



How to...

BUDDY BENEFITS

Studies show that friendships can boost happiness, reduce stress, and strengthen your sense of purpose and belonging.



Strike up friendships

Try these tips to form close connections with other kids.

A new school year is an opportunity for a fresh start, including making new friends. But lots of kids feel that growing their social circle can be intimidating. How do you start talking to someone? The truth is that most people are wondering the same thing—and hoping someone else will take the first step. Here's how.

Join a club

When you share an interest with others, whether it's chorus or robotics, you naturally have a lot to talk about. That's why joining a club after school can be a natural way to make friends. If you feel hesitant about attending on your own, say hi to the teacher or a student in charge and let them know you would like to check out a meeting. They will help put you at ease about coming!

Buddy up in class

Pay attention to classmates who are interested in the same subjects you enjoy. That makes it easier to ask "Want to be my partner?" when a class project comes along. Working together in class can lead to after-school study sessions and discovering other things you may have in common.

Practice topics to talk about

Starting a conversation can feel awkward, so role-play first with a sibling or parent. Try out openers like: "Did you do anything fun over the summer?" or "Hi, I'm [name]. What teacher do you have?" Practicing helps you feel more comfortable when the real moment comes. That could be before the morning bell, at lunch, or on the walk or bus home from school. Celebrate small successes, like saying hello to someone, as you build confidence.

Give back

Volunteer opportunities are typically welcoming settings. Sign up to work side by side with other kids, whether to plant a garden or organize a bake sale to support animal rescue. You'll meet kids who care about the same causes you do, which can be a solid base for friendship.

Make plans

Friendships deepen through consistent interaction, so invest time in them. You could suggest a pickup game of basketball or going out for ice cream, then invite old and new friends to get to know one another. Soon enough, you and your new friend will look at each other like, "Do you even remember when we weren't friends?"



A friend makes everything brighter!

Heartfelt gestures



These small meaningful moves can show a friend—new or old—that you appreciate them.

Say thank you Friends support one another in all kinds of ways. Show your gratitude by saying, "Thank you for being a good friend. It means a lot to me!"

Bake a treat A special snack—like cookies, brownies, or mini muffins—can brighten a friend's day. They're also fun to share with a group of pals.

Write a card A handmade card shows extra thoughtfulness toward your friend. You don't need a special occasion to write a message like, "You're awesome. I'm really glad we met!"