

Friendship and Bullying

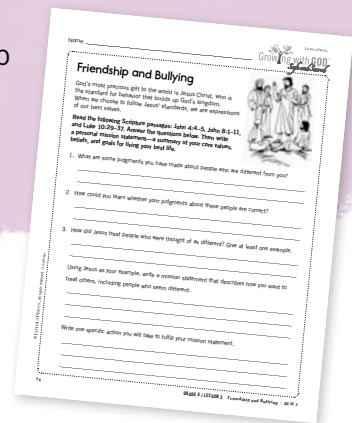
Called to Love and Care

We are called to love and care for one another. One way we can have a spirit of friendship is by being aware of how we use words. Emphasize the importance of choosing words carefully and treating others with respect. Tell your child that we can love like Jesus by having open hearts and choosing to treat everyone with kindness and care, even when it's difficult.



Forms of Bullying

Making snap judgments about people based on how they look or act is a form of bullying. Discuss with your child how our first impressions of people can be wrong. Give an example of a time when you changed your mind about someone after getting to know him or her. Furthermore, being unwelcoming or intentionally leaving others out is also a form of bullying. Talk about why it is important to include others, even those we may not feel close to. The Friendship and Bullying handout further explores this topic.



Empathy

We can use empathy to identify how others may be feeling. The next time your child is having trouble with a friend or sibling, invite your child to share his or her thoughts and feelings. Then ask your child to imagine what his or her friend or sibling might be thinking or feeling.



Stand Up for Others

Ask your child if he or she has ever witnessed bullying behavior. Discuss with your child how it takes courage to stand up for someone who is being bullied. Share ideas for ways to stop bullying behavior. Pray together the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis or a prayer of your own.



Name _____

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God's most precious gift to the world is Jesus Christ, who is the standard for behavior that builds up God's kingdom. When we choose to follow Jesus' standards, we are expressions of our best selves.



Read the following Scripture passages: John 4:4–5, John 8:1–11, and Luke 10:29–37. Answer the questions below. Then write a personal mission statement—a summary of your core values, beliefs, and goals for living your best life.

1. What are some judgments you have made about people who are different from you?

2. How could you learn whether your judgments about these people are correct?

3. How did Jesus treat people who were thought of as different? Give at least one example.

Using Jesus as your example, write a mission statement that describes how you want to treat others, including people who seem different.

Write one specific action you will take to fulfill your mission statement.
