

## Making Friends



It helps your child to build their:

- social skills
- confidence
- self-esteem

It also helps them to learn about healthy relationships.



### What is on this page?

This page is about helping your child to make friends.

It has information about:

- what makes someone a friend
- who is not a friend
- talking about friends
- how to help your child make friends



## Who are friends?

Friends are people you like and who like you back.

They are people you can talk to and share your feelings with.

Friends are people who make you feel good when you are with them.

Some people might have a lot of friends.

Some people might have a few.

That is OK.

Not everybody you meet will be your friend.



Here are some important things your child should know about friends:

- friends listen to each other
- friends share things with each other
- friends trust each other
- friends can sometimes disagree.

That is OK.

Friends take time to try to work it out

- friends can sometimes do things that make us upset.

This does not mean they are not your friend.

You should talk to them about why you are upset

- friends should not upset you or make you feel bad all the time.

They should not make you feel unsafe.

Speak to somebody you trust if you need help

### Who is not a friend?

It is important that your child understands which people are not their friends.

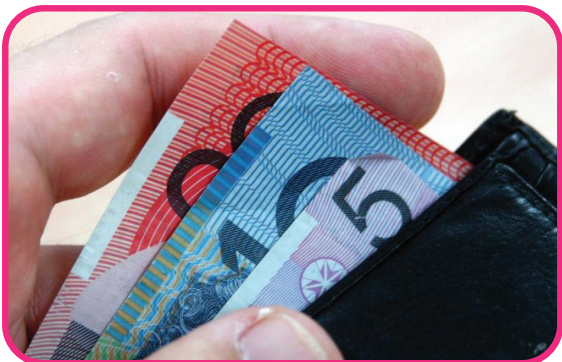


Just because somebody is nice and friendly to you does not mean they are your friend.

This includes people like:

- teachers
- support workers
- doctors or health workers
- shop assistants

These can be people your child likes and trusts, but they are not friends.



They are being paid to help your child.

A friend is not paid to help your child.

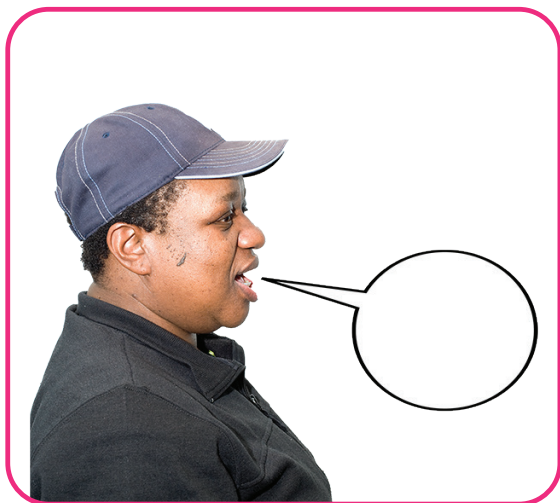
They choose to spend time with your child because they want to.

## Talking about friends

There are lots of ways you can talk to your child about making friends. Here are some examples:

- “there are lots of different relationships in that movie.

Who do you think are friends?”



- “you’ve been in the swimming class with the same people for a while now.

Would you call any of them your friends?”

- “this is my friend Mickey.

Do you want to introduce them to your friend?”

## Things for you to try

There are lots of different ways you can help your child to make friends.

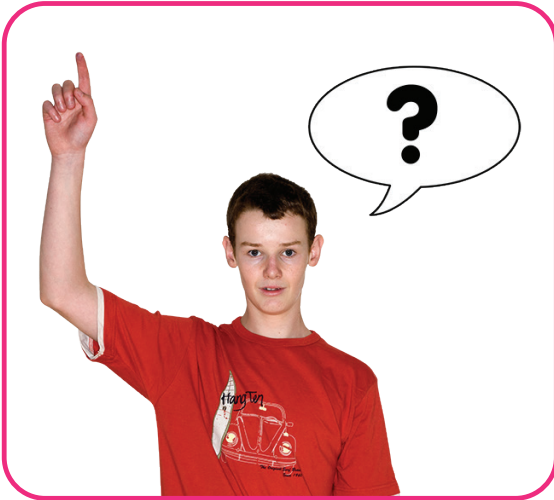
Talk about friendship with your child

Ask them questions like:

- what are some things that friends do together?







- do friends always have to like the same thing?
- who is your friend? Why do you like them?
- is your teacher/support worker your friend?
- if somebody is friendly to you are they your friend?

**Help your child to spend time with peers outside of school**

**Peers are people the same age as your child.**

**Spending time with peers is a good way to make friends and build social skills.**

**Your child can spend time with peers through:**

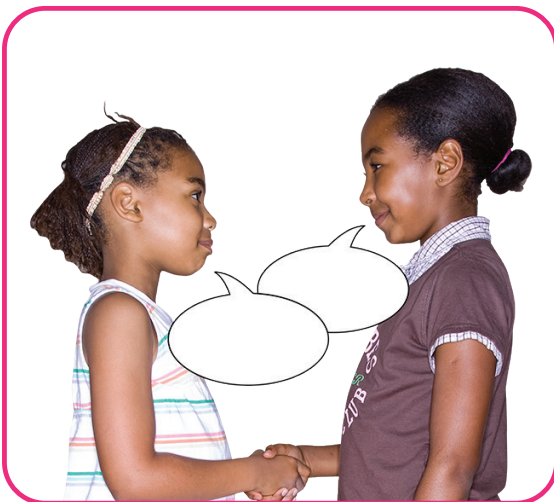
- playing sport



- different hobbies like art, drama or singing

Choose a fun activity that your child enjoys.

### Practice conversations with your child



Practice with your child how they can introduce themselves to new people.

Help them to remember some questions they can use to start conversations.

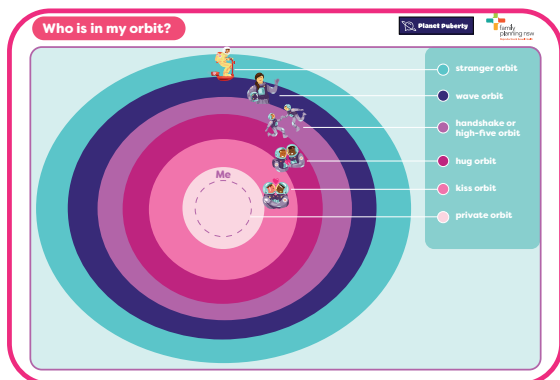
Here are some questions your child could use:

- what did you do on the weekend?
- what is your favourite movie?
- what did you have for dinner last night?



## Resources you can use

### Who is in my orbit? Worksheet



### Planet Puberty

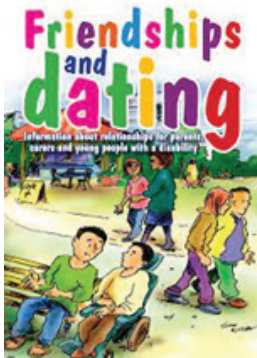
<https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Whos-in-my-Orbit-F.pdf>



### Friends Info Guide

### Council of Intellectual Disability

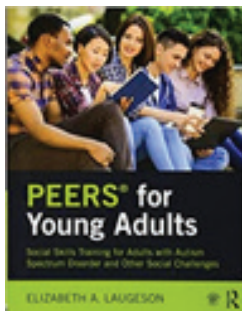
<https://cid.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Friends-Info-Guide-CID.pdf>



## Friendships & Dating

SHINE SA

[https://www.shinesa.org.au/  
media/product/2015/04/  
Friendships-and-dating.pdf](https://www.shinesa.org.au/media/product/2015/04/Friendships-and-dating.pdf)



## PEERS® for Young Adults: Social Skills Training for Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Other Social Challenges

Elizabeth Laugeson



## Autism: communicating & relationships

Raising Children Network

[https://raisingchildren.net.  
au/autism/communicating-  
relationships](https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/communicating-relationships)



## Autism: Friends and socialising: autistic teenagers

**Raising Children Network**

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/communicating-relationships/connecting/socialising-teens-autism>



## What to read next:

- [Types of relationships](#)
- [Keeping friends](#)
- [Keeping Safe](#)
- [Healthy relationships](#)

**For more information go to the  
Planet Puberty website**

[www.planetpuberty.org.au](http://www.planetpuberty.org.au)