

FRIENDSHIP SOUP: FRIENDSHIP AND MENTAL WELLNESS



Grades 4-7

Friendship Soup: Friendship and Mental Wellness Career Education & Health Education

Purpose of the Lesson:

Friendships are so deeply connected to mental wellbeing and supporting mental health. Whether it's leaning on a friend during a hard time, being there for a friend when they're going through a difficult experience or just sharing memories with someone special, friendships can boost mood and support mental wellness. In this lesson, your students will explore the connection between friendships and mental wellbeing. They will get to create a recipe for a strong friendship in an activity called "friendship soup". Once they've created their ideal friendship soup recipe, they will share their soup with the class and ensure everyone gets a bowl. This lesson is also intended to facilitate a deeper sense of connection and community within your classroom environment.

Curriculum Competencies:

Career Education

- Recognize the need for others who can support their learning and personal growth (Grade 4/5)
- Demonstrate respect for differences in the classroom (Grade 4/5)
- Appreciate the influence of peer relationships, family, and community on personal choices and goals (Grade 4/5)
- Appreciate the importance of respect, inclusivity, and other positive behaviours in diverse, collaborative learning, and work environments (Grade 6/7)
- Question self and others about the reciprocal relationship between self and community (Grade 6/7)

Health Education

- Describe and apply strategies for developing and maintaining positive relationships (Grade 4/5/6/7)
- Describe and apply strategies that promote a safe and caring environment (Grade 4/5/6/7)
- Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being (Grade 4)
- Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being, for self and others (Grade 5/6/7)

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- Describe and assess strategies for managing problems related to mental well-being and substance use (Grade 4)
- Describe and assess strategies for managing problems related to mental well-being and substance use, for others (Grade 5/6/7)
- Describe factors that positively influence mental well-being and self-identity (Grade 4)

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Video

[Friendship Soup - The Ned Shows](#)

Guiding Questions:

- Why are friendships important?
- How can friendships support our mental wellness?
- How can friendships support the mental wellness of our friends?
- What are some things that are important to have in a friendship?

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Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Preparation: Queue up video/set up projector

1. **Have the students watch the video “Friendship Soup”** This can be found [HERE](#).
2. **Pause the video and use the Guiding Questions to spark discussion.**
3. **Discuss the connection between friendship and mental wellness.** Share this information with your class:

Friends not only prevent loneliness, but they also:

- Increase your sense of belonging and purpose
- Boost your happiness and reduce your stress
- Improve your self-confidence and self-worth
- Help you cope with traumas, such as divorce, serious illness, job loss, or the death of a loved one
- Encourage you to change or avoid unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as excessive drinking or lack of exercise
- Help put your problems in context to develop a stronger sense of meaning and direction
- Increase feelings of security and help protect against stress

Ease the emotional impact of difficulties and offer new ideas about tackling them ([Source](#))

For all of these reasons and more, it is important for our mental wellness to cultivate and maintain strong and fulfilling friendships.

4. **Explain the curriculum connections to your students.** Have your students create their own Friendship Soup Recipe! They can use the ingredients from the video as inspiration and come up with their own ideas as well. If they need support for coming up with ideas, you can do some brainstorming as a class. Have them write down the “ingredient”, the quantity of the ingredient and why that ingredient is important for them to have in their soup.

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5. Have your students draw an image of their friendship soup. Once they've created their recipe, it's time to make their soup! They can draw an image of a bowl and put all of their friendship soup ingredients in the bowl.

6. Get your students to share their soup with the class. As a way to continue to cultivate strong connections in your classroom among your students, have the students share their friendship recipes with the class and symbolically give each student a bowl of soup! They can mime ladling some soup out of their bowl to share with each student in the room.

7. Lesson Closure. Discuss with your students that this activity was designed to get them to reflect upon the connections they have with their friends and their peers in the classroom. It is important to be mindful about the way we treat those who are close to us. When we are conscious about what is important to keep friendships going, we can ensure that we maintain friendships that will last a lifetime! These kinds of friendships are so important for our mental wellness and wellbeing.