



## LEARNING TOOLS

1. [Summer 2016: Supporting Healthy Friendships Newsletter](#)
2. [Making New Friends](#)
3. [Friendship – 10 Things to Know!](#)
4. [What Do I Like to Do? Worksheet](#)
5. [Supporting Healthy Friendships Article](#)
6. [Video: It's Great to Have Friends!](#)

*\*Not available in this packet. Please visit the DDS SafetyNet to watch these videos.*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

SafetyNet Learning Tools are designed to assist in providing information on a specific topic and to be used in a variety of learning environments. These Learning Tools can be used during one-on-one conversations with an individual, or with small and larger groups.

Before beginning a learning session, the presenter should review all SafetyNet Learning Tools on the topic. The trainer can find additional material within the links provided on the SafetyNet Article and Newsletter.

## BEFORE THE TRAINING

The presenter should:

- Arrange adequate time and comfortable space for the training and discussion.
- Arrange for any equipment needed, such as a laptop and projector.
- Set up necessary equipment.
- Print or photocopy enough materials for each individual to have their own copy.

## TRAINING

The presenter:

- Shows videos.
- Leads discussion of content and encourages open communication.
- Reviews and discusses information on each of the handouts.
- Asks questions to check for understanding.
- Follows up with additional review and discussion as needed.
- Provide training in multiple sessions to assure adequate coverage and understanding of the topic.



## Supporting Healthy Friendships



### Why are friendships important?

Long-lasting friendships are important to all of us. Most of us can name friends who we can -

- talk to,
- have fun with, and
- feel supported by.

Friends are there for each other, hopefully, for a long time. Without a network of friends, a person can feel depressed and lonely.

As support staff, you may develop a close relationship with someone you support. It is important to remember that over time, your job can change. At some point, you may no longer be there for that person.

An important part of your job is to help the individuals you support make friendships that will last over time. This helps people lead much fuller and more enjoyable lives. When they have friends and family in their lives, everyone wins!

### What is a healthy friendship?

The first thing to do to help an individual make friends is to talk about what a healthy friendship looks like.

*A true friend doesn't come and go...*

*They stay,*

*They listen, and*

*They are there for you during ups and downs!*

**Talk about what a real friend looks like, sounds like and acts like.** For example, friends talk to, and listen to each other. They also show sympathy and understanding when needed. In addition, they say nice things to each other. All of these things serve to build trust and strengthen a friendship.

**Help the individual understand what a healthy friendship means.** It usually means feeling good, feeling safe, and feeling supported. In any friendship, there may be times when there are disagreements. In a healthy friendship, people talk and work things out.

**Ongoing feelings of sadness, anger, or fear may be a sign of an unhealthy friendship.** Make sure individuals know where to go and who to talk to when they have these feelings.

**Watch the video "It's Great to Have Friends" and use the companion *tip sheet***

**"Friendship—10 Things to Know"** to help start a conversation about healthy friendships.

Find them here: <http://ddssafety.net/everyday-life/friendships-and-relationships/all-about-supporting-healthy-friendships>



## Friendships - continued



### What can you do to help an individual you support meet others?

There is no set way for starting a friendship. Friendships usually grow out of shared activities and interests. Here are some ideas about how to help an individual meet people who may become friends.

1. **Talk to the individual you support about things they like to do.** Use the worksheet *What Do I Like to Do?* to help get ideas. Work together to choose one or two interests or favorite activities.
2. **Connect these choices to opportunities for meeting new people and making friends.** For example, someone may have an interest in gardening. Does the local nursery have a gardening class?
3. **Explore your community together.** Check out local civic groups, community colleges, adult schools or libraries for activities that match the person's interests.
4. **Use your community connections.** Set aside time at staff meetings to brainstorm all of the community connections you and your co-workers have. One might match the individual's interest and lead to an opportunity for new friendships.

5. **Offer encouragement and support for attending an activity, especially the first few times.** You may need to provide or arrange for transportation. You may also need to help an individual learn how to make friends.

### What are some tips on how to make friends?

Many people are shy or unsure of how to approach a new person. They lack confidence because they don't know what to do or say. **You can help by sharing and role-playing these simple tips for meeting people.**

When a person first meets someone new, they should **approach the person in a friendly way**. If they find out they both like the same thing, they can talk more about it. Maybe there is an opportunity for them to get together and go out for lunch or coffee. That will give them an opportunity to get to know each other better.

**As a support staff, you can help an individual build their confidence.** Before you know it, they will have a new friend! You may need to continue to provide some support to help the friendship grow over time.

### More Resources about Friendships

You can find additional materials on the SafetyNet website. **These tip sheets will help you support individuals to develop friendships and community connections:**

- Friendship - 10 Things to Know
- Making New Friends
- "What Do I Like to Do?" Worksheet

**Get these tip sheets on the DDS SafetyNet here:** <http://ddssafety.net/everyday-life/friendships-and-relationships/all-about-supporting-healthy-friendships>

# Making New Friends



## Step 1: Think about what you like to do.

- Make a list of things you like to do. To get ideas use the worksheet *What Do I Like to Do?* found at <http://ddssafety.net/everyday-life/friendships-and-relationships/what-do-i-do>.
- Ask people who know you well to help you. Get lots of ideas.
- Identify at least one or two interests or favorite activities.

## Step 2: Find out where and when people are doing the things you like to do.

- If you like to garden, does the local nursery have a class? Is there a neighbor with a garden? Is there someone who can help you plan a garden?
- If you like to walk, do you know people who like to walk? Is there a walking club?
- Ask a supporter to help you look for events that match your interests. Choose activities to get involved in.

## Step 3: Find out about other places to meet people. Check out local civic groups, community colleges, adult schools or libraries. Are there:

- People First meetings in your community?
- Dances and other activities at local recreation centers?
- Volunteer opportunities at parks, theaters, or museums?

## Step 4: Just go do it!

- What will you try first? A club? A new place you haven't been? A sports event?
- Do you need support - like a ride or help filling out a form? Ask!
- Do you want someone to go with you? Ask!
- Now... just go do it!

## Step 5: What if I meet someone I'd like to have as a friend?

- Smile! Don't look bored. Say your name. Ask for their name. Try to remember it.
- The weather is always a good place to start a conversation. "It is a beautiful day!"
- Follow-up with a question. "Do you like warm weather?"
- Talk about something you enjoy. Ask questions. Be a good listener.

If you both like the same thing, ask more about it. Perhaps ask the person out for lunch or coffee. That will give you a chance to talk and get to know each other a little bit better.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES





## Friendship – 10 Things to Know

*A true friend doesn't come and go...*

*They stay,*

*They listen, and*

*They are there for you during  
ups and downs!*

Talking and listening to each other, showing sympathy and understanding when needed, and doing and saying nice things are all important to friendships. You should expect certain things from your friends. And, your friends will expect certain things from you. These are 10 things to know about friendships:

1. Listen to your friends. Talk and listen to each other.
2. Trust your friends - and be trusted by your friends.
3. Show your friends sympathy and understanding when they need it.
4. Support your friends. If a friend comes to you with a problem, show you care.
5. Do nice things for your friend without being asked.
6. Stand up for your friends when they aren't around. Don't gossip about them or say mean things.
7. Whenever you can, say something nice! Everyone likes to be appreciated.
8. If something doesn't feel right, talk about it. Try to work things out.
9. If you have ongoing feelings of sadness, anger, or fear when you hang out with someone, it may be a sign of an unhealthy friendship.
10. Make sure you know what to do – where to go and who to talk to – when you have these feelings.

**What else do you think is important to know about friendship?**

# What Do I Like to Do?

This worksheet will help you think of what you like to do for fun and give you ideas for activities you might want to do. You will also find helpful ways to find those activities.

Ask Yourself:	You Can:
<b>Do I like walking?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a walking club.</li> <li>• Go on weekly walks with your friends or family members.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I like gardening?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a community garden.</li> <li>• Find a neighbor to garden with.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I like sports?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a local sports program.</li> <li>• Join a YMCA or a gym.</li> <li>• Take an exercise class.</li> <li>• Watch local sports games.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I like to make things?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a drawing class.</li> <li>• Join a knitting circle.</li> <li>• Try scrapbooking.</li> </ul>
<b>Am I a performer?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a local singing group.</li> <li>• Audition for a part in a community play or musical.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I like to watch other people perform?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a group that attends local symphony performances.</li> <li>• Volunteer to help at a local theater, for example as an usher or stage help.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I want to learn more about my own culture or other cultures?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit a museum exhibit.</li> <li>• Go to a local cultural festival.</li> <li>• Try food from different cultures.</li> </ul>



<b>Ask Yourself:</b>	<b>You Can:</b>
<b>Do I want to talk with others who share my religious beliefs?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a religious interest group where you can talk with others about your beliefs.</li> <li>• Volunteer for a local religious congregation.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I want to learn new job skills?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a class at an adult school or your local community college.</li> <li>• Take a class at your local Regional Occupational Center and Program (ROCP).</li> </ul>
<b>Do I want to learn about new things?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a class on something you think is interesting, such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Cooking</li> <li>o Different languages</li> <li>o Art</li> <li>o Photography</li> <li>o Dance</li> <li>o And more!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Do I want to spend my time helping my community?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help clean your local park.</li> <li>• Support a good cause by participating in a local charity walk.</li> <li>• Help care for animals at your local Humane Society.</li> <li>• Find a volunteering activity or group you enjoy.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I want to talk with people who have similar experiences and conditions to my own?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join a support group.</li> </ul>
<b>Do I share an interest with friends I already have?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start your own group or club. (For example, if you and your friends all like the same TV show, you can start a club that meets every week to watch it!)</li> </ul>
<b>What else do I like to do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill in your own ideas here!</li> </ul>



SafetyNet: Summer 2016

## Supporting Healthy Friendships

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***Why are friendships important?***

***What makes for a healthy friendship?***

***What can you do to help an individual you support meet others?***

***What are some tips on how to make friends?***

***What does it mean to have friends?***

***What are some additional resources?***



### **Why are friendships important?**

Long-lasting friendships are important to all of us. Most of us can name friends who we can -

- talk to,
- have fun with, and
- feel supported by.

Friends are there for each other, hopefully, for a long time. Without a network of friends, a person can feel depressed and lonely.

As support staff, you may develop a close relationship with someone you support. It is important to remember that over time, your job can change. At some point, you may no longer be there for that person.

An important part of your job is to help the individuals you support make friendships that will last over time. This helps people lead much fuller and more enjoyable lives. When they have friends and family in their lives, everyone wins!





## What makes for a healthy friendship?

The first step in helping a person make friends is to talk about what a healthy friendship looks like.

***A true friend doesn't come and go...***

***They stay,***

***They listen, and***

***They are there for you during ups and downs!***

Talk about what a real friend looks, sounds, and acts like. For example, friends talk to and listen to each other. They also show sympathy and understanding when needed. In addition, they say nice things to each other. All of these things serve to build trust and strengthen a friendship.

Help the individual understand what a healthy friendship means. It usually means feeling good, feeling safe, and feeling supported. In any friendship, there may be times when there are disagreements. In a healthy friendship, people talk and work things out.

Ongoing feelings of sadness, anger, or fear may be a sign of an unhealthy friendship. Make sure individuals know where to go and who to talk to when they have these feelings.

Watch the video *It's Great to Have Friends!* (<http://ddssafety.net/everyday-life/friendships-and-relationships/video-its-great-have-friends>) and use the companion *tip sheet* "Friendship – 10 Things to Know!" (<http://ddssafety.net/everyday-life/friendships-and-relationships/friendship-10-things-know>) to help start a conversation about healthy friendships.



## What can you do to help an individual you support meet others?

There is no set way for starting a friendship. Friendships usually grow out of shared activities and interests. Here are some ideas about how to help an individual meet people who may become friends.

1. **Talk to the individual you support (or with someone who knows them well) about things they like to do.** Use the worksheet *What Do I Like to Do?* (<http://ddssafety.net/everyday-life/friendships-and-relationships/what-do-i-do>) to help get ideas. Work together to choose one or two interests or favorite activities.
2. **Connect these choices to opportunities for meeting new people and making friends.** For example, someone may have an interest in gardening. Does the local nursery have a gardening class? Is there a neighbor who has a garden? Is there a Master Gardener who can help plan a garden?
3. **Explore your community together.** Check out local civic groups, community colleges, adult schools or libraries for activities that match the person's interests.
4. **Use your community connections.** Set aside time at staff meetings to brainstorm all of the community connections you and your co-workers have. One might match the individual's interest and lead to an opportunity for new friendships.
5. **Offer encouragement and support for attending an activity, especially the first few times.** You may need to provide or arrange for transportation. You may also need to help individuals learn how to make friends.

## What are some tips on how to make friends?

Many people are shy or unsure of how to approach a new person. They lack confidence because they don't know what to do or say. **You can help by sharing and role-playing these simple tips for meeting people.** Here's how you can help the individuals you support **meet someone new in a friendly way:**

1. Smile! Don't look bored or disinterested.
2. Say your name and ask for theirs. Try to remember their name.
3. The weather is always a place to start a conversation.  
*"It is really a beautiful sunny day today!"*  
 Follow up with a question.  
*"Do you like warm weather?"*  
 Or make a compliment.  
*"I like your jacket. Where did you get it?"*
4. Talk about something you enjoy:  
*"I like baseball. Do you like baseball?"*
5. Ask questions about the person. Be a good listener.  
*"What do you like to do?"*

If they find out they both like the same thing, they can talk more about it. Maybe there is an opportunity for you to get together. Ask them out for lunch or coffee. That will give you an opportunity to get to know each other better. A good way is to say:

*"Hey, well, I've got to go, but if you ever want to talk over lunch or coffee or anything like that, let me give you my number/e-mail address."*

**As a support staff, you can help an individual build their confidence.** Before you know it, they will have a new friend! You may need to continue to provide some support to help the friendship grow over time.



**What does it mean to have friends?**

Listen and learn as one person shares what her friendships mean in her life:

*I have lots of friends.*

*I like friends who are outgoing.*

*I like friends who are good listeners.*

*My friends help me have a good life in the community.*

*I do lots of stuff with my friends. I like go to their house for dinner, do yoga together, drumming, go for coffee, and sharing with their kids.*

*I feel happy when I am with my friends. I feel joyful when I spend time with my close friends.*

*I like people and being with people. I talk with new people who are nice and friendly. And then sometimes we become friends.*

**Karen Lord** (Excerpted from *Friends and Inclusion, Five Approaches to Building Relationships*)

## What are some additional resources?

To learn more about connecting people with their communities, go to *Friends, Connecting People With Disabilities and Community Members*, by Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D., University of Minnesota: Friends, Connecting People With Disabilities and Community Members.

[http://rtc.umn.edu/docs/Friends\\_Connecting\\_people\\_with\\_disabilities\\_and\\_community\\_members.pdf](http://rtc.umn.edu/docs/Friends_Connecting_people_with_disabilities_and_community_members.pdf)

To learn more about building relationships, go to *Friends and Inclusion, Five Approaches to Building Relationships*, by Peggy Hutchison, John Lord and Karen Lord: [www.inclusion.com/friends](http://www.inclusion.com/friends)

To learn more about the support staff role, go to “*You Just Don’t Do That!*” *Drawing the Line Between Direct Support Staff and People with Disabilities*, by Stephanie Ioannou, edited by David Hinsburger, Vita Community Living Services and Angie Nethercott, The Family Help Network.

<http://vitacls.org/pdf/boundaries-direct-care.pdf>

You can find additional materials on the SafetyNet website. **These tip sheets will help you support individuals to develop friendships and community connections:**

- Friendship - 10 Things to Know
- Making New Friends
- “What Do I Do?” Worksheet

Get these tip sheets on the DDS SafetyNet here:

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