

Resource Guide



WITH THE IMPROV TROUPE

Dynamics of Friendship

Grades 7-8

This resource guide was compiled by Marylee Girardi, Instructional Services, Fairfax County Public Schools

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HOT TOPICS

Thank you for watching Hot Topics With The Improv Troupe.

We have included a list of resources for you to use to prepare yourself for further educational discussion. These resources include books and articles for educators, parents, and students. Also included are a number of web sites you can review for more information. Please consult with your school administration prior to sharing any of these resources directly with students. These resources are also available to help further your understanding of a student who may be experiencing some difficulty.

Some of the concerns addressed in the series may be difficult to discuss with students. We strongly encourage you to “touch base” with student support staff, such as counselors, social workers, and psychologists. Use these school professionals as resources for continued classroom discussion or to refer students for counseling. They also can direct students and families to other public and private resources for additional help.

The resources for **Hot Topics With The Improv Troupe** were compiled by the following Fairfax County Public Schools, Department of Student Services personnel:

- Richard Crowley, Coordinator—Guidance Services
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H O T T O P I C S

Articles

Elkind, David. "Whose Friend Is He, Anyway? (How children are influenced by their friends)." *Parents Magazine*. November 1992: 354.

The author states that parents should remember that their teenagers' friends are unlikely to have a negative effect on their children. Parents should avoid interfering in their children's friendships, except in cases in which the friendships are destructive.

Degirmencioglu, Serdar, Kathryn A. Urberg, Jerry M. Olson, and Richard Protima. "Adolescent Friendship Networks: Continuity and Change Over the School Year." *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*. July 1998.

The researchers found that adolescent friendship networks are not static; rather, they display interplay between continuity and change at all levels. Overall, half of all close friendships are stable over the school year. Consistent with other studies, mutual friendships are more likely to be stable, and best friendships are more stable than other close friendships. Friendship groups, especially tight-knit cliques, also are quite stable. Many students also retain the types of friendship networks they have, especially if their networks are well connected.

Ladd, Gary W. "Peer Relationships and Social Competence During Early and Middle Childhood." *Annual Review of Psychology*. 1999.

By adolescence, the intimate nature of friendship has emerged, especially for girls. Even by age 12, a friend is described as someone special, someone who stands by you, and someone who "backs you up." Compared to the friendships of middle childhood, based largely on mutual interests and activities, adolescent friendships also reflect each other's attitudes, values, and beliefs. Adolescents report spending more time with friends than with their family and tend to value friends for their understanding and the sense of identity they reflect. Boys tend to spend time with groups of friends, while girls tend to spend time with smaller numbers of closer friends.

Pleydon, Anne P., and Joseph G. Schner. "Female Adolescent Friendship and Delinquent Behavior." *Adolescence*. Summer 2001.

Young female offenders and female high school students were compared in terms of delinquent behavior and relationships with their best female friends and peer groups. Delinquents and nondelinquents did not significantly differ in the amount of companionship, conflict, help, security, and closeness with their best female friends and in the amount of trust, alienation, and perceived intimacy in their peer groups.

Moody, James. "Race, School Integration, and Friendship Segregation in America." *American Journal of Sociology*. November 2001.

Moody's study of over 90,000 students examines how school organization affects interracial friendships.

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H O T T O P I C S

Books

Chopra, Gotham, Maurice J. Elias, Brian S. Friedlander, and Steven E. Tobias. *Raising Emotionally Intelligent Teenagers: Guiding the Way for Compassionate, Committed, Courageous Adults*. Crown Publishing Group. 2002.

The authors state that parents want teens to head in certain directions. Parents want teens to be knowledgeable, responsible, nonviolent, and caring. Raising emotionally intelligent teenagers requires—on our part as parents—a balance of love, laughter, limits, and linkages. Teenagers need to grow up at least as ready for interdependence as for independence, and love, laughter, and limits provide a map for parenting our teenagers on a road that has many curves, lots of bumps, but also many miles of beautiful scenery.

Erdley, Cynthia and Douglas W. Nangle. *The Role of Friendship in Psychological Adjustment: (New Directions for Child and Adolescent Developments)*. John Wiley & Sons. 2001.

Erdley and Nangle, with doctoral students Julie Newman and Erika Carpenter, write of their pioneering research that examines how the various levels of friendship, as well as peer acceptance, relate to a youngster's psychological development.

Goldstein, Arnold P., and Ellen McGinnis. *Skillstreaming the Adolescent: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills*. Research Press. 1997.

This book prepares teachers and adolescent group leaders to develop missing social skills in a step-by-step, well-thought-out, and research-proven manner. The book also prepares the leader with great strategies for recognizing and dealing with trainee and client resistance.

Marano, Hara E. *Why Doesn't Anybody Like Me? A Guide to Raising Socially Confident Kids*. William Morrow & Co. 1998.

Marano, an editor for *Psychology Today*, closely examines and interprets the research on children's interactions and their ability to get along with peers. Marano stresses the importance of play in developing social skills and decries the phenomenon of the over-scheduled child. A full third of *Why Doesn't Anybody Like Me?* focuses on what parents can do to help their kids improve their social interactions, and the book includes suggestions for dealing with bullies and helping the aggressive child.

Mitchell, John. *Natural Limitations of Youth: The Predispositions That Shape the Adolescent Character (Developments in Clinical Psychology)*. Ablex Publishing Company. 1998.

This book examines the predispositions that shape the adolescent character. Divided into three sections, covering adolescent intelligence, adolescent selfishness, and adolescent friendship and love, it treats issues such as the emotionalization of thought and the psychoeconomics of teen approval.

Nikkah, John and Leah Furman. *Our Boys Speak: Adolescent Boys Write About Their Inner Lives*. St. Martin's Press. 2000.

This collection of essays and poems written by boys ages 13 to 18, is divided into three general and 13 more specific sections. They write about enduring friendships and friendships lost, peer pressure, family trouble, first loves, how to confront violence and racism, and what it's like to be different. This great anthology provides poignant glimpses into the lives of today's young men.

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Simmons, Rachel. *Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls*. Harcourt. 2002.

Why are girls becoming more aggressive in their everyday lives, and how is it affecting their overall self-esteem? Simmons, a Rhodes scholar who has painstakingly researched female bullying and the psychology of girls, feels that girls' aggressiveness is just as harmful as that of boys but is much harder to recognize.

Wiseman, Rosalind. *Queen Bees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and Other Realities of Adolescence*. Crown Publishing. 2002.

Wiseman, who founded a nonprofit company dedicated to empowering teens, calls on her extensive face-to-face research with teens in this book that exposes the social minefields of female adolescence and the deep scarring that can result. Wiseman also gives an excellent overview of the common patterns of aggressive teen girl behavior with an increased focus on a parent-teacher audience, offering valuable practical advice, including how to talk about hard issues like sexual harassment. She also offers admirable, groundbreaking insight into an all-too-common issue and will be invaluable to any adult struggling to help a girl get through her teens.

Books for Students

Baker, Camy. *Love You Like a Sister: 30 Cool Rules for Making and Being a Better Best Friend*. Skylark Books. 1998.

From her educational experiences, Baker shares the wit and wisdom she's learned about girls and their fights, fun, and foibles and what every girl can do to maintain close, sincere friendships, even when faced with adolescent competition.

Herron, Ronald W. *What's Right For Me? Making Good Choices In Relationships*. Boys Town Press. 1998.

Using true-to-life examples, this book identifies situations that can victimize teens. Stories of relationships that spun out of control are shared to show young people how to avoid a similar fate. Sound strategies on setting physical and emotional boundaries to stay safe and comfortable are described.

Jukes, Mavis. *Guy Book: An Owners Manual: Safety, Maintenance, and Operating Instructions for Boys*. Random House, Inc. 2001.

Told in the author's usual straightforward, funny, favorite-aunt style, this book delivers sound information and useful advice for boys who are preparing to go through, or are in the midst of, puberty.

Kirberger, Kimberly, and Colin Mortensen. *Teen Love: On Friendship*. HCI, The Life Issues Publisher. 2000.

Based on the familiar and successful *Chicken Soup* format, this title, part of the *Teen Love* series, explores the true meaning of friendship. Kirberger (aided by Mortensen, from MTV's *Real World*) supplements her general comments about having and being a friend with poems, stories, and essays by teens themselves.

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Lutz, Ericka. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Friendship for Teens*. Pearson Education Company. 2001. Specifically geared for teens, this is a jam-packed resource about making friends, being a good friend, and being a friend to oneself. Teens learn about choosing friends, having different friends for one's different sides, cultivating friendship skills to keep friends, and learning how to overcome friendship's complications.

Romain, Trevor. *Cliques, Phonies, & Other Baloney*. Free Spirit Publishing. 1998. Written for every child who has ever felt shut out or trapped by a clique, this book blends humor with practical advice as it explains how to form positive, healthy relationships. Trevor Romain tackles this serious subject with wit and common sense, explaining what cliques are and why they exist

Schmidt, John. J. *Making & Keeping Friends: Ready-to-Use Lessons, Stories, and Activities for Building Relationships: Grades 4-8*. Center for Applied Research in Education. 1997. This book was written for people who have trouble making friends. John Schmidt focuses on both making friends and keeping friends. He uses a variety of stories and activities that will encourage young people to make friends.

Videos

Meridian Education. *Friendship...Put It to the Test*. 2000. Reviewed by Vicki Reutte, Cazenovia High School, NY

Having friends is key to an adolescent's happiness and well-being. Those who work with children know that friendship problems are a common cause of hurt feelings. The video is designed to help youngsters in grades 5-8 learn the social skills necessary to choose and keep friends. Young students will relate to Vicki Reutte and be more likely to follow her advice. Teachers, counselors, and peer groups will find this short program a great asset at the middle school level.

Web Sites

www.aboutourkids.org

The New York University Child Study Center letter is published five times per year. The goal of the letter is to make mental health issues accessible and understandable to parents and professionals working with, and caring for, children. The letter covers topics related to psychological development and academic concerns and explores contemporary issues that affect the social and emotional functioning of children and families.

www.apa.org

This is the web site of the American Psychological Association. It deals with many different issues—general public information, articles, newsletters, journals, books, and other resources. It's a good publication on teen dating violence as well as other relevant issues such as preventing violence and controlling anger.

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www.education.indiana.edu/cas/adol/adol.html

Adolescence Directory On-Line (ADOL) is an electronic guide to information on adolescent issues. It is a service of the Center for Adolescent Studies at Indiana University. Educators, counselors, parents, researchers, health practitioners, and teens can use ADOL to find web resources for these topics.

www.focusas.com/PeerInfluence.html

Focus Adolescent Services is an Internet clearinghouse of information and resources to help and support families with troubled and at-risk teens. The group's mission is to provide information and resources to empower individuals to help their teens and heal their families.

www.healthteacher.com

HealthTeacher.com is the first comprehensive K-12 health education curriculum for Internet use. Its goal is to address the significant health and behavioral issues facing today's youth—and their classroom teachers. Almost 300 unique lesson guides are provided, including student handouts and teacher support material. Its resources are provided with the hope of improving student health, over time, by helping students develop not only knowledge but also skills needed to pursue a healthful lifestyle.

www.parentingadolescents.com

This site has free advice and resources for parents of teens and pre-teens and includes a question of the week.

<http://www.oberlin.edu/faculty/ndarling/adolesce.htm>

This web site provides an introduction to some of the developmental changes that shape our lives between puberty and the end of college. Adolescence is a time when our bodies, our families, our schools, and the larger society demand that we change. Although each life unfolds in its own unique pattern, this site provides information about basic changes, settings, and issues that are particular to the teenage years.

www.search-institute.org

The Search Institute is an independent, nonprofit, nonsectarian organization whose mission is to advance the well-being of adolescents and children by generating knowledge and promoting its application. At the heart of the institute's work is the framework of 40 developmental assets, which are positive experiences, relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

www.teengrowth.com

This site was created by a team of teens, doctors, and teachers who are "committed to improving the lives of adolescents." The topics include body, emotions, health, friends, sports, danger, school, sex, and family.

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