



# TALKING WITH FRIENDS

**Project Skills:**

- Youth will express themselves both through original artwork and communication tools.

**Life Skills:**

- Communication

**Academic Standards:**

- English: C.4.3. Participate effectively in discussion

**Grade Level:** Grades

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Supplies Needed:**

Rock Painting Activity

- Rocks
- Paints (washable)
- Cotton swabs
- Paper plates
- Markers

Sharing Circle Activity

- “Special Object”

Campfire Activity

- Fan with orange crepe paper streamers

**Do Ahead:**

- Prepare the “campfire” as directed in the “Meeting New Friends” activity plan.

**BACKGROUND**

Everyone likes to be listened to when they have something to say. This lesson provides the opportunity for youth to both speak and listen in a respectful manner.

**WHAT TO DO**

**Activity: I Like Friends Who . . .**

In this introductory game, place chairs in a large circle. There should be at least one less chair than the number of participants. If you don’t have chairs, players may sit on the floor.

The speaker stands in the middle and begins the game by saying, “I like friends who...” and inserts a word or phrase to complete the sentence. Examples include: like to camp, like to ride bicycles, swim, eat cookies and wear red. The phrase should apply to the speaker because that’s how that person gets out of the middle.

When the speaker has completed the phrase, all of the youth to whom the phrase applies leave their spots and rush to another chair. If the group is large, you can stipulate that no player may go to their immediate right or left. The person who is left without a chair goes to the middle of the circle, taking his or her place as the next speaker.

**Activity: Rock Painting**

In this activity each youth will create a special object by painting a rock.

Encourage the youth to paint their rocks so that they represent an animal or something else of significance to them. Insects and birds are popular choices.

**Directions:**

- Give each youth a paper plate and a handful of swabs.
- Remind youth to keep their rocks on the plates to minimize clean-up.
- Demonstrate using a swab as a paint brush.
- Remind youth to use a new swab for each color and to let the paint dry if they are painting over another color.
- Demonstrate how eyes and contours can be added with markers.

**Activity: Sharing Circle**

Invite youth to join you in a circle. Explain that in a circle we can listen better because the format allows each person’s face to be seen. Explain that in the sharing circle we will use a special object to designate the speaker. The only person who will speak is the person holding the object. That person will pass the object only when he or she is through speaking – and this may also include periods of thoughtful silence.

Share the sentiment behind the special object that you have chosen to designate the speaker in the group. Begin the sharing circle with a question about talking with your friends (see suggestions below). Remind youth that each of them will get a chance to talk, one at a time, and that whoever starts with the object will answer the question and pass the object on to the next person in the circle. When the object comes back to the adult leader, you can continue by asking another question. When the time for the sharing circle is over, process the activity using the questions below in “Talk It Over.”

**Sources:**

- Created by Paula Rogers Huff, 4-H Youth Development Agent, UW-Extension, Oconto County

**Suggested questions:**

- What are some things that make a person a good friend?
- What things do you do that show that you are a good friend?
- If a new student came to your school, what are some ways that you could be a friend to that person?

**Activity: Campfire**

Light the 4-H Afterschool campfire (fan turned on its side with orange crepe paper streamers) from the “Meeting New Friends” activity plan. Remind them about the safety procedures with “fire” and the need to avoid touching the fire. Then sing the “Shark Tale” and “Friends” songs from that activity plan.

**TALK IT OVER****Reflect:**

- What did you like about the Sharing Circle?
- How did it feel to be the speaker in the Circle?
- How did it feel to be a listener?
- Which did you like better, being the speaker or the listener?

**Apply:**

- What did you learn about listening and talking in a group?
- How can knowing more about yourself as a speaker and a listener help you be a better friend?

**HELPFUL HINTS**

- Substitute twigs for rocks in the Rock Painting Activity.
- Encourage youth to develop brightly colored “animal” characterizations.



*Reviewed by Wisconsin 4-H Afterschool Team: July 2005.*