

# Helping a Friend Activity

## Goal

- To validate the importance of caring for one another.

## Senior 1-4 Education Curriculum Connections

This activity contributes to the following Student Specific Learning Outcomes:

### *Family Studies*

- *S1 5.1.3 Identify behaviours that promote health and wellness.*
- *S1 5.1.5 Examine how decisions affect one's well-being.*
- *S3 4.4.4 Demonstrate appropriate stress management/problem-solving techniques.*

**Guidance Education** GLOs under Personal/Social Component.

### *Physical Education*

- *K.3.5.B.4 Identify available community supports that promote safety and community health.*
- *K.4.S2.C.1a Describe the behaviours necessary for providing others with support and promoting emotional health and well-being.*
- *K.4.S2.C.4a Examine the stress management strategies and defense mechanisms that can be healthy or unhealthy ways of managing stress.*
- *K.5.S2.A.2 Demonstrate knowledge of healthy lifestyle practices that contribute to disease/illness prevention, including mental illness/ disorders.*
- *11.MH.1 Identify and apply positive health strategies to deal with issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, and eating disorders.*

## Have Ready

- Space for youth to face each other for the quick change game.
- Write “Helping a Friend” on two flipcharts or white board.

## Instructions

- Tell youth, **“Everybody, find a partner and sit facing each other. Take a quick look at what your partner is wearing, what their hair is like and what shoes they are wearing. Now, turn around and quickly change 3 things about yourself; you could pull out a pocket, untie your shoes, tuck your hair back,**

**roll up a sleeve etc. Now turn around and your partner will try to notice what you have changed.”<sup>4</sup>**

- After the debrief for the game, break the youth into two groups and flipchart helping a friend. Ask what are some ways we can help a friend going through a hard time.

## **Game Debrief**

- **Why do you think we would have you do this activity?** We played the quick change game to try to notice changes in our partner. It is important to pay attention to the people in our lives and notice if we see any changes in the ways that they are acting. This is just a game, but changes in people can show us signs that they are having a hard time. Also noticing positive changes in people is a good way to show that we value them and can be encouraging. For example, “That’s a sharp haircut my friend.”

## **Sample Flipchart**

### **Helping a Friend**

- Listen to them
- Don’t judge them or make them feel bad
- Bring them food
- Hang out with them
- Have fun together
- Ask them how they are doing
- Play sports with them
- Compliment them
- Try to cheer them up
- Go with them to talk to an adult they trust (if needed)
- Help them call a crisis line (if needed)
- Play video games with them
- Spend time with them
- Give/make them treats
- Etc.

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<sup>4</sup>Quick Change Game adapted from Sources of Strength Trainer Program Guide.

## Debrief

- **There are many things we do/can do to support each other. Listening, being there for someone, and showing them that you care can be very helpful.**
- **If your friend is really struggling, they may need help and support from a trusted adult (counsellor, teacher, guidance counsellor, coach, uncle, auntie, Elder, etc.).** It is important to tell an adult you trust and to not to keep the information to yourself. You can let the person know you are seeking outside help, and if possible ask the person you are supporting which adult they would like to go to for help, and offer to do it with them. **You could say something like, “this is bigger than the both of us and I need to make sure you get all the help you need.”** The more supportive people we have when helping someone who is really struggling, the better.
- **Taking care of yourself is also important when supporting a friend through a hard time.** It can be helpful to set a boundary and get support for yourself from someone you trust if it is too much for you. For example, you could say “You need to make arrangements for other supports and here are some helplines you can call because today I need time to myself and will be turning off my cell.” **It is very important to continue to do the things you like and care for your own needs so that you have the energy to keep being helpful to others.**