

VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

for use with
Program 10

FRIENDSHIP

In the Youth Guidance Video Series



EDUCATIONAL GOALS

YOUNG ADOLESCENTS LEARN:

- To recognize what makes a good friendship.
- That it is normal for friendships to change as we grow up.
- How to maintain good friendships through the tumultuous changes of adolescence.
- That it's good to be open to friendships with people who are different from us.

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- ▶ **Trigger group discussion**
- ▶ **Stimulate critical thinking**
- ▶ **Boost self-esteem**

Big Changes, Big Choices helps young teens work their way through the turmoil of early adolescence while making positive, healthful life choices. In each program TV cameras follow comedian / youth counselor Michael Pritchard to middle schools around the country, as he thrills young audiences with warm humor about growing up and engages them in problem solving sessions about serious issues that affect their lives.



The purpose of this video program is to shape young people's attitudes by appealing to their minds and their hearts. By watching and discussing these videos, kids will come to a deeper understanding of the issues presented in the tapes, think more critically about their own choices and behaviors, and gain confidence in their own better instincts.

HOW TO USE THIS VIDEO

Use in classrooms, libraries, youth groups, or show it to your kids at home. Ideal for parents, too.

You can greatly enhance the effectiveness of this video by following it up with group discussions, writing assignments, and learning activities. This guide is intended to help you in your efforts.

We recommend that, before showing the tape, you ask a few questions to start the kids thinking about the issues treated in the program. You'll find some useful questions on page 6. Also, you can expect your students to have a lot to talk about after viewing the tape, so it's a good idea to allow ample time.

While this discussion guide may appear to be written for classroom teachers, any group leader or parent will find it a useful tool for getting the most out of this video program.

ABOUT THIS PROGRAM

As children enter adolescence, issues of friendship become more complex and more central in their lives. This program explores such matters as: the characteristics of good friendship, the differences between "true" friends and "false" friends, how to prevent trouble and handle change in friendships, and initiating new friendships. Also, we look at cliques & clubs, and what it means to either include or exclude others.

PROGRAM CONTENT

Mike Pritchard on stage entertains a middle school audience with a humorous introduction to the topic of friendship.

PART I

WHAT IS A FRIEND

Teentalk: Pritchard leads a group of middle school students in a discussion about true friends and false friends. A true friend is: somebody who knows everything about you and still likes you; somebody who will share the good times as well as the bad times and will also listen to you; someone who is willing to give a part of him/herself to you; someone who gives you support. A false friend: talks about you behind your back; always wants support from you but doesn't give it back; likes you for something you have that they want. One girl asserts that popular groups are big groups of false friends.

GROUPS

The teentalkers observe that cliques make it difficult to have friends outside of the clique. They say that getting into a clique often cuts you off from other friends. Also, they report that there is pressure to stay with your own kind. Racial & ethnic groups tend to stay to themselves. Several of the kids expressed sadness that these barriers exist and a desire to be friends with people who are different.

PART II

MAKING FRIENDS

Pritchard on stage does a comedy bit about the awkwardness and difficulty we sometimes experience trying to make new friends.

Teentalk: The kids share some of their experiences with meeting new people. One girl says some people may seem unreachable, but inside we're all the same.

They go on to talk about becoming good friends with people they thought, at first, they were going to dislike, and about having friends who are very different from them. One girl, who's into baggy clothes and rap music, tells about her surprise at becoming

good friends with a girl who's into long flowing dresses and country western. When Pritchard asks what led the way she replies "our hearts."

CONFLICTS

The discussion turns toward problems in friendship. Two girls have a funny confrontation over the juvenile behavior of one of them. When asked by Pritchard, the kids assert that it's important for a friendship to have room for arguments. One girl tells about how a friend she'd had a serious rift with came to her support when her grandmother died. Another girl cries about losing a friend over a big argument, and a boy tells about fighting with a friend over a pencil.

Pritchard asks, "How do you tell a friend you're mad and still keep that person as a friend?" The kids reply that you have to communicate your feelings honestly to your friends, because that's the only way you can resolve the issue. It's not telling them that causes the serious problems.

PART III

FRIENDSHIPS AND CHANGE

Pritchard on stage tells a humorous story about friends migrating towards very different interests.

Teentalk: Pritchard asks, "Are some friendships destined to end?" A few of the kids tell about friends changing in ways they didn't like, so they had to let it go. Or just changing and growing apart. One boy says that sometimes people just need space to go through changes, and you have to give it to them. A girl adds that changes are important, and it's a lot more fun to accommodate and enjoy each other's changes than to fight them. Another girl tells about a friend who's going through some weird changes and tough times, but she's still there for her and intends to help her friend get through it.

Pritchard on stage concludes that learning how to make good friends and how to keep them is a good choice, and it's up to you to make the right choices.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Questions to ask **before** showing the tape.

1. What qualities do you look for in a friend?
2. Are friends more important to you now than they were in elementary school? Why?

Questions to ask **after** showing the tape.

3. Did anybody in this video say anything you disagree with? What would you say to that person?
4. There's an old saying that goes "in order to have good friends you have to be a good friend." What does that mean. Do you think it's true?
5. What's the difference between a friend and an acquaintance?
6. One boy in the video said that a true friend is somebody who knows everything about you and still likes you. What do you think that means?
7. How do you tell the difference between true friends and false friends?
8. What is a "best friend?" Is it possible to have more than one "best friend" at the same time?
9. In what ways does friendship change as you get older?
10. The kids in the video talked about making space for their friends to go through changes. How do you do that? Is it always possible, or are some friendships destined to end?
11. Is there a difference between popularity and friendship? Can you be popular and not be a good friend? What is more important, being popular, or being a good friend?

12. Do you think there's something wrong with you if you aren't part of the popular set?

13. One girl in the video said that popular groups are sort of a whole big group of false friends. What did she mean by that? Do you think it's true?

14. Describe the groups or cliques that people you know associate with. Are the relationships within these groups real friendships? What's the difference between friendship and group membership?

15. The kids in the video said that cliques cut them off from people. Is that true in your experience?

16. What do you do if you want a person you have just met to become a part of your group, but the others don't want to have anything to do with this new person?

17. Have you ever been excluded from a group? What happened? How did you feel? What should we learn from that?

18. Are there kids here at school who get constantly excluded? How do you think that makes them feel? Is there anything you could do about it?

19. Are there any racial or ethnic barriers to friendship at your school? How do you feel about that?

20. What are the benefits of having friends who are different from us?

21. What was most meaningful to you in this video?

HOW TO BE A GOOD FRIEND

To have good friends you must be a good friend. Here are some of the ways good friends treat each other.

- 🍏 **Good friends** listen to each other.
- 🍏 **Good friends** don't put each other down or hurt each other's feelings.
- 🍏 **Good friends** try to understand each other's feelings and moods.
- 🍏 **Good friends** help each other solve problems.
- 🍏 **Good friends** give each other compliments.
- 🍏 **Good friends** can disagree without hurting each other.
- 🍏 **Good friends** are dependable.
- 🍏 **Good friends** respect each other.
- 🍏 **Good friends** are trustworthy.
- 🍏 **Good friends** give each other room to change.
- 🍏 **Good friends care about each other.**

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Write about the best friendship you've ever had. What made (or makes) it so special? Describe your friend. What are the qualities that you appreciate most about this person?
2. Imagine that some day you will have a child. Write a letter for that child to read when he or she reaches the age you are right now. Tell the child about the different kinds of friendships (good and bad) you had at this age, and the important things you've learned about friendship. Offer advice on how he/she can have good friendships at this age.
3. Write about a time when you really felt hurt by a friend. What happened? How did you handle it? Did you tell him or her how you felt? What could you have done differently? What have you learned from this experience?
4. Have you ever been jealous of a friend? What happened? How did you handle it? How could you have handled it better? Has a friend of yours ever been jealous of you? What happened? What have you learned from either of these experiences?
5. Have you and a friend ever drifted apart? What happened? How do you feel about it? How do you deal with that loss? Is there anything you could (or should) do to get back together?
6. Write about a time when a friend really helped you with something - really came through for you when you needed him or her. How did that make you feel? Did you tell him/her?
7. Watch a television program and write about one of the characters. Is that person a good friend to any of the other characters? Explain. Would you like to have this character for a friend? Why, or why not?

GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. When you see someone you think you'd like to become friends with, what are some good ways to initiate things? Brainstorm this and make a list.
2. Brainstorm ways to be a good friend. (See "How To Be A Good Friend," on page 8.)
3. Let's see how you would handle some sticky situations that can happen in friendships. For each situation given below, answer these questions:
 1. How would this make you feel?
 2. What's a positive way to deal with it?
 3. What's a harmful way to deal with it?
 - a. Your friend starts acting in ways that you think are wrong (drugs, stealing, being rude, etc.).
 - b. You find out your friend has been telling stories about you that aren't true.
 - c. Your friend keeps saying or doing something that hurts your feelings.
 - d. Your friend invites you to go swimming, but calls back an hour later to cancel. You find out your friend went swimming with someone else.
 - e. You and your friend both want to run for the same class office.
 - g. You and your best friend have romantic feelings toward the same person.
 - h. Two friends of yours are at odds with each other. They demand that you choose between them. You don't want to lose either of them.
 - i. Your friend wants to spend more time with you than you want to spend with him or her. You like this person very much, but you want more freedom to see other people, too.
 - j. Your friend is on the brink of failing a class and begs you to help him/her cheat on the final exam.

ABOUT MICHAEL PRITCHARD

Michael Pritchard is a juvenile probation officer turned comedian / youth counselor / public speaker. After his college graduation in 1973, Mike went to work for the St. Louis Police Department and then moved to San Francisco's juvenile hall. In his years of working with young offenders, Mike discovered that his penchant for humor served as a powerful counseling tool, enabling him to break down communication barriers and help a lot of troubled kids turn their lives around. As Mike is fond of saying, "the shortest distance between any two people is a good laugh." Mike's unusual combination of talents gained him recognition as California's "Probation Officer of the Year" the same year that he won the San Francisco International Comedy Competition.

Whether he's being funny or serious, Mike's big love is talking with kids about the choices they make in their lives. He teaches young people that they have the power of choice, that they are responsible for the choices they make, and that they owe it to themselves to choose the best.



"The shortest distance between two people is
a good laugh."

Big Changes, Big Choices®
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