**Group Goal**

To promote specific friendship and social skills that lead to improved friendships, and to provide group time and interaction to practice those skills so they may be transferred to other settings.

**Group Members**

This group can be adapted for students in grades K-2 or approximately 5 to 7 years old. Given the young age of group members, meeting with 4 students at a time (and no more than 6) is recommended.

Group members will be identified using recommendations from teachers, counseling staff, and parents. This group is most helpful for children who are experiencing difficulty with friendships or who could benefit from more opportunities for social skill development. Children who have difficulty resolving conflicts peacefully and children who feel anxious about interacting with peers are likely to gain confidence in their social skills.

The students will be pre-assessed and post-assessed on skills being taught in the group to determine effectiveness of the intervention.

**Group Structure**

This group will meet for 4 sessions, each lasting 20 to 30 minutes.

**Session Outline**

Session 1 Group Rules & Friendly Behaviors

Identifying group and friendship rules / Picture card activity

Session 2 Talking & Listening Rules for Friends

Practicing skills of talking and listening / Chit Chat go-around / Puzzle game

Session 3 Feelings and Cause & Effect in Friendships

Evaluating how behaviors help or hurt friendships / If-Then exercise

Session 4 Creating Solutions

Identifying fair solutions to conflict / Solution card activity and role-play

**TEACHER PRE/POST-ASSESSMENT**

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Never Sometimes Always

1. can get along in a small group game 0 1 2 3 4 5

2. shows friendly talking and listening skills

with classmates 0 1 2 3 4 5

3. shares well with classmates 0 1 2 3 4 5

4. takes turns appropriately with classmates 0 1 2 3 4 5

5. offers to help his/her classmates 0 1 2 3 4 5

6. is a good sport if s/he does not get his/her way 0 1 2 3 4 5

7. can start and complete a 5-10 minute activity

with a classmate without conflict 0 1 2 3 4 5

8. understands how his/her behavior could make

his/her classmates feel 0 1 2 3 4 5

9. uses polite phrases with classmates 0 1 2 3 4 5

10. can find an appropriate solution during conflict 0 1 2 3 4 5

This student’s greatest friendship challenge in the classroom is

This student’s greatest friendship strength in the classroom is

**STUDENT PRE/POST-ASSESSMENT**

(This assessment can be given verbally depending on grade level and reading/writing ability.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please name 3 things you can do get along with your classmates and friends.

1.

2.

3.

Please name 1 way you can show someone you are listening to them.

You and your classmates are playing a game together. You start to lose, so you quit the game and stomp away. How could this make your classmates feel?

Your classmate drew a picture and you tell her she did a great job. How could this make your classmate feel?

You and a classmate both want to play with a toy truck. What is a fair solution in this situation?

A classmate is teasing you at recess and calling you names. What would you do in this situation?

Who was your group leader? What is 1 way that person can help you at school?

**Session 1: Group Rules & Friendly Behaviors**

**Objective:** Students will learn 3 basic group rules to get along with classmates and identify friendly behaviors.

**ASCA Standard:** PS:A1.6 Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior

**Materials:**

Pair of eyeglasses

Plastic ear or bunny ears headband

Laminated construction heart

Picture cards

Large piece of paper

Markers

**Introduction** – Explain to the students that their teacher and/or parent wanted them to learn more about friendships at school, so they will all be coming to the counselor office at least 4 times to learn some ways to be a better friend.

Ask them: How is school different from home? Common responses will be: bigger, more people, louder or quieter, have to take naps, etc. Then ask: What are some rules we follow at school? Some responses might be: have to walk in lines, can’t talk all the time, have to sit at a table or desk quietly, have to share toys, etc. Add: Knowing the school rules helps us be better students. Knowing the rules of friendship makes it easier for us to make friends and be a better friend.

**Group Rules –** Introduce group rules using the props.

Our group will have 3 basis rules.

1. Make sure your eyes are looking at the person who is talking. (Eyeglasses)

2. Use your ears to listen to and hear each other. (Ear headband)

3. Use your heart to care for each other and be respectful; don’t make fun of others. (Heart)

Point out that we need these rules when we meet as a group, and that we also need these rules outside the group when interacting with classmates and friends in everyday life.

**Activities** –

***Go Around:*** Ask each student to name one other thing they look for in a friend (something that helps with friendship) and one thing they don’t like in a friend (something that gets in the way of friendship).

***Picture Cards:*** The picture cards will show kids at school getting along or not getting along. Student will give a THUMBS UP for cards that show kids getting along and a THUMBS DOWN for cards showing kids not getting along. Give a brief description of each situation for each card.

[Picture cards can come from the cited publication; photos; copies from picture books; or drawings made by the counselor.]

Picture 1 – One child taking a toy from another who was already playing with it.

Picture 2 – One child ending a turn on the swings and offering the swing to another.

Picture 3 – One child making fun of a picture another has drawn.

Picture 4 – One child offering to help another carry a heavy load of books.

Picture 5 – One child asking to borrow scissors when s/he has finished.

Picture 6 – Two kids telling another he can’t play with them because they don’t like his hair.

Picture 7 – Two kids working together to clean up a big mess on the floor.

Picture 8 – Four kids building a tower together and one child stomping off because they weren’t doing it her way.

Re-state the things students did in the THUMBS DOWN pictures that were not helpful or friendly, and re-state the things done in the THUMBS UP pictures to get along: took turns, shared, help someone else, cooperated, etc.

Create a large list of these THUMBS UP behaviors and post it in your meeting space. Make sure to add to this list as needed in future groups.

Ask the group members to notice when they are behaving in ways that would get a THUMBS UP or a THUMBS DOWN throughout the week, so they can talk about it at the next session.

Option: Give each student a journal or small notebook, so they can track their THUMBS UP/THUMBS DOWN behaviors and keep notes about their friendship issues and feelings.

Adapted from: St. Paul Public Schools Elementary Counseling Program. [www.guidance.spps.org](http://www.guidance.spps.org)

Picture cards available from: *Small Group Counseling for Children K-2* by Diane S. Senn, Ed.S., Publisher: Youthlight Inc.

**Session 2: Talking & Listening Rules for Friends**

**Objective:** Students will practice the friendship skills of talking and being a good listener.

**ASCA Standards:** PS:A2.6 Use effective communications skills; PS:A2.7 Know that communication involves speaking, listening and nonverbal behavior; PS:A1.9 Demonstrate cooperative behavior in groups

**Materials:**

Eyeglasses; Bunny ears; Heart

Puzzles with 6-8 pieces

**Introduction** – Briefly have each student share something that went well (thumbs up) or something that did not go well (thumbs down) with the group over the past week. Review your discussion about sharing, taking turns, helping others, and cooperating as behaviors that help friendships.

Next, ask students about something they’ve learned or gotten better at in the past year. For example, learning a new sport; reading a more difficult book; singing a new song; learning a new skill in math. Relate that PRACTICE makes us better at everything, including being a better friend.

**Activity** – Review the 3 group rules: look at the person whose turn it is to talk (eyeglasses); listen to the person speaking (ears); and care about what the person is saying and be respectful (heart).

***Chit Chat Go Around****:* Have each student think of one thing they want to share with the group. Have them give a thumbs up when they are ready. Some suggestions are: their pet; their favorite TV show or movie; their favorite place to go with their family, etc. Next, introduce the Talking & Listening Rules.

*Talking Rules:* When it is your turn to share with the group, tell us enough so that we understand, but don’t say so much that it becomes boring. Move your eyes around the group to look at each person when you speak. Look for signals from the group members that might let you know when you have said too much or when it’s time to let someone else speak. This is called reading body language. For example: If people begin shifting their weight or stop making eye contact with you or look down and away from you, that could mean that they are no longer paying attention and that it might be time for you to let someone else speak.

*Listening Rules:* Your body and your eyes should be turned to the person speaking. You can nod your head or say “uh-huh” to the person talking to let them know that you are listening and interested in what they are saying.

Next: Have the first person share. Then have another student summarize what the first person said. Move around the group, practicing the rules as each student speaks, and follow up with a student summarizing.

***Puzzle Game****:* Give pairs of students a puzzle to put together. Explain that they cannot talk to each other while working together to complete the puzzle, but will have to practice using body language and reading their partner’s body language in order to communicate. Share your observations afterwards.

Ask them: What was hard? What was easy? Did you feel yourself getting mad? Did you feel yourself feeling silly that you couldn’t talk? How did you manage to communicate? What helped you? What didn’t help?

Review that PRACTICING how to talk and how to listen with friends will make you a better friend.

Adapted from: St. Paul Public Schools Elementary Counseling Program. [www.guidance.spps.org](http://www.guidance.spps.org)

**Session 3: Feelings and Cause & Effect in Friendships**

**Objective:** Students will recognize positive and negative consequences and how our actions can affect how other people feel.

**ASCA Standard:** PS:B1.2 Understand consequences of decisions and choices; PS:A1.9 Demonstrate cooperative behavior in groups

**Materials:**

Small ball

Consequence chart

Feelings chart

**Introduction** – Briefly have each student share something that went well (thumbs up) or something that did not go well (thumbs down) with the group over the past week. Review group rules and last week’s rules about talking, listening, and reading body language.

**Activity –** Introduce the idea that our actions lead to reactions and that what we say and do can affect how the people around us FEEL. Use examples, such as:

What if you told your sister that you think her shirt is cool? Would she be sad, or would she be happy?

What if you left house without telling your mom or dad? Would they be upset or scared, or would they be proud?

***If/Then Game:*** Discuss how the things people say and do to us can affect our emotions, how we feel about those people, and how much we want to be around those people. Read an IF statement about what a friend could do. Toss the “talking ball” to someone in the group and have them complete the phrase with a THEN statement about how the IF behavior would make them feel.

Use the Feelings Chart to demonstrate possible emotions, and add to the chart if a student identifies a feeling that is not already included.

* IF you brag about yourself THEN I will feel…
* IF you bully and push others around THEN I will feel…
* IF you tattle on others THEN I will feel…
* IF you are grumpy and in a bad mood a lot THEN I will feel…
* IF you are a poor sport whenever you play a game THEN I will feel…

Next, use positive statements.

* IF you share with others THEN I will feel…
* IF you are a good sport even when you lose THEN I will feel…
* IF you give compliments and say nice things about friends THEN I will feel…
* IF you smile at people THEN I will feel…

Ask the students to quietly think about how they treat their friends.

Do *you* give compliments or do you brag a lot?

Do *you* share easily or do you keep what they have for yourself?

Are *you* usually in a good mood or a bad mood?

[Option: Introduce the idea of CONSEQUENCES that go beyond feelings. Use the Consequence Chart to show demonstrate that positive actions lead to positive consequences and negative actions lead to negative consequences.]

Remind group members that everyone has to PRACTICE friendly behavior to make and keep good friends. Review your list of THUMBS UP behaviors such as sharing, taking turns, helping someone else, cooperating, etc.

***Timed Game:*** Let the students pick a game/activity to do in the counselor’s office with the other group members. Set a timer and let them know that you will be keeping track of all the postitive, THUMBS UP actions that happen while the timer is ticking.

Possible games include: pick-up sticks; Chutes & Ladders; making something together with Legos

Share what you observe with the group.

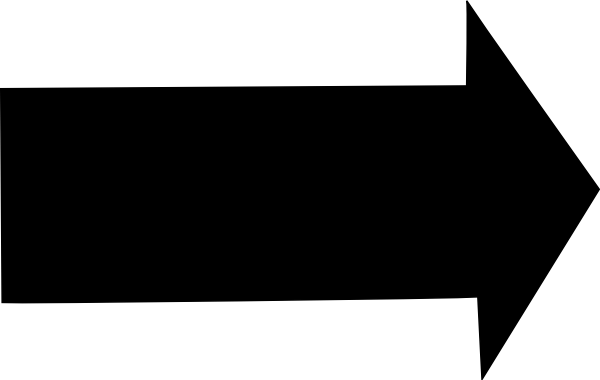
Adapted from: St. Paul Public Schools Elementary Counseling Program. [www.guidance.spps.org](http://www.guidance.spps.org)

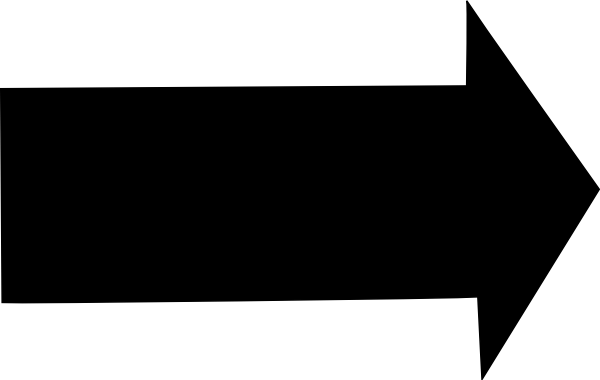
**FEELINGS**

Feelings Chart source: The Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/index.html>

(available in various formats)

**BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCE**

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Adapted from: <http://www.elementaryschoolcounseling.org/resources.html>

**Session 4: Creating Solutions**

**Objective:** Students will identify fair methods of solving conflicts and practice those methods.

**ASCA Standard:** PS:B1.3 Identify alternative solutions to a problem

**Materials:**

Solution cards (preferably laminated)

Construction paper

Markers

**Introduction –** Explain that a conflict is when two or more people cannot agree on something. Ask for volunteers to give examples of when they didn't agree with someone.

Explain: From time to time we all have conflicts. We can't always be the first one in line, play with our first choice of toy, or watch a certain program on TV if someone else wants to watch a different show. Sometimes our friends or classmates pick on us and prevent us from doing the fun things we want to do. Sometimes so much time is spent fighting that none of us are able to do what we want.

Ask: When the conflict is settled in a way that isn't fair, how do people feel?

Discuss the fact that one person may feel pretty good, while the other may feel pretty bad.

**Activity** – Hand out a set of Solution Cards to each student. Present a conflict to the students. Have them each select the solution they would use and explain why it makes sense and is fair. You can come up with your own conflict scenarios, have the students offer suggestions, and also borrow some conflict scenarios from last week’s If/Then exercise. Encourage students to come up with other solutions not featured in the Solution Cards (such as apologizing, finding someone else to play with, etc.). Have card-sized pieces of construction paper and markers available so they can create their own cards.

*Example Conflict Scenario:* When you and your friend both want to play with the same toy, how can you solve this conflict fairly?

*Example Solutions (not found on cards):*

* + Chance - To solve a conflict, you can flip a coin or play the 'rock, paper, scissors' game. Demonstrate how to play this game and have children practice.
  + Apologizing - Sometimes we accidentally bump into another child or do something else where we hurt someone, but not on purpose. This kind of conflict can be solved by saying, 'I'm sorry.’

***Role Play****:*  Have the student demonstrate how they would use the solution they identified to solve the conflict.

Adapted from: <http://www.ncpc.org/topics/conflict-resolution/activities-and-lesson-plans/conflict-management-grades-k-1>

Solution Card source: The Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/index.html>

(available in various formats)

**SOLUTION CARDS**