

12 TIPS FOR MAKING AND KEEPING FRIENDS

- 1. Reach out.** Don't always wait for someone else to make the first move. A simple "hi" and a smile go a long way.
- 2. Get involved.** Join clubs that interest you. Take special classes inside or outside of school. Be a volunteer.
- 3. Let people know you're interested in them.** Don't just talk about yourself; ask questions about them.
- 4. Be a good listener.** Look at people while they're talking to you. Pay attention to what they say.
- 5. Risk telling people about yourself.** When it feels right, let them in on your interests, your talents, and what's important to you. *But . . .*
- 6. Don't be a show-off.** Not everyone you meet will have your abilities and interests. (On the other hand, you shouldn't have to hide them—which you won't, once you find friends who like and appreciate you.)
- 7. Be honest.** Tell the truth about yourself, what you believe in, and what you stand for. When asked for your opinion, be sincere. Friends appreciate truthfulness in each other. *But . . .*
- 8. Be kind.** There are times when being tactful is more important than being totally honest. The truth doesn't have to hurt.
- 9. Don't just use your friends as sounding boards for your problems.** Include them in the good times, too.
- 10. Do your share of the work.** That's right—work. Any relationship takes effort. Don't always depend on your friends to make the plans and carry all the weight.
- 11. Be accepting.** Not all of your friends have to think and act like you do. (Wouldn't it be boring if they did?)
- 12. Learn to recognize the so-called friends you can do without.** Some people get so lonely that they put up with anyone—including friends who aren't really friends at all.

Adapted from *The Gifted Teen Survival Guide: Smart, Sharp, and Ready for (Almost) Anything* by Judy Galbraith, M.A., and Jim Delisle, Ph.D., copyright © 2011 Free Spirit Publishing Inc.

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MY FAVORITES

Your name: _____ **Today's date:** _____

My favorite TV show _____

My favorite place to go _____

My favorite thing to do in my free time _____

The thing I like *most* about school _____

The thing I like *least* about school _____

My favorite athlete/sports personality _____

My favorite radio station _____

My favorite food _____

My favorite place to eat _____

I like people who . . . _____

I don't like it when people . . . _____

My favorite magazine _____

My favorite book _____

My favorite movie _____

My favorite website _____

The job I'd like to have when I grow up _____

My favorite game _____

My favorite video game _____

My greatest hope _____

My biggest worry _____

If I could go anywhere in the world, I'd go to . . . _____

My favorite type of music _____

My favorite singer/group/musician _____

My favorite actor/actress _____

The person I admire most _____

My favorite time of the day _____

THE ASSERT FORMULA

A stands for **ATTENTION**. Before you can talk about and try to solve a problem you're having with someone else, you need to get his or her attention. *Example:* "Sean, I need to talk to you about something. Is now a good time?"

S stands for **SOON, SIMPLE, AND SHORT**. Speak up as soon as you realize that your rights have been violated. Look the person in the eye and keep your comments brief and to the point. *Example:* "It's about something that happened in the hall today."

S stands for **SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR**. What did the person do to violate your rights? Focus on the behavior, not the person. Be as specific as you can. *Example:* "I didn't like it when you pushed me against my locker, I dropped my books, and you kicked them across the hall."

E stands for **EFFECT ON ME**. Share the feelings you experienced as a result of the person's behavior. *Example:* "It was embarrassing, plus I was late for class. I had to wait for the hall to clear before I could pick up my books."

R stands for **RESPONSE**. Wait for a response from the other person. He or she might try to brush you off with "What's the big deal?" or "Don't be a baby" or "Can't you take a joke?" or "So what?" Don't let it bother you. At least it's a response. On the other hand, the person might apologize.

T stands for **TERMS**. Suggest a solution to the problem. *Example:* "I want you to stop bothering me in the hall. If you don't, I'll report you to the teacher."

Tips: The ASSERT Formula may feel strange and awkward at first. It isn't foolproof, and it won't always work. In some situations—for example, bullying that involves physical violence—it might make things worse. And some kids love getting any kind of response, even an assertive response. If your being assertive seems to anger or provoke the person who is bullying you, walk away or run away.

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