

# Persons



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Friendship and Its Important Roles in Sharpening Children's and Adolescents' Well Being and Development Objectives: 1. What are the growing importance of friends in governing our social behavior and our social selves? 2. What is the social status or levels of acceptance of the children and adolescent within the peer group? 3. How does one acquire the ability of “selling” oneself to others and make friends? The self – who we are and who we think we are – plainly influences social interactions. But the reverse is also true, and there is no question that the social world influences – and some would say, defines – who we think we are.

Each of us is influenced by how others treat us and how they respond to our actions. Their behavior causes us to adjust our social role, and, in many cases, to reshape how we think about ourselves. Indeed, some authors cast this more strongly, suggesting that what each of us considers to be “me” is in large part derived from what others have taught us and how they have reacted to us. The self that each of us knows, in other words, is what William Cooley, many years ago, called a “looking glass self”, defined largely through what we have learned in our interaction with others. Gleitman, Fridlund, & Reisberg, 2004, PSYCHOLOGY, p. 170) 1. What are the growing importance of friends in governing our social behavior and our social selves? The world of peers is one of varying acquaintances; children interact with some children they barely know, and with others they know well, for hours every day. It is to the latter type – friends – that we now turn. Friendships serve six functions: (John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT (Tenth Edition) p. 522) 1. Companionship. Friendship provides children with a familiar partner, someone who is willing to spend time with them and join in

collaborative activities. . Stimulation. Friendship provides children with interesting information, excitement, and amusement. 3. Physical support. Friendship provides resources and assistance 4. Ego support. Friendship provides the expectation of support, encouragement, and feedback that helps children to maintain an impression of themselves as competent, attractive, and worldwide individuals. 5. Social comparison. Friendship provides information about where children stand vis-a-vis others and whether children are doing okay. 6. Intimacy/affection.

Friendship provides children with a warm, close, trusting relationship with another individual, a relationship that involves self-disclosure. Harry Stack Sullivan contended that friends also play important roles in shaping children's and adolescents' well being and development. In terms of well-being he argued that all people have a number of basic social needs, including the need for tenderness (secure attachment), playful companionship, social acceptance, intimacy, and sexual relations. (John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT (Tenth Edition) p. 523) Friendships are important to children for several reasons (Hartup, 1989, 1992).

During the elementary school years, friends are companions to have fun and do things with. They also serve as important emotional resources b y providing children with a sense of security in new situations and when family or other problems arise. Friends are also cognitive resources when they teach or model specific intellectual skills, and how to resolve conflicts successfully are also learned within the context of friendships. (p. 84) Adolescents say they depend more on friends than on parents to satisfy their

needs for companionship, reassurance of worth, and intimacy (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992).

In another study, friendship in early adolescence was a significant predictor of self worth in early childhood (Bagwell, Newcomb, & Bukowski 1994). In addition to the role they play in socialization of social competence, friendship relationships are often important sources of support (Berndt, 1999). Friends also act as important confidants that help children and adolescents work through upsetting problems (such as difficulties with parents or breakup romance) by providing both emotional support and informational advice. Friends can also protect “ at-risk” adolescents from victimization by peers (Bukowski, Sippola, & Boivin, 1995).

In addition, friends can become active partners in building sense of identity. During countless hours of conversation, friends act as sounding boards as teenagers explore issues ranging from future plans to stances on religious and moral issues. (John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT(Tenth Edition) p. 523) POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE INFLUENCES OF PEERS ON CHILDREN’S AND ADOLESCENTS’ DEVELOPMENT Both Piaget(1932) and Harry stack Sullivan(1953) were influential theorists who stressed that it is through peer interaction that children and adolescents learn the symmetrical reciprocity mode of relationships.

Children explore the principles of fairness and justice by working through disagreements with peers. They also learn to be keen observers of peers’ observers of peers’ interests and perspectives in order to smoothly disintegrate themselves into going peer activities. In addition, Sullivan argued that adolescents learn to be skilled and sensitive partners in intimate

relationships by forgoing close friendships with selected peers. These intimacy skills are carried forward to help from the foundation of later dating and marital relationships, according to Sullivan. John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT (Tenth Edition) p. 511) In contrast, some theorists have emphasized the negative influences of peers on children's and adolescents' development. Being rejected or overlooked by peers leads some children to feel lonely or hostile. Further such rejection, such rejection and neglect by peers are related to an individual's subsequent and mental health and criminal problems. Some theorists have also described the children's peer culture as a corrupt influence that undermines parental values and control.

Further peers can introduce adolescents to alcohol, drugs, delinquency, and other forms of behavior that adults view as maladaptive. (John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT(Tenth Edition)p. 512) 2. What is the social status or levels of acceptance of our children and adolescent within the peer group? One of the most understood and perhaps important aspects of peer relations in middle childhood is peer acceptance, or status within the peer groups (McCallum & Bracken, 1993). Developmentalists have distinguished three other types of peer statuses (Wentzel & Asher, 1995). (John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT (Tenth Edition) p. 15-516) \* Popular children are frequently nominated as a best friend and are rarely disliked by their peers. \* Neglected children are infrequently nominated as best friend but are not disliked by their peers. \* Rejected children are infrequently nominated as someone's best friend and are actively disliked by their peers. \* Controversial children are frequently nominated both as someone's best

friend and as being disliked. In a review of the research of peer acceptance, Hatzichriston and Hoph (1996) conclude that children who are not well accepted or are rejected by their peers in elementary school are at high risk.

These children are more likely to drop out of school, engage in delinquent behavior, and have emotional and psychological problems in adolescence and adulthood than are their peers who are more accepted. Some rejected children tend to be highly aggressive; others to be very passive and withdrawn, and these children may be victims of bullying (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000). Children who are rejected, aggressive, and withdrawn seem to be at highest risk for difficulties (Hymel, Bowker, & Woody, 1993).

Many characteristics seem to be related to peer acceptance, including physical attractiveness (Kennedy, 1990) and cognitive abilities (Wentzel, 1991). Studies have also linked behavioral styles to peer acceptance. Well-accepted and popular children tend to be cooperative, helpful, and caring and are rarely disruptive and aggressive. Children who are disliked by their peers tend to be highly aggressive and to lack prosocial and conflict resolution skills. Neglected and controversial children display less distinct behavioral styles and often change status over short periods of time (Newcomb & Bagwell, 1998). John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT (Tenth Edition) p. 85) 3. How does one acquire the ability of "selling" oneself to others and make friends? Most human relations involve a considerable amount of salesmanship. In order to make friends, you have to "sell" yourself as a good person and one and worthy of friendship. (Harold Shyrock, On Becoming A Man, Washington D. C. : Review and Herald Publishing Assoc. , 1951, p. 771) How can one make favorable impressions? One of the ways is

your method of carrying on a conversation. People are often judge by it so give attention to your manner of conversing with people.

Everyone takes pleasure in relating some personal experience. Sometimes the conversations take on the proportions of a contest wherein each participant tries to outdo the others in telling about the things that interest him. But the other parties are meanwhile not much interested anymore in what is being told. They are simply eagerly waiting for an opportunity to break in and tell some of their own experiences. The conversation is an opportunity to make a friend, which is important. It is even more important than your chance to gain personal pleasure from telling your own experiences.

The secret of your using such an opportunity to best advantage is to allow the person to tell his experiences while you listen. According to Shyrock, if you can learn to let the other person do most of the talking his memory of conversation will be very pleasant. The principle of making a favorable impression at conversation is simple. If you are willing to pay the price of forgoing your own pleasure in talking about your personal interest and allow the other person to talk about this, he will carry away the impression that you are a very fine conversationalist and he will like you.

If you don't like the topic, occasional questions could show that you appreciate what is being told. It is possible to become genuinely interested in almost any type of conversation if you discipline yourself to do it. (Evangelista, 2005, PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RELATION, p. 76-77) Appropriate and Inappropriate Strategies for Making Friends (John W. Santrock, 2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT(Tenth Edition), p. 524) Strategies

Appropriate for Making Friends \* Initiate interaction – Learn about friend; ask for his or her name, age, favorite activities.

Prosocial overtures; introduce self, start conversation, invite him or her to do things \* Be nice – Be nice, kind, considerate. \* Show prosocial behavior – Be honest and trustworthy; tell the truth, keep promises. Be generous, sharing, cooperative. \* Show respect for self and others – Respect others, have good manners; be polite and courteous. Listen to what others say. Have a positive attitude and personality; be open to others, be friendly, be funny. Be yourself. Enhance your own reputation; be clean, dress neatly, be on best behavior. Provide social support – Be supportive; help, give advice, show your care. Engage in activities together; study or play, sit next to one another, be in same group. Enhance others; compliment them. Strategies Inappropriate for Making Friends \* Be psychologically aggressive – Show disrespect, bad manners; be prejudiced and inconsiderate, use others, curse, be rude. Be exclusive, uncooperative; don't invite others to do things, ignore them, isolate them, don't share with or help them. Hurt their reputation or feelings, gossip, spread rumors, embarrass them, criticizes them. Present yourself negatively – Be self-centered; be snobby, conceited, and jealous; show off, care only about yourself. Be mean, have bad attitude or effect; be cruel, hostile a grouch, angry all the time. Hurt own reputation; be a slob, act stupidity, throw temper tantrums, starts trouble; be a sissy. \* Behave antisocially – Be physically aggressive; fight, trip, spit, cause physical harm. Be verbally aggressive or controlling; yell at others, pick on them, make fun of them, call them names, be bossy. Be dishonest, disloyal; steal; cheat, tell secrets, break promises. Break school rules, drink alcohol, use drugs.



Helping Children Develop Social Skills Because peer acceptance is such a strong predictor of current and long-term adjustment, many intervention techniques have been designed to improve the social skills and levels of acceptance of unpopular and rejected children. Common approaches involve the following:

- \* Reinforcing appropriate social behavior. Adults can systematically reinforce prosocial skills such as helping and sharing and can ignore anti-social behavior such as fighting and verbal aggression. Reinforcement techniques will be most successful if a teacher or other adult uses them with an entire group of children.

This allows the child who lacks skills to observe others being reinforced for positive behavior, and it draws the attention of the peer group to the target child's positive rather than negative actions (Price & Dodge, 1989).

- \* Modeling. Children who observe models learning positive social interaction skills show significant improvement in their own skills (Asher, Renshaw, & Hymel, 1982).
- \* Coaching. This strategy involves a sequence of steps that include demonstrating positive social skills, explaining why these skills are important, providing opportunities for practice, and giving follow-up feedback (Mize & Ladd, 1990a, 1990b).

The effectiveness of any intervention is likely to depend largely on the involvement of the rejected child's peers and classroom teachers. If peers and teachers notice positive changes in behavior, they are more likely to change their opinions of and accept the child than if interventions are conducted in isolation (Olweus, 1994; White and Kistner, 1992). Reference: \* Gleitman, Fridlund, & Reisberg, 2004, PSYCHOLOGY \* John W. Santrock,

2004, CHILD DEVELOPMENT (Tenth Edition) \* Lourdes L. Evangelista, Ed. D.

Revised Edition 2005, PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RELATION