



Carol's Club

*Custom Social Stories™ Resources
Created by Carol Gray for Members*

 CAROL GRAY
SOCIAL STORIES

Friendship Is Like That:

Social Stories™ About How Friendships Change

The Requests

Friendships often change as children grow. This project is in response to requests for Social Stories to describe the shifting social alliances of childhood. Timely requests with Valentine's Day just around the corner!

This set of Social Stories titled, "Friendship is Like That," is a sharp contrast to the open declarations of love on classroom-exchange Valentine cards. The Stories are based on the research of Dr. Kenneth H. Rubin, summarized in his timeless, reader-friendly book for parents and professionals, *The Friendship Factor* (2002). The characters are fictional, though they closely reflect Dr. Rubin's detailed descriptions of the social connections of childhood at each age. I consulted the book many times in an effort to make the Stories accurate, and applicable to as wide an audience as possible.

I wrote the Stories for children with autism seven to twelve years of age with grade level reading ability. As is the case with all project Social Stories, they are intended as a cross-section of samples – a framework - to provide a starting point. Parents and professionals are encouraged to gather additional information prior to writing, and tailor Stories to the age, abilities, interests of the child or children in their care.

If you have any questions, I'm right here! Simply send me an email at toCarolGray@gmail.com. Have a Happy Valentine's Day and thank you for being a part of Carol's Club!

References

Rubin, K. H. (2002). *The friendship factor: Helping our children navigate their social world - and why it matters for their success and happiness*. New York: Viking.



Confusing Phrases About Friends

Most adults do their best to help children. Sometimes, though, adults say things that are confusing to children, like when they talk about friends and friendship. Here are three examples of confusing friend phrases and what they usually mean.

“Make a friend.”

People who study friendship know that friends aren’t really made. Friendships often start when people feel safe and comfortable with each other and like to do things together. Friendships just sort of

happen. The people who share the friendship are called “friends.” Friends become friends together, at about the same time.

“We’re all friends here.”

Sometimes teachers say to students, “We’re all friends here.” What they mean is that ‘it’s important to try to be friendly and kind.’ It is very unlikely that every kid is a friend with all of the others. In fact, it is so unlikely that it probably has never happened and never will. What teachers are trying to say is that It is important to be nice and use friendship skills.

“Lost a friend”

In the phrase “lose (or lost) a friend,” the word ‘lose’ is the problem. Usually, when people lose things it means that they make some kind of a mistake. A mom may forget where she put her keys or her son may leave a toy where it becomes ruined. When a friendship ends, often no one did anything wrong. Just like friendships start, the end of a friendship may just happen, without any mistakes by either friend. Friendship is like that.

When words and phrases about friends are confusing, it’s okay to ask what they mean or agree on new words to use that work better.



How Long Does a Friendship Last?

This is a photo of Ben and Sam. They like doing things together. Sometimes Ben plays at Sam's house. Sometimes Sam plays at Ben's house. Ben and Sam are friends.

Ben and Sam met at the grocery store where their moms work. Their moms thought they might like to play together and they do! That's how Ben and Sam became friends.

Ben and Sam may be friends for many years. Or, they may be friends for another month or just until next Saturday. No one knows how long their friendship will last. Not Ben or Sam or even their moms.

Friends can't choose how long they will be friends. This is because there are too many things about friendship that friends can't decide or control. That seems to be okay with people because they keep forming friendships, even after they have seen some friendships end.

Sometimes a friend may say something like, "I think we'll be friends forever." It means "I'm having fun and I hope we will always be together." That's okay, especially if both friends are feeling that way.

People usually know about when a friendship started. And, if it ends, they know about when that happened, too. But no one ever really knows how long a friendship will last.

What people do know is that there is always someone, somewhere, looking for a friendship.



Does a Friend Ever Play with Someone Else?

This is a photo of (from the left to the right) Sam, Ben, Anna, Andre, and Maria. It looks as though they are all really good friends because they are standing close and smiling. Sam, Ben, Anna, Andrea, and Maria are in the same reading group. Their teacher asked them to squeeze together and smile for the picture, and they did. This is a photo of kids following directions from their teacher.

This is where this story may get a little complicated. Sam, Ben, Anna, Andre, and Maria are not all good friends. Sam and Ben are friends who like to play chess. Sam and Andre are friends, too, who like to build model rockets. Once, Ben and Andre played together when Sam was on vacation, but they haven't played together since because Ben doesn't like making models and Andre doesn't like playing chess. Andre has a favorite friend, William, who he plays with more than Sam. (William is in this reading group too, but he is not in the photo because he left school early for a dental appointment.)



In answer to the question, “Does a friend ever play with other kids?” the answer is yes, it happens a lot. A friend may play with another friend or someone else. Friendship is like that.

Friendship, Friendshift, and Friendshipped

Children grow into adults. Many children have friendships with other kids as they grow. Some kids have lots of friendships, other kids have less than that, like one or two. Friendship is frequently fun but it may also confuse, disappoint, or even make someone feel sad for a while. Understanding friendships can make it easier to have them. This story is about friendship, friendshift, and friendshipped. *Friendship* is



a word that has been around for a while, the other two just since January of 2018. They are pretty new.



That's Ben and Sam in the photo above. They are friends. According to a man who has studied friendship for a long time, a friendship is something that moms, dads, teachers, or kids can't make or plan. Friendships just happen. It doesn't matter if a person is a child or an

adult. People get together and sometimes friendships form and sometimes they don't. Boys may find they like playing together on the playground, or three kids may live close together or like doing the same things. Most of the time but not every second, friendship is fun.



Friendshift is when a friendship feels different and not as easy or as much fun as it was before. Often it is because the friends are also kids who are growing, learning, and trying new things. One friend

may decide to join a soccer team or chess club. Sometimes a family has to move. Other things can happen, too. For example, two friends may not play together as much and no one really knows exactly why. That's what happened with Ben and Sam's friendship. Sam would call Ben and ask if he could play, and many times Ben would say "not today." There's was a *shift* in their friendship. It happens as kids grow. It even happens with adult friendships. Friendshift is like that.



During a friendship, friends will often see each other in their community. Sometimes, friends may see one another where they worship or at places like the grocery store or movie theatre, where they might talk or play around for a little while. They may see each other at school and work together in class. During their friendship, Ben and Sam would sometimes may play together on the playground, but not as often as before. Ben started playing with other kids.



Sometimes, a friendship may feel friendly and kind. Most of the time a friendship may feel a little uncomfortable. Both friends are still doing many of the same things as before. It's just that they don't do as many things together during their free time. Because they had fun and shared fun times during their friendship, being together now might feel a little *awkward* until they get used to the friendship.

Friendshipped is the word *friendship* with “ed” on the end (and a second ‘p’). Like *friendshift*, it’s a new word. *Friendshipped* is the “past tense” form of *friendship* – meaning that there was a friendship but there isn’t one now. Ben and Sam’s *friendshipped* means they don’t play together on the playground and haven’t been to each other’s homes in a very long time. Ben and Sam see each other and work together at school, but don’t spend any of their free time together anymore.

Ben and Sam have had a friendship, friendship, and friendshipped. During the friendship, Ben joined the chess club. Sam played on his own at home sometimes and finished a rocket model. He tried some new activities, too. Andre started asking Sam to play.



Andre and Sam have known each other for a while. They are in the same reading group. They even played together a few times about a year ago. They are playing together more and more. They’re friends.

