

Friendship among children

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Establishing friendships is an important developmental goal of early childhood. Friendships established during the preschool years create valuable contexts to learn and practice skills essential to children's social, cognitive, communicative, and emotional development (Berndt & Keefe, 1992). Through interacting with friends, children learn the give and take of social behavior in general. They learn how to set up rules, how to weigh alternatives and make decisions when faced with dilemmas.

They experience fear, anger, aggression and rejection (Hartup, & Stevens, 1999). Friendships also benefit children by creating a sense of belonging. Through friendships and belonging to a group, children improve their sense of self-esteem. The support of friends help children cope with troubling times and through transition times - moving up to a new school, entering adolescence, dealing with family stresses, facing disappointments.

In addition, successful friendships in early childhood contribute to children's quality of life and are considered important to life adjustment. Friendships are not just a luxury; they are a necessity for healthy psychological development. During the elementary school years children generally choose friends who are similar to themselves and who share their interests. At this age children become increasingly group-oriented; the most well-liked children are those who can manage social relations within a group and think of activities that are fun.

Research shows that children with friends have a greater sense of well-being, better self-esteem and fewer social problems as adults than individuals without friends (Hartup & Stevens, 1999). On the other hand, children with friendship problems are more likely than other children to feel

lonely, to be victimized by peers, to have problems adjusting to school, and to engage in deviant behaviors (Rose & Asher, 2000). Children who were completely isolated and had no friends would go into depression as they made their way through the teenage years.

Belonging to a group, whether a sports team, school club, or a class project, they all provide a sense of belonging and is not just a means for exclusion. Between the ages of 10 to 12 cliques form; as children mature and rely less on their parents for guidance, they turn to their peers (Ladd, 1990). Groups become more single-gender; girls usually have more intimate and supportive relationships with their friends than boys do. Their play groups reflect this difference; boys tend to associate with peers in large groups centered on sports while girls are more likely to be involved in small groups and spend more time in personal conversation. Girls' friendship groups are usually smaller and more exclusive than boys' during childhood, and then in adolescence the situation reverses (Rose & Asher, 2000). Groups are a naturally occurring phenomenon. Some kids, who care about belonging to a certain group, suffer from feelings of rejection if they are not included and can become victims of teasing and bullying.

When cliques turn aggressive they may become gangs. Overall, the concepts of friendship and the behaviors associated with friendship change as children develop. It's based largely on companionship. Learning how to behave socially with other kids and becoming part of a group helps the child build a strong connection between his friends. '

Work Cited

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