

Creating Connection

Have you ever moved to a new school or new community? Have you ever started at a new club or after school program? When changes like these happen in our lives, it can be hard to know how to go about making new friends and build meaningful connections with people. Meeting new people can be overwhelming. When we don't know anyone in a new environment, we can feel nervous, scared, uneasy and insecure.

However, friends are so important, so we push past these feelings to create connection. This is an extremely brave and challenging thing to do. But know what you are not alone in feeling scared about doing this.

It can also be hard to know where to start when it comes to making friends. Here are 5 tips and tricks that you can bring into new situations where you want to make connections with new people. Arming yourself with some helpful suggestions might ease some of your anxiety.

Try them out and see if they help!

1. Wear an article of clothing that has your favourite team or band on it. This is a great invitation for others to start a conversation with you! Someone might be in the same boat as you where they want to start a conversation but don't know how to. Wearing an article of clothing with something you're interested in on it gives others the opportunity to connect with you about a shared interest.
2. Ask someone for directions. This may seem silly, but if you're looking for an excuse to go up to someone new and start a conversation, asking them for directions can break the ice. If you're at a new school, ask someone where one of your classes is, where the gym is, etc. Once you've initiated the conversation, you can introduce yourself and get the ball rolling for more conversation.
3. Offer help. Just like with the last tip, offering someone assistance is a great way to start a conversation and break the ice. If you see that someone has dropped their books or something on the ground, offer to help them pick it up! If someone looks confused about what you're supposed to do in class or on a team, offer to show them how to do it!

4. Compliment someone. It is always great to receive a compliment. Complimenting someone's shoes, their jeans, the stickers on their binder, or any number of things, can help create conversation. Not only have you started a conversation, but you've also shown interest in something they're wearing or doing. Creating connection is all about finding common ground!
5. Bring in treats for your new class, group or team. A simple way to connect with people is over food! Bake some cookies or go to the store and grab a bag of chips. Offering everyone a treat will let them know that you're generous and when people thank you for the snack, it can be a perfect moment to get a conversation going.

While creating connection can be scary, it is such an important way to build community and make new friends. Try out these tips the next time you're in a new environment!