

Difficulties with Friendships: Scenarios and Questions

Scenario A

Simon and Ji are 14. They have known each other since primary school, and have been best mates for years. They spend most of their free time together.

When Simon suggested going to the pictures one Saturday afternoon, Ji said he couldn't go, as he'd promised to go with his mum to visit his gran in hospital. Simon was in town later when he saw Ji sitting in a café with a boy who had joined their class a couple of weeks before. They were talking, laughing and obviously enjoying themselves.

Questions for group discussion:

- how do you think Simon feels?
- what explanations could there be for Ji's behaviour?
- what could Simon do?



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Scenario B

Coral, 12, has just found out that her best friend's dad has a new job there. They'll be even closer. Her mum says she'll soon get over it as she keeps crying.

Questions for group discussion:

- how is Coral feeling?
- why do you think she is crying and not happy?
- what help and advice would you give her?

Scenario C

Rudi is 15 and a bit of a health fanatic, so he's been smoking outside the school gates at morning break. He's thinking of who has just stopped smoking herself.

Questions for group discussion:

- is Rudi right to become involved with her?
- what will happen if he tells their mum?
- what else could he do?

Chapter 3 Friendships

This chapter explores friendships. The first activity explores what friendship is and what personal qualities help us to make and maintain friendships; the second activity considers membership of groups or gangs; the third activity considers some dilemmas and difficulties in friendships; and the last activity raises the issue of bullying and its effect on the victims of bullying.

Activity 10: What is Friendship?

Learning Objective:

To help students understand the most important qualities of a friend, and how to make and keep friends.

Age Range:

Ages 9–14

Materials Needed:

Flipchart paper and felt-tip pens.

Notes for the Educator:

Be aware of students who may have difficulties with this activity because of their own circumstances. Be prepared to give help and support if necessary.

Method:

Explain the purpose of the lesson. Have each student write down all the things they like about their friends, without mentioning any names. Then have them form small groups of four or five. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper and have them divide it into four (or draw four large circles), labelled:

- things we do together
- appearance
- personality
- other

Have them share in turn the things they like about their friends and agree which box or circle on the sheet to write them in.

Bring the class back together, pin up the sheets and discuss what each group has written. Have students consider which are the most important qualities of a friendship and make a list of these things.

Review:

Discuss the following questions:

- how do you know if somebody is a friend?
- why is friendship sometimes difficult?
- who could you talk to if a friendship has gone wrong?