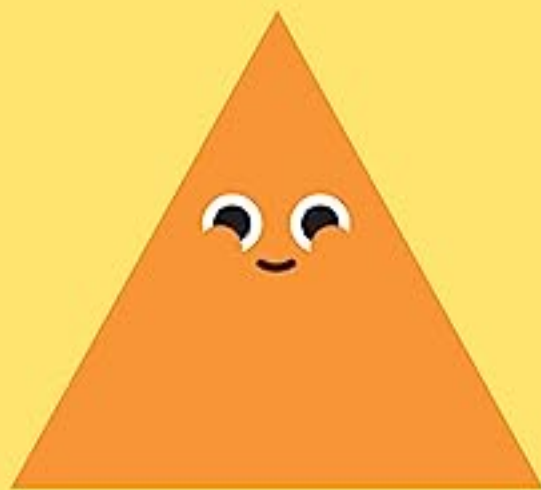


# Let's Talk About Friendship

Start the conversation and help children **open up about peer relationships** with this book and card set created by **School Adjustment Counsellor Casey O'Brien Martin** and counsellor and author **Kim Davies**.



This beautifully illustrated set combines practical exercises and 20 engaging cards to provide “conversation starter” guidelines for discussing difficult topics.





...ood sport works  
...y fairly sets you up with  
...al skills for life. These include  
...ee and accept other people's  
... weaknesses (as well as your  
...ng inclusive. Having these skills  
...st and respect as a friend.



...ate for adults  
...elp your child develop these skills off, as well as  
...rt, the sports field. Make up scenarios in which your  
...child can identify whether someone is displaying  
...good or bad sportsmanship traits. Use familiar  
...settings – a friend's birthday party, joining a queue,  
...doing well (or poorly) at school – to discuss themes of  
...inclusivity, sharing, patience, allowing others to lead  
...and succeeding and failing graciously.

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Friends in a group can be a good influence or a not-so-good influence. A good group might inspire you to be kinder or more adventurous or try harder at a sport or schoolwork. A not-so-good group might try to push you into doing things that you are not comfortable with – like being mean to other kids, gossiping or making poor choices.

Shhh



48 How to solve problems

**Make your own choices:** It's okay to disagree with the rest of the group. Trust yourself.

**Be happy!** If you often feel miserable in a group, then it's not the right group for you.

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Being caring feels good. It means that you are a kind, friendly person. Saying that caring means "putting yourself in someone else's shoes" and imagining how they might be feeling. Another word for this type of caring is 'empathy'.

Caring people tend to build good friendships because they think about others as well as themselves, which helps them to compromise and connect. Some people seem to have a talent for thinking about others, but we can all get better at being caring and kind.



20 Friendship skills

## How to handle difficult feelings

Everyone has feelings and they impact the choices you make. Now that you know how to identify the difficult feelings that can come with friendships, you can also learn how to handle them. Here are some suggestions:

### Feeling jealous?

If you want something your friend has, try thinking of the things you do have that you're grateful for. Or perhaps one friend is better than you at something. Why not try to improve your own skills and talents? Everyone has skills that are worth exploring!

### Feeling angry?

It's okay to feel mad but you still need to make good choices and treat others with respect when you're feeling angry. Take a break by leaving the situation and doing a sport or exercising to help release some of your energy.



36 How to solve problems

### Feeling sad, bored or lonely?

Choose to think helpful thoughts like 'this is just a feeling that will pass. I'll feel better soon'. Ask a friend to hang out. If no one is around, make plans for another day. Then do something you enjoy doing by yourself like playing a video game or working on a colouring book.



### Feeling nervous or shy?

If you're feeling shy, it can be easier to say hello to just one person, instead of approaching a whole group. Step out of your comfort zone and set a small goal for yourself like 'I will smile at three people in the hallway before lunch. Then take a deep breath, count down from 5 to 1 and go for it!'



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### ACTIVITY!

## The kindness challenge

Every day, challenge yourself to do a little act of kindness. Use these ideas or think up your own.

- Ask someone to join your game
- Hold a door open
- Share something
- Comfort someone who's sad
- Pick up some litter
- Let someone go ahead of you in a queue
- Say thanks to a teacher



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...a kindness, they are  
...ome else, and  
...ine.

### ACTIVITY!

## Make a friendship tree

... and branches of a  
... leaves and



## There are all sorts of friends

Everyone has different kinds of friends. We might see some people often and others just when we do an activity together, like a sport. Perhaps you have a special 'best' friend that you spend lots of your time with. But even if you have a best friend, it's still good to have other people to hang out with. And if you do have one best friend, that's fine too. Having more than one friend gives you more ways to have fun.

You often can't tell who you are going to get along with – one person may just like you, or seem exactly the friend you want, but you just don't know. Others may seem very different to you, but you love spending time with them. Being open to all sorts of friends helps you find friends you are comfortable with.

12 Why friends matter