



FRIENDOLOGY 101 FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE 2021 | [URSTRONG.COM](https://urstrong.com)



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Creating a kinder world by empowering kids with friendship skills.

URSTRONG's whole-school friendship strategy has improved the social climate in schools globally, connecting over 1 million kids, parents, and teachers with a common language of friendship.

URSTRONG teaches kids what's normal in a friendship and the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships. In short, we teach kids how to become Friendship Ninjas.

Friendship Ninjas know how to put out common **Friendship Fires®** and how to use a **Quick Comeback** when someone is **Mean-on-Purpose**.

Friendship Ninjas can get their friendships back into the green zone on the **Friend-o-Meter** by working their way through the **Friend-o-Cycle**. They know how to **Talk-it-Out**, but they also understand that friendships change ...and that's okay.

There's a Friendship Ninja in all of us and URSTRONG helps kids discover theirs!

To learn more, please visit:

www.urstrong.com



COMMUNITY

FORGIVENESS

SELF COMPASSION

KINDNESS

FUN

TRUST

RESPECT

DIVERSITY

HONESTY • COURAGE • GRATITUDE

EMPATHY

ABOUT THE >>> FOUNDER!

Dana Kerford is a Teacher, Friendship Expert, and the Founder of URSTRONG.

After starting her career as a 4th grade teacher in Canada, Dana began to recognize the complexity and intensity of childhood friendships. Motivated to create cultures of kindness in schools, Dana launched a first-of-its-kind friendship program in 2009. Since then, URSTRONG's whole-school friendship strategy has improved the social climate in schools globally, connecting over 1 million kids, parents, and teachers with a common language of friendship.

As the go-to expert on childhood friendships in Australia and worldwide, Dana is regularly interviewed by media and has presented at education conferences across North America, Australia, and Asia.

URSTRONG's ground-breaking efforts in empowering children in friendships, led to Dana's participation in an exclusive conference on gender equality at the **White House** in 2016. She is also **SnapChat's Friendship Expert** in Australia, as a key contributor to their **Global Friendship Reports**.

Dana is a mum, a true Teacher-At-Heart, and is passionate about empowering children with the skills, language, and self-confidence to develop healthier relationships.



URSTRONG IS AN AWARD-WINNING FRIENDSHIP PROGRAM THAT EMPOWERS CHILDREN WITH THE SKILLS, LANGUAGE, & SELF-CONFIDENCE TO BE BETTER FRIENDS & DEVELOP HEALTHIER RELATIONSHIPS.

Founded by Dana Kerford, a teacher from Canada, URSTRONG's focus on bullying prevention has improved the social climate in schools globally, teaching kids a **common language** for managing conflict and creating a culture of respect and kindness.



THE URSTRONG GLOSSARY:

URSTRONG BELIEVES IN USING KIDS' LANGUAGE FOR KIDS' PROBLEMS. THE FRIENDOLOGY 101 CURRICULUM TEACHES STUDENTS A WHOLE NEW LANGUAGE OF FRIENDSHIP. SOME OF THE COMMON TERMS INCLUDE:



FRIENDSHIP NINJA

A **Friendship Ninja** is someone who surrounds themselves with friends in the healthy zone of the **Friend-o-Meter**. A **Friendship Ninja** is kind and friendly to everyone.

A **Friendship Ninja** understands the **4 Friendship Facts** and puts out their **Friendship Fires®** when they ignite.

A **Friendship Ninja** stands up for themselves and their friends. A **Friendship Ninja** makes new friends and understands that friendships change, and that's okay.

Above all else, a **Friendship Ninja** is someone you want to be friends with because they're true to who they are!



FRIEND-O-CYCLE

The normal cycle in a friendship that brings the friendship back to the healthy zone after experiencing a **Friendship Fire®**.

The phases of the **Friend-o-Cycle** are:

- Healthy Friendship
- Fire
- Confront the issue
- Talk-it-Out
- Forgive & Forget
- Closer & Stronger
- Healthy Friendship!



FRIENDSHIP FIRE

Any situation between you and a friend that results in negative feelings.



FRIEND-O-METER

A visual tool that assesses the health of friendships, ranging from the healthy zone to the unhealthy zone.



MEAN-ON-PURPOSE

When someone is intentionally unkind to someone else.



QUICK COMEBACK

A very short word or phrase that is used when someone is **Mean-on-Purpose**.

Quick Comebacks are designed to let the other person know that you heard/saw what they did and you're not okay with it.

LEARN MORE AT URSTRONG.COM/



4 FRIENDSHIP FACTS

A set of four facts that help us have realistic expectations in our friendships so we understand what is normal.

1. No friendship (relationship) is **perfect**.
2. Every friendship is **different**.
3. **Trust & Respect** are the two most important qualities of a friendship.
4. Friendships **change**, and that's okay.

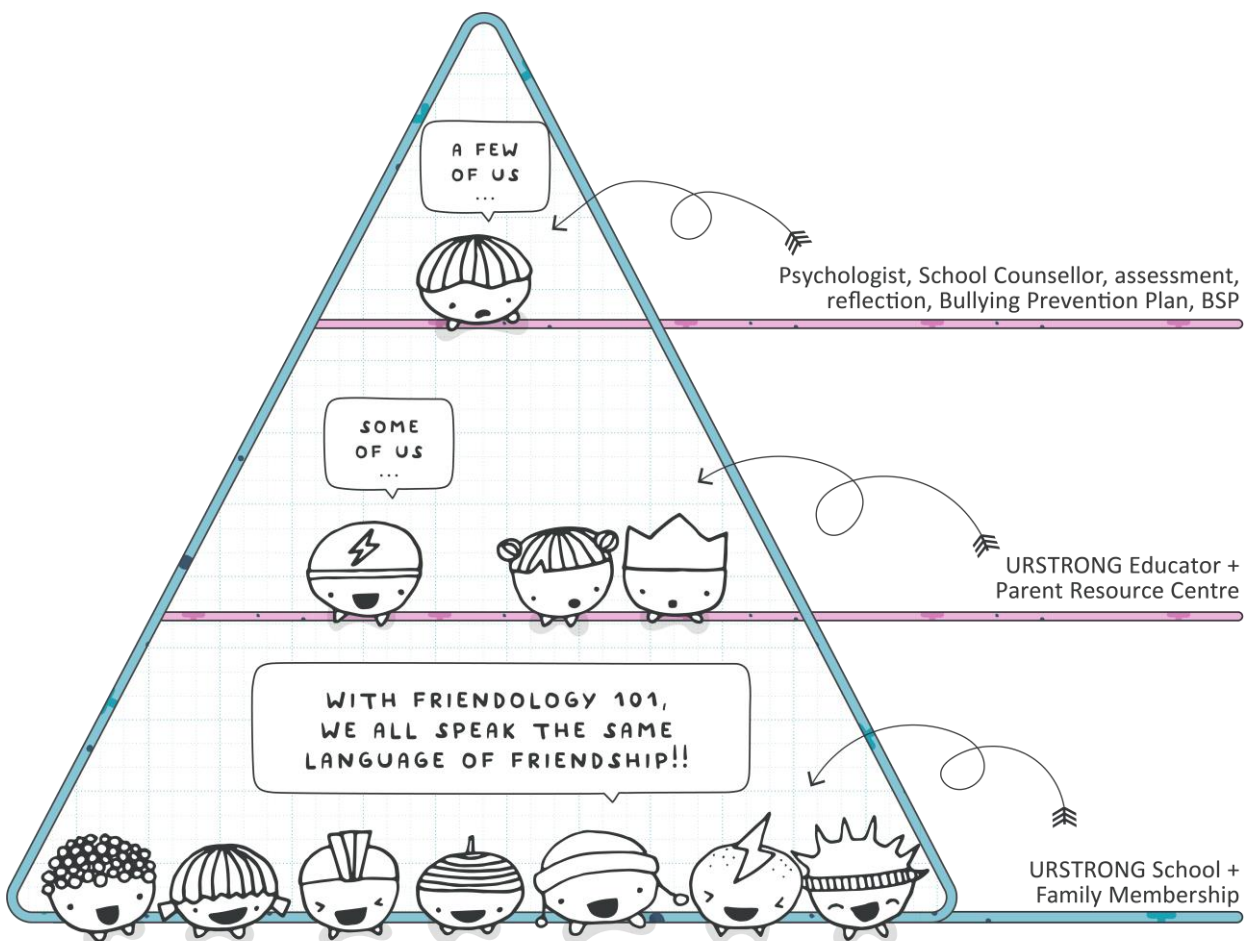


WHAT IS FRIENDOLOGY 101?

The Friendology 101 curriculum is designed as a framework to support a whole-school friendship strategy; the hallmark of a URSTRONG School.

By providing students consistent language and strategies, Friendology 101 helps teachers create a school culture that promotes positive mental health, wellbeing, and kindness through the lens of friendship skills.

URSTRONG Schools teach Friendology 101 to all of their students, supplementing the curriculum with the online library of [Educator](#) & [Parent](#) resources. Students are considered to be “**Friendship Ninjas**” when they utilize their friendship skills.



THROUGH THE LENS OF FRIENDSHIP SKILLS

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION MODEL (RTI)



WHY SHOULD I TEACH FRIENDOLOGY 101?

The mission of the URSTRONG programming is to proactively create a climate within friendships that exudes trust, respect, and honesty. Using kids' language for kids' problems and a practical, step-by-step approach, Friendology 101 teaches children to solve their own problems and make decisions that support happy, healthy relationships.

Research shows that relationships are the heart of wellbeing and learning. URSTRONG has seen the following results in students whose schools teach Friendology 101 and implement the whole-school friendship strategy:

- Children feel happier and enjoy coming to school
- Children feel better about themselves
- Children feel empowered and more in control of their social lives
- Children feel more confident
- Children feel more comfortable talking to their parents and teachers about peers
- Children feel lighter and more focused
- Children perform better academically
- Children engage in more leadership roles
- Children transfer the skills in other relationships, making better decisions

Friendology 101 meets many learning objectives that are set out in provincial, state, and national health curriculums around the world. The development of interpersonal skills, emotional literacy, and conflict-resolution are central to the URSTRONG programming.

**Friendology 101
inspires kids to
feel empowered,
develop a strong
sense of self,
and love
themselves while
learning to
manage the
most important
thing to them...
their friendships**



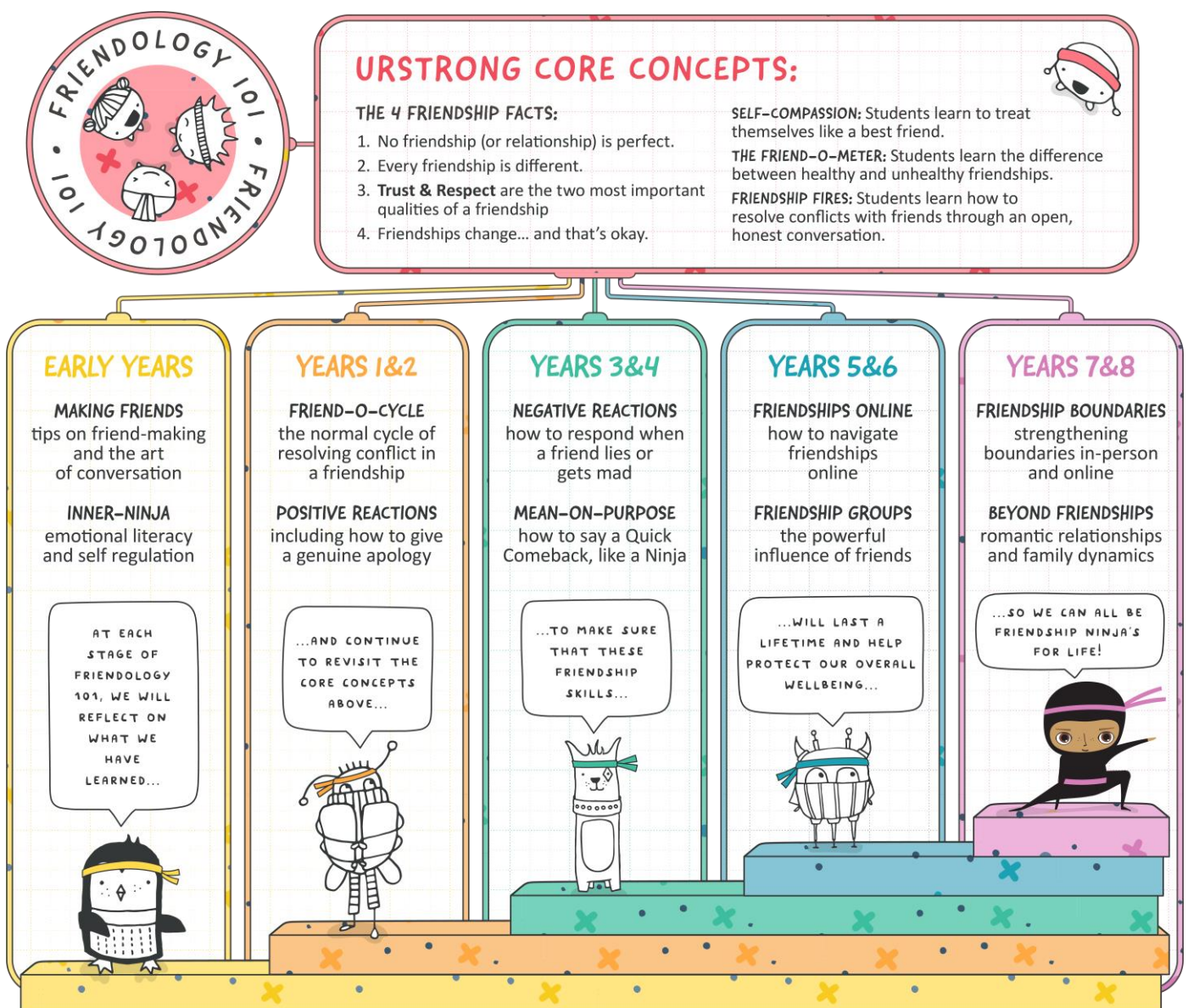
FRIENDOLOGY 101 >>> PROGRESSIVE LEARNING:

FRIENDOLOGY 101'S SKILLS-BASED PROGRAMMING TEACHES KIDS A NEW "LANGUAGE" THAT THEY CAN CONNECT WITH; GIVING THEM A VOICE THAT ALLOWS THEM TO ARTICULATE THEIR EXPERIENCES & GET THE HELP THEY NEED TO FOSTER HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS.

Spanning early years to teens, Friendology 101 is a suite of 5 distinct curriculums that are designed for progressive learning. With continuity across the year levels among core concepts, the context, scenarios, and teaching style change to meet the needs of each developmental stage.

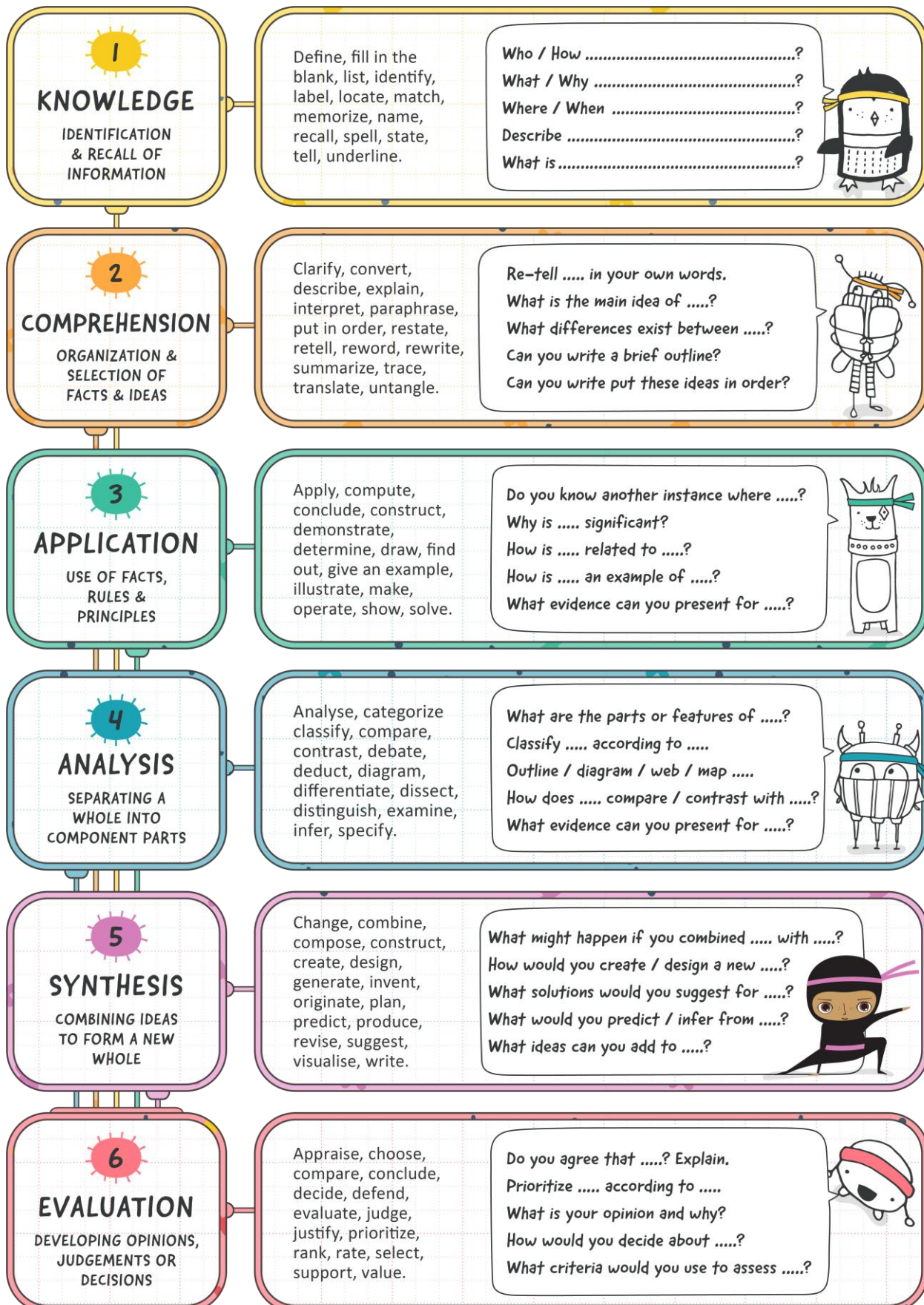
Students deepen their understanding of the concepts and friendship skills through differentiated instruction, applying developmentally-appropriate higher-order thinking skills.

Educators provide scaffolding through questions, role-plays, and activities; encouraging and supporting critical thinking and problem solving.



HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS:

TEACHERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO EXPAND STUDENTS' LEARNING + CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS BY PROMPTING & GUIDING THEM ALONG AT EACH STAGE OF THEIR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT.



ADAPTION OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY HIGHER-ORDER THINKING



A SNAPSHOT OF >>> EACH STAGE:

For every stage, the first session focuses on self-compassion (called “Inner Ninja”) and the last session is a review and celebration, tying it all together. The format is consistent throughout and each stage completes a culminating project focused on empathy (called “Friendology ShoeCase”), combining self-awareness and social awareness.

Each stage contains a session on Tricky Situations where common, age-appropriate issues are addressed. The symmetry and continuity allows URSTRONG Schools to feature and display the progressive learning model and supports students in a deeper understanding of the framework.





FRIENDOLOGY 101 >>> FOR EARLY YEARS:

Friendology 101 for Early Years is a series of 8 sessions (20-30 minutes) designed to shine the light on wellbeing through the lens of friendship skills. The sessions are made up of reflection questions, scenarios, explicit friendship skills instruction, and opportunities to apply the friendship strategy.

A challenge is assigned as “homework” at the end of each session to get students to test out their new skills and inspire reflection.

1. **INNER-NINJA:** This session is focused on self-compassion, teaching students ways to treat themselves like a best friend.
2. **TRUE COLOURS:** This session introduces students to naming feelings and learning strategies for calming down when they feel big emotions.
3. **MAKING FRIENDS:** This session teaches students two strategies for making new friends, including how to introduce themselves and ask a friend to play.
4. **FRIENDSHIP FACTS:** This session anchors students to the ‘truths’ in friendship so they have realistic expectations.
5. **FRIEND-O-METER:** This session helps students identify the difference between healthy & unhealthy friendships and the importance of ‘friendly’ body language.
6. **FRIENDSHIP FIRES®:** This session teaches students, step-by-step, how to resolve conflict with a friend by talking-it-out.
7. **TRICKY SITUATIONS:** This session highlights hot topics for this age group including: sharing, taking turns, and fairness.
8. **KIND + STRONG:** This final session ties it all together, reviewing the key concepts, and students share their culminating project, “Friendship Ninjas Stand Strong”, designed to strengthen empathy.

STUDENTS ARE
ENCOURAGED TO BRING
THEIR FAVOURITE
SOFT TOY (TEDDY BEAR)
FROM HOME
TO HELP THEM WITH
ROLE-PLAYING ACTIVITIES.





LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR EARLY YEARS:

SESSION 1: INNER-NINJA	STUDENTS WILL:
Rollercoaster	Identify that there are ups and downs in friendship
Growth Mindset	Apply the Friendology 101 guidelines*
Self-Compassion	Learn that Self-Compassion is the act of friendship towards yourself
Friendship Ninja	Identify that a Friendship Ninja is someone who uses friendship skills to stand up for themselves
Be Your Own Bestie	List ways they can treat themselves like a best friend
High Five°	Practice treating themselves like a best friend five times
Friendship Ninjas Stand Strong°°	Begin to strengthen their Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy), as they prepare their culminating project (presented in session 8)
SESSION 2: TRUE COLOURS	STUDENTS WILL:
Your True Colours	Identify ways they are unique
Feelings Are Like Colours	Reflect on their feelings and practise describing them
How Are They Feeling	Analyse body language to predict how someone is feeling
Naming Feelings	Identify words to describe positive and negative feelings
Scribble	Create their own word to describe a complicated emotion, practise putting a voice to their feelings
Feelings Change	Recognize how feelings change and list ways to improve their mood
Blow Out The Candles	Practise a fun breathing strategy for self-regulation
How Are You Feeling	Express how they are feeling using an I-statement ("I feel...")
Blow Out The Candles°	Apply their new skill for calming down
SESSION 3: MAKING FRIENDS	STUDENTS WILL:
Making New Friends	Reflect on how it feels to make new friends
Ask & Pass	Practise having a conversation through a game of catch with a goal of finding something in common
Super Introducer	Practise and role-play how to introduce themselves
Asking a Friend To Play	Role-play asking a friend to play
Friendology Mixer	Get to know their classmates and practise using their new friend-making skills
Make a New Friend°	Apply their new friend-making skills

A FEW NOTES:

* Friendology 101 Guidelines: Be kind to yourself and others, be open to learning and growing, be honest, be brave and have fun!

° Friendology Challenge: Assigned at the end of each session that encourages students to apply a specific friendship skill

°° Friendology Showcase: Culminating project that is presented on the final session



LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR EARLY YEARS:

SESSION 4: FRIENDSHIP FACTS	STUDENTS WILL:
All The Friends In Your Life	Recognize and list all the different types of friendships in their life
Friendship Fact #1 **	Identify and accept that conflict is a normal part of friendship
Friendship Fact #2 **	Develop examples of how friendships are different and understand that each friendship is unique
Friendship Fact #3 **	Describe what Trust & Respect look like in-action
Friendship Fact #4 **	Learn to accept the natural Ebb & Flow of friendship, knowing friendships change because we change
Be "Cool" °	Practise showing a friend respect
SESSION 5: FRIEND-O-METER	STUDENTS WILL:
Amazing Friends	Identify the most important qualities in a healthy friendship
Friend-o-Meter	Identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships
Body Language	Identify how actions speak louder than words in friendships
Feel-Good Friendships	List ways they are a good friend to others
Be a Green Zone Friend°	Practise creating healthy friendships by being a good friend
SESSION 6: FRIENDSHIP FIRES®	STUDENTS WILL:
Friendship Fires®	Identify that a Friendship Fires® is like hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and disagreements
Talk-it-Out	Apply the steps of Talking-it-Out with a friend through role-plays
Positive Reaction	Role-play positive reactions that put Friendship Fires® out
You Can't Control Your Friends	Recognize they can only control themselves
Fire-Fighter Not Fire-Lighter°	Practise making Friendship Fires® smaller
SESSION 7: TRICKY SITUATIONS	STUDENTS WILL:
Tricky Situations	Reflect on friendship issues that are not easily classified as Friendship Fires®
Sharing	Reflect on sharing; when it is okay not to share, and how to kindly say "No"
Taking Turns	Reflect on how and when to take turns
Fairness	Identify the difference between fair & unfair
Sharing, Taking Turns, & Fairness°	Practice sharing, taking turns, & playing fair
SESSION 8: KIND + STRONG	STUDENTS WILL:
Review	Review and highlight the key friendship skills they learned throughout the sessions
Kind + Strong	Reflect on how Kindness & Strength work together to protect our Mental Health & Wellbeing
Friendship Ninjas Stand Strong°	Demonstrate Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy) by presenting projects, deepening their connection

A FEW NOTES:

- ** The 4 Friendship Facts:
- FF#1: No Friendship (relationship) is perfect
 - FF#2: Every friendship is different
 - FF#3: Trust & Respect are the two most important qualities of any friendship
 - FF#4: Friendships change, and that's okay!



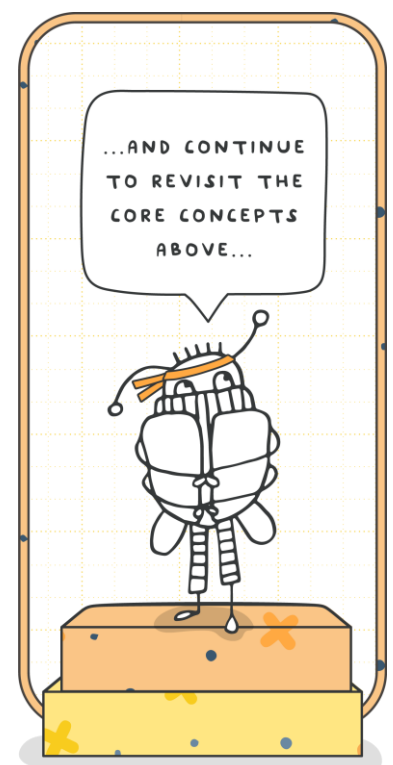
FRIENDOLOGY 101 >>> FOR YEARS 1&2:

Friendology 101 for Years 1 & 2 is a series of 8 sessions (20-30 minutes) designed to shine the light on wellbeing through the lens of friendship skills. The sessions are made up of reflection questions, scenarios, explicit friendship skills instruction, and opportunities to apply the friendship strategy.

A challenge is assigned as “homework” at the end of each session to get students to test out their new skills and inspire reflection.

1. **INNER-NINJA:** This session is focused on self-compassion, teaching students ways to treat themselves like a best friend.
2. **TRUE COLOURS:** This session is focused on naming feelings, helping students recognize and embrace both Positive & Negative feelings.
3. **MAKING FRIENDS:** This session teaches students four strategies for making new friends, including how to introduce themselves and ask a friend to play.
4. **FRIENDSHIP FACTS:** This session anchors students in the ‘truths’ of friendship so they have realistic expectations. Students learn what respect looks & sounds like in their friendships.
5. **FRIEND-O-METER:** This session helps students identify the difference between Healthy & Unhealthy friendships and the impact that body language has on our friendships.
6. **FRIENDSHIP FIRES®:** This session teaches students, step-by-step, how to resolve conflict with a friend and how to respond to hurt feelings and misunderstandings.
7. **TRICKY SITUATIONS:** This session highlights hot topics for this age group including: Playdates & Birthday Parties, how to say “No!” in a kind way, and how to respond to feeling bossed around.
8. **KIND + STRONG:** This final session ties it all together, reviewing the key concepts, and students share their culminating project, “Put Yourself in a Friend’s Shoes”, designed to strengthen empathy.

STUDENTS ARE
ENCOURAGED TO BRING
THEIR FAVOURITE
SOFT TOY (TEDDY BEAR)
FROM HOME
TO HELP THEM WITH
ROLE-PLAYING ACTIVITIES.





LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 1&2:

SESSION 1: INNER-NINJA	STUDENTS WILL:
Rollercoaster	Identify that there are ups and downs in friendship
Growth Mindset	Apply the Friendology 101 guidelines*
Self-Compassion	Learn that Self-Compassion is the act of friendship towards yourself
Friendship Ninja	Identify that a Friendship Ninja is someone who uses friendship skills to stand up for themselves
Be Your Own Bestie	List ways they can treat themselves like a best friend
Friendship Ninja Headband°	Construct their own Friendship Ninja band for themselves and their teddy bear
Put Yourself in a Friend's Shoes°°	Begin to strengthen their Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy), as they prepare their culminating project (presented in session 8)
SESSION 2: TRUE COLOURS	STUDENTS WILL:
Your True Colours	Identify ways they are unique
Feelings Are Like Colours	Reflect on their feelings and practise describing them
How Are They Feeling	Analyse body language to predict how someone is feeling
Naming Feelings	Identify words to describe positive and negative feelings
Scribble	Create their own word to describe a complicated emotion, practise putting a voice to their feelings
Feelings Change	Recognize how feelings change and list ways to improve their mood
Sensitivity Rainbow	Identify that we all feel more/less sensitive at different times and about different things
How Are You Feeling	Express how they are feeling in symbols, colours, and words, practising an I-statement ("I feel...")
Calm Down Kit°	Collect items to support them with de-escalating and emotional regulation
SESSION 3: MAKING FRIENDS	STUDENTS WILL:
Making New Friends	Reflect on how it feels to make new friends
Ask & Pass	Practise having a conversation through a game of catch with a goal of finding something in common
Super Introducer	Practise and role-play how to introduce themselves
Quick Question	Craft a question to use when they meet a new friend
Be a Magnet	Reflect on the behaviours people feel naturally drawn to
Asking a Friend to Play	Role-play how to ask a friend to play
Lunch Mate°	Apply their new friend-making skills

A FEW NOTES:

- * Friendology 101 Guidelines: Be kind to yourself and others, be open to learning and growing, be honest, be brave and have fun!
- ° Friendology Challenge: Assigned at the end of each session that encourages students to apply a specific friendship skill
- °° Friendology Shoe-case: Culminating project that is presented on the final session



LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 1&2:

SESSION 4: FRIENDSHIP FACTS	STUDENTS WILL:
Friendship Fact #1 **	Identify and accept that conflict is a normal part of friendship
Friendship Fact #2 **	Develop ways to be strategic in their friendships and understand that each friendship is unique
Friendship Fact #3 **	Describe what Trust & Respect look like in-action
Friendship Fact #4 **	Learn to accept the natural Ebb & Flow of friendship, knowing friendships change because we change
Respect and Ice-Cream	Identify what respect looks/sounds like, role-playing how to be respectful if their friend likes something different
Potatoes at Heart	Reflect on the 4 Friendship Facts in an abstract way
Potato Pals°	Demonstrate one of the 4 Friendship Facts
SESSION 5: FRIEND-O-METER	STUDENTS WILL:
Amazing Friends	Identify the most important qualities in a healthy friendship
Friend-o-Meter	Identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships
Body Language	Identify how actions speak louder than words in friendships
Drawing Challenge	Create and share their own Friend-o-Meter
Feel-Good Friendships	List ways they are a good friend to others
Being Alone°	Analyse the feeling of being alone to strengthen empathy and self-confidence
SESSION 6: FRIENDSHIP FIRES®	STUDENTS WILL:
Friendship Fires®	Identify that a Friendship Fire® is like hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and disagreements
Friend-o-Cycle	Reflect on how conflict-resolution is like a cycle
Talk-it-Out	Apply the steps of Talking-it-Out with a friend through role-plays
Positive Reaction	Role-play positive reactions that put a Friendship Fire® out
You Can't Control Your Friends	Recognize they can only control themselves
Lights, Camera, Action°	Demonstrate how to put out a Friendship Fire® , sharing the strategies with their family
SESSION 7: TRICKY SITUATIONS	STUDENTS WILL:
Tricky Situations	Reflect on friendship issues that are not easily classified as Friendship Fire®
Playdates and Birthday Parties	Reflect on birthday parties and playdates, identifying the best ways to minimize hurt feelings
Saying "No"	Practise saying " No, because... " to kindly decline offers and strengthen boundaries
Boss of You	Reflect on feelings of being bossed around and identify appropriate responses
Find Your Mantra°	Identify their own power statement and how it improves their confidence
SESSION 8: KIND + STRONG	STUDENTS WILL:
Review	Review and highlight the key friendship skills they learned throughout the sessions
Kind + Strong	Reflect on how Kindness & Strength work together to protect our Mental Health & Wellbeing
Put Yourself in Someone's Shoes°°	Demonstrate Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy) by presenting projects, deepening their connection

A FEW NOTES:

- ** The 4 Friendship Facts:
- FF#1: No Friendship (relationship) is perfect
 - FF#2: Every friendship is different
 - FF#3: Trust & Respect are the two most important qualities of any friendship
 - FF#4: Friendships change, and that's okay!

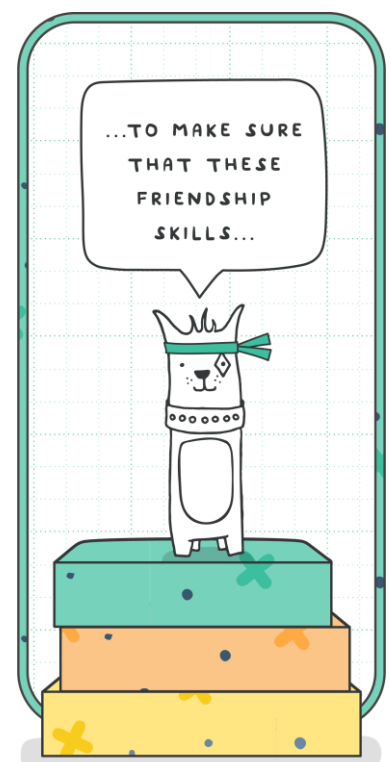


FRIENDOLOGY 101 >>> FOR YEARS 3&4:

Friendology 101 for Years 3 & 4 is a series of 8 sessions (45 to 60 minutes) designed to shine the light on wellbeing through the lens of friendship skills. The sessions are made up of reflection questions, scenarios, explicit friendship skills instruction, and opportunities to apply the friendship strategy to their real-life experiences.

A challenge is assigned as “homework” at the end of each session to get students to test out their new skills and inspire reflection.

1. **INNER-NINJA:** This session is focused on self-compassion, teaching students how to tame their butterflies and feel calm when they are experiencing big emotions.
2. **MAKING FRIENDS:** This session teaches students four strategies for making new friends, including how to introduce themselves and have a conversation that plants a seed for a new friendship to grow.
3. **FRIENDSHIP FACTS:** This session anchors students in the ‘truths’ of friendship so they have realistic expectations in their friendships. Students learn the **WWW strategy** for being strategic in their friendships.
4. **FRIEND-O-METER:** This session helps students identify the difference between healthy & unhealthy friendships and the impact that body language has on our friendships.
5. **FRIENDSHIP FIRES®:** This session teaches students, step-by-step, how to resolve conflict with a friend. They learn how to respond to both a positive and negative reaction, plus practise giving a genuine apology.
6. **MEAN-ON-PURPOSE:** This session teaches students how to respond to intentionally cruel, rude, or mean behaviour with a **Quick Comeback**. Students learn the difference between a **Friendship Fire®** vs **Mean-on-Purpose** behaviour, along with Reporting vs Tattling.
7. **TRICKY SITUATIONS:** This session highlights hot topics for this age group including: birthday parties, how to kindly decline, feeling caught in the middle, following & copying, and “stealing” friends.
8. **KIND + STRONG:** This final session ties it all together, reviewing the key concepts, and students share their culminating project, “**Looking into Your Sole**”, designed to strengthen empathy.





LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 3&4:

SESSION 1: INNER-NINJA	STUDENTS WILL:
Rollercoaster	Identify that there are ups and downs in friendship
Growth Mindset	Apply the Friendology 101 guidelines*
Self-Compassion	Learn that Self-Compassion is the act of friendship towards yourself
Friendship Ninja	Identify that a Friendship Ninja is someone who uses friendship skills to stand up for themselves
Butterflies	Reflect on uncomfortable emotions, recognizing they are normal
Sorting Butterflies	Categorize worries they can control versus ones they cannot control
Calming Butterflies	Learn strategies to calm negative feelings and catastrophic thinking
I'm Happy Being Me	Reflect on the power of self-acceptance
Gratitude Journal°	Focus on seeing life through a positive lens by expressing gratitude and appreciation
Looking into Your Sole°°	Begin to strengthen their Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy), as they prepare their culminating project (presented in session 8)
SESSION 2: MAKING FRIENDS	STUDENTS WILL:
All the Friends in Your Life	Recognize and list all the different types of friendships in their life
Making New Friends	Reflect on how it feels to make new friends
Ask & Pass	Practise having a conversation through a game of catch with a goal of finding something in common
Super Introducer	Practise and role-play how to introduce themselves
Quick Question	Craft a question to use when they meet a new friend
Be a Magnet	Reflect on the behaviours people feel naturally drawn to
Strangers to Friends	Identify the steps for going from strangers to friends
Lunch Mate°	Apply their new friend-making skills
SESSION 3: FRIENDSHIP FACTS	STUDENTS WILL:
Friendship Fact #1 **	Identify and accept that conflict is a normal part of friendship
Friendship Fact #2 **	Develop ways to be strategic in their friendships and understand that each friendship is unique
Friendship Fact #3 **	Describe what Trust & Respect look like in-action
Friendship Fact #4 **	Learn to accept the natural Ebb & Flow of friendship, knowing friendships change because we change
Sensitivity Rainbow	Identify that we all feel more/less sensitive at different times and about different things
WWW of Friendship°	Reflect on a friendship to develop a plan based on what works and what doesn't work

A FEW NOTES:

* Friendology 101 Guidelines: Be kind to yourself and others, be open to learning and growing, be honest, be brave and have fun!

° Friendology Challenge: Assigned at the end of each session that encourages students to apply a specific friendship skill

°° Friendology Shoecase: Culminating project that is presented on the final session

** The 4 Friendship Facts:
 FF#1: No Friendship (relationship) is perfect
 FF#2: Every friendship is different
 FF#3: Trust & Respect are the two most important qualities of any friendship
 FF#4: Friendships change, and that's okay!



LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 3&4:

SESSION 4: FRIEND-O-METER	STUDENTS WILL:
Must Haves	Identify the most important qualities in a healthy friendship
Friend-o-Meter	Identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships
Body Language	Identify how actions speak louder than words in friendships
Design Challenge	Design a Friend-o-Meter and analyse how well they worked in a group
Being Alone°	Analyse the feeling of being alone to strengthen empathy and self-confidence
SESSION 5: FRIENDSHIP FIRES®	STUDENTS WILL:
Naming Conflict in Friendships	Differentiate between Friendship Fires® versus Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Friend-o-Cycle	Learn the step-by-step process of conflict-resolution
Friendship Fires®	Discuss common, low-level friendship issues like hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and disagreements
Confront the Issue	Recognize the importance of facing conflicts, acknowledging that conflict-avoidance exacerbates friendship issues
Talk-it-Out	Apply the steps of Talking-it-Out with a friend through role-plays
Negative vs Positive Reaction	Compare the difference between a positive and negative reaction, practising how to respond
Forgive & Forget	Analyse what forgiveness means in a friendship, learning how to move forward in a friendship
Closer & Stronger	Reflect on ways that conflict can improve a friendship
Spending Less Time	Describe ways to spend less time in an unhealthy friendship while still being kind
DIY Friend-o-Cycle°	Compose a Friend-o-Cycle using symbols
SESSION 6: MEAN-ON-PURPOSE	STUDENTS WILL:
Friendship Fires® v. Mean-on-Purpose	Analyse scenarios to differentiate Friendship Fires® versus Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Mean-on-Purpose Moments	Identify behaviours that are intentionally mean, cruel, or rude designed to hurt someone
Mean-on-Purpose v. Bullying	Recognize that "bullying" is a misunderstood term that is often misused and labels people
Quick Comebacks	Identify and practise their own pre-loaded statement to respond to Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Reporting v. Tattling	Compare the difference between reporting and tattling, role-playing how to report
Bystander	Identify that a Quick Comeback can be used when they witness Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Mean-on-Purpose Often	Review ways to deal with ongoing Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Kind-on-Purpose°	Employ tactics that are intentionally kind to assess the impact it has on themselves and others
SESSION 7: TRICKY SITUATIONS	STUDENTS WILL:
Tricky Situations	Reflect on friendship issues that are not easily classified as Friendship Fires® or Mean-on-Purpose
Birthday Parties	Reflect on birthday parties, identifying the best ways to minimize hurt feelings
Saying "No"	Develop scripts to kindly decline offers and strengthen boundaries
Friendship Sandwich	Develop scripts and strategies to avoid being caught in the middle of conflict between friends
Stealing Friends	Analyze the concept of 'stealing friends' and identify Friendship Fires® that ignite when this happens
Following & Copying	Reflect on feelings of being followed or copied and identify appropriate responses
Highs & Lows°	Strengthen connections at home, practise putting a voice to their feelings, and express gratitude
SESSION 8: KIND + STRONG	STUDENTS WILL:
Review	Review and highlight the key friendship skills they learned throughout the sessions
Kind + Strong	Reflect on how Kindness & Strength work together to protect our Mental Health & Wellbeing
Looking into Your Sole°°	demonstrate Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy) by presenting their projects, deepening their connection with classmates



FRIENDOLOGY 101 >>> FOR YEARS 5&6:

Friendology 101 for Years 5 & 6 is a series of 8 sessions (45 to 60 minutes) designed to shine the light on wellbeing through the lens of friendship skills. The sessions are made up of reflection questions, scenarios, explicit friendship skills instruction, and opportunities to apply the friendship strategy to their real-life experiences.

A challenge is assigned as “homework” at the end of each session to get students to test out their new skills and inspire reflection.

1. **INNER-NINJA:** This session is focused on self-compassion, teaching students how to squash ANTs (Automatic Negative Thoughts) and dispelling myths around gender stereotypes and the ‘pressures of perfection’.
2. **FRIENDSHIP FACTS:** This session anchors students in the ‘truths’ of friendship so they have realistic expectations in their relationships. Students also practise the art of conversation.
3. **FRIEND-O-METER:** This session helps students identify the difference between healthy & unhealthy friendships and friendship groups, both in-person and online, and the impact body language has on our friendships.
4. **FRIENDSHIP FIRES®:** This session teaches students, step-by-step, how to resolve conflict with a friend. They learn how to handle a friend’s negative reaction and what to do if the conflict is online.
5. **MEAN-ON-PURPOSE:** This session teaches students how to respond to intentionally cruel, rude, or mean behaviour. They reflect on the difference between low-level friendship issues and mean-on-purpose behaviour.
6. **TRICKY SITUATIONS:** This session highlights hot topics for this age group including: how to kindly decline, feeling caught in the middle, ways to end gossip, and navigating friendships online.
7. **FRIENDSHIP GROUPS:** This session focuses on the powerful influence of friends and the importance of strong boundaries. Students reflect on the difference between fitting-in v. belonging and quality v. quantity.
8. **KIND + STRONG:** This final session ties it all together, reviewing the key concepts, and students share their culminating project, “Walk a Mile in My Shoes”, designed to strengthen empathy.





LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 5&6:

SESSION 1: INNER-NINJA	STUDENTS WILL:
Growth Mindset	Apply the Friendology 101 guidelines*
Self-Compassion	Learn that self-compassion is the act of friendship towards yourself
Friendship Ninja	Identify that a Friendship Ninja is someone who uses friendship skills and stands up for themselves
Squashing ANTs	Apply strategies to manage Automatic Negative Thoughts
Pressures of Perfection	Challenge pressures from unrealistic standards
What Matters Most	Recognize that it is the character of a person that we value most
Gender Stereotypes	Analyse, critique, and dispel myths around gender stereotypes
Real You Chart°	Identify the difference between things they can and cannot control about themselves
Walk a Mile°°	Begin to strengthen their Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy), as they prepare their culminating project (presented Session 8)
SESSION 2: FRIENDSHIP FACTS	STUDENTS WILL:
Friendship Fact #1 **	Identify and accept that conflict is a normal part of friendship
Friendship Fact #2 **	Develop ways to be strategic in their friendships and understand that each friendship is unique
Friendship Fact #3 **	Describe what Trust & Respect look like in-action
Friendship Fact #4 **	Learn to accept the natural Ebb & Flow of friendship, knowing friendships change because we change
Making New Friends (Ask & Pass)	Practise having a conversation through a game of catch with a goal of finding something in common
Talk to a Stranger°	Apply the Ask & Pass strategy with someone they do not know
SESSION 3: FRIEND-O-METER	STUDENTS WILL:
Must-Haves & Deal-Breakers	Crystallize their values in friendship, strengthening their boundaries
Friend-o-Meter	Identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships
Body Language	Identify how actions speak louder than words in friendships
Texting & Online Messaging	Discuss "negativity bias" and the impact emojis have on messages online
WWW of Friendship	Devise a plan to manage a complicated friendship
Groups of Friends	Identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendship groups
Quantity v. Quality	Recognize that quality is more important than quantity when it comes to friendships
Friend-o-Meter Quiz°	Assess the health of their friendships to create a more objective perspective

A FEW NOTES:

- * Friendology 101 Guidelines: Be kind to yourself and others, be open to learning and growing, be honest, be brave and have fun!
- ° Friendology Challenge: Assigned at the end of each session that encourages students to apply a specific friendship skill
- °° Friendology ShoeCASE: Culminating project that is presented on the final session
- ** The 4 Friendship Facts:
 - FF#1: No Friendship (relationship) is perfect
 - FF#2: Every friendship is different
 - FF#3: Trust & Respect are the two most important qualities of any friendship
 - FF#4: Friendships change, and that's okay!



LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 5&6:

SESSION 4: FRIENDSHIP FIRES®	STUDENTS WILL:
Naming Conflict in Friendships	Differentiate between Friendship Fires® versus Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Friend-o-Cycle	Learn the step-by-step process of conflict-resolution
Friendship Fires®	Discuss common, low-level friendship issues like hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and disagreements
Confront the Issue	Recognize the importance of facing conflicts, acknowledging that conflict-avoidance exacerbates friendship issues
Talk-it-Out	Apply the steps of Talking-it-Out with a friend through role-plays
Negative vs Positive Reaction	Compare the difference between a positive and negative reaction, practising how to respond
Forgive & Forget	Analyse what forgiveness means in a friendship, learning how to move forward in a friendship
Closer & Stronger	Reflect on ways that conflict can improve a friendship
Friendly v. Friendship	Strengthen boundaries by understanding when and how to "let go" of a friendship
Friendship Fires Online	Practise scripts for addressing conflict online, recognizing conflict is best managed face-to-face
Interview a Mentor°	Open up the lines of communication with a grown-up they trust
SESSION 5: MEAN-ON-PURPOSE	STUDENTS WILL:
Mean-on-Purpose Moments	Identify behaviours that are intentionally mean, cruel, or rude designed to hurt someone
Mean-on-Purpose v. Bullying	Recognize that "bullying" is a misunderstood term that is often misused and labels people
Quick Comebacks	Identify and practise their own pre-loaded statement to respond to Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Reporting	Reflect on why it is important to report Mean-on-Purpose behaviour and how to do it
Bystander	Identify that a Quick Comeback can be used when they witness Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Friendship Fires® v. Mean-on-Purpose	Summarize the different approaches for handling Friendship Fires versus Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Mantra Meme°	Describe their own power statement and express how positive self-talk impacts their confidence
SESSION 6: TRICKY SITUATIONS	STUDENTS WILL:
Tricky Situations	Reflect on friendship issues that are not easily classified as Friendship Fires® or Mean-on-Purpose
Saying "No"	Develop scripts to kindly decline offers and strengthen boundaries
Friendship Sandwich	Develop scripts and strategies to avoid being caught in the middle of conflict between friends
Gossip & Rumours	Develop scripts and strategies to end gossip
Navigating Friendships Online	Identify their top challenges and reflect on strategies to keep friendships healthy online
Kind-on-Purpose Online°	Employ tactics that are intentionally kind to assess the impact it has on themselves and others
SESSION 7: FRIENDSHIP GROUPS	STUDENTS WILL:
Influence of Friends	Reflect on the powerful influence of friends, identifying both positive and negative influences
Core Friends	Identify qualities of best friends and how close friendships prevent feelings of loneliness
Untangling Groups of Friends	Reflect on friendship groups and the importance of thinking of each friendship individually
Fitting in v. Belonging	Cultivate a sense of belonging by standing strong in their own values
Friendship Boundaries	Differentiate between quality v. quantity, friendly v. friendship, fitting-in v. belonging, and friend v. best friend
Friendship Map°	Reflect on the closeness of their friendships by mapping out all the connections in their lives
SESSION 8: KIND + STRONG	STUDENTS WILL:
Review	Review and highlight the key friendship skills they learned throughout the sessions
Kind + Strong	Reflect on how Kindness & Strength work together to protect our Mental Health & Wellbeing
Walk a Mile°°	Demonstrate Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy) by presenting projects, deepening their connection with their classmates

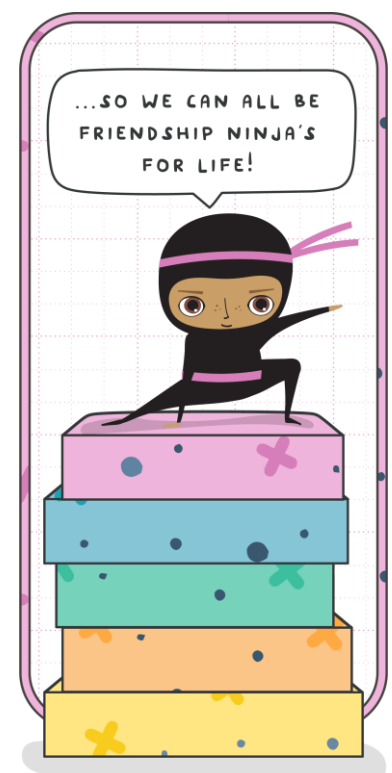


FRIENDOLOGY 101 >>> FOR YEARS 7&8:

Friendology 101 for Years 7 & 8 is a series of 8 sessions (45 to 60 minutes) designed to shine the light on wellbeing through the lens of friendship skills. The sessions are made up of reflection questions, scenarios, explicit friendship skills instruction, and opportunities to apply the friendship strategy to their real-life experiences.

1. **INNER-NINJA:** This session is focused on self-compassion, teaching students how to squash ANTs (Automatic Negative Thoughts) and dispelling myths around gender stereotypes and the 'pressures of perfection'.
2. **FRIENDSHIP FACTS:** This session anchors students in the 'truths' of friendship so they have realistic expectations in their relationships.
3. **FRIEND-O-METER:** This session helps students identify their must-haves and deal-breakers in friendships, learning the difference between healthy & unhealthy friendships and friendship groups.
4. **FRIENDSHIP FIRES®:** This session teaches students, step-by-step, how to resolve conflict with a friend. They learn how to handle a friend's negative reaction and what to do if the conflict is online.
5. **MEAN-ON-PURPOSE:** This session teaches students how to respond to intentionally cruel, rude, or mean behaviour. They reflect on the difference between low-level friendship issues and mean-on-purpose behaviour.
6. **TRICKY SITUATIONS:** This session covers hot topics for teens like parties, saying no, gossip, and navigating friendships online. Romantic relationships are also discussed.
7. **FRIENDSHIP BOUNDARIES:** This session teaches students 3 levels of friendship, getting them to reflect on the powerful influence of friends and the importance of strong boundaries. Students consider their boundaries online and a social media experiment is assigned.
8. **KIND + STRONG:** This final session ties it all together, reviewing the key concepts, and students share their culminating project (which is assigned in the first session), "If These Shoes Could Talk", designed to strengthen empathy.

A CHALLENGE IS ASSIGNED AS "HOMEWORK" AT THE END OF EACH SESSION TO GET STUDENTS TO TEST OUT THEIR NEW SKILLS AND INSPIRE REFLECTION.





LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 7&8:

SESSION 1: INNER-NINJA	STUDENTS WILL:
Self-Compassion	Learn that self-compassion is the act of friendship towards yourself
Squashing ANTs	Apply strategies to manage Automatic Negative Thoughts
Pressures of Perfection	Challenge pressures from unrealistic standards
Gender Stereotypes	Analyse, critique, and dispel myths around gender stereotypes
Iceberg	Reflect on the ways they have a lot going on below the surface, not visible to others
Real You Chart°	Identify the difference between things they can and cannot control about themselves
If These Shoes Could Talk°°	Begin to strengthen their Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy), as they prepare their culminating project (presented Session 8)
SESSION 2: FRIENDSHIP FACTS	STUDENTS WILL:
Myths v. Truths in Friendship	Reflect on preconceived misconceptions in friendships & challenge gender stereotypes
Friendship Fact #1 **	Identify and accept that conflict is a normal part of friendship
Friendship Fact #2 **	Develop ways to be strategic in their friendships and understand that each friendship is unique
Friendship Fact #3 **	Describe what Trust & Respect look like in-action
Friendship Fact #4 **	Learn to accept the natural Ebb & Flow of friendship, knowing friendships change because we change
WWW of Friendship	Devise a plan to manage a complicated friendship
Making New Friends (Ask & Pass)	Reflect on the art of conversation and how to recognize a potential new friend
Talk to a Stranger°	Apply the Ask & Pass strategy with someone they do not know
SESSION 3: FRIEND-O-METER	STUDENTS WILL:
Must-Haves & Deal-Breakers	Crystallize their values in friendship, strengthening their boundaries
Friend-o-Meter	Identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships
Body Language	Identify how actions speak louder than words in friendships
Texting & Online Messaging	Discuss "negativity bias" and the impact emojis have on messages online
Groups of Friends	Identify the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendship groups
Fitting in v. Belonging	Cultivate a sense of belonging by standing strong in their own values
Quantity v. Quality	Recognize that quality is more important than quantity when it comes to friendships
Friend-o-Meter Quiz°	Assess the health of their friendships to create a more objective perspective

A FEW NOTES:

° Friendship Challenge: Assigned at the end of each session that encourages students to apply a specific friendship skill

°° Friendship Shoecase: Culminating project that is presented on the final session

** The 4 Friendship Facts: FF#1: No Friendship (relationship) is perfect
 FF#2: Every friendship is different
 FF#3: Trust & Respect are the two most important qualities of any friendship
 FF#4: Friendships change, and that's okay!



LEARNING OUTCOMES >>> FOR YEARS 7&8:

SESSION 4: FRIENDSHIP FIRES®	STUDENTS WILL:
Naming Conflict in Friendships	Differentiate between Friendship Fires® versus Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Friend-o-Cycle	Learn the step-by-step process of conflict-resolution
Friendship Fires®	Discuss common, low-level friendship issues like hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and disagreements
Confront the Issue	Recognize the importance of facing conflicts, acknowledging that conflict-avoidance exacerbates friendship issues
Talk-it-Out	Apply the steps of Talking-it-Out with a friend through role-plays
Negative vs Positive Reaction	Compare the difference between a positive and negative reaction, practising how to respond
Forgive & Forget	Analyse what forgiveness means in a friendship, learning how to move forward in a friendship
Closer & Stronger	Reflect on ways that conflict can improve a friendship
Friendly v. Friendship	Strengthen boundaries by understanding when and how to "let go" of a friendship
Friendship Fires Online	Practise scripts for addressing conflict online, recognizing conflict is best managed face-to-face
Conflicts at Home°	Apply their conflict-resolution skills to relationships at home
SESSION 5: MEAN-ON-PURPOSE	STUDENTS WILL:
Mean-on-Purpose Moments	Identify behaviours that are intentionally mean, cruel, or rude designed to hurt someone
Mean-on-Purpose v. Bullying	Recognize that "bullying" is a misunderstood term that is often misused and labels people
Quick Comebacks	Identify and practise their own pre-loaded statement to respond to Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Reporting	Reflect on why it is important to report Mean-on-Purpose behaviour and how to do it
Bystander	Identify that a Quick Comeback can be used when they witness Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Friendship Fires® v. Mean-on-Purpose	Summarize the different approaches for handling Friendship Fires® versus Mean-on-Purpose behaviour
Kind-on-Purpose°	Apply intentional acts of kindness + consider the impact kindness has on friendships & wellbeing
SESSION 6: TRICKY SITUATIONS	STUDENTS WILL:
Tricky Situations	Reflect on friendship issues that are not easily classified as Friendship Fires® or Mean-on-Purpose
Saying "No"	Develop scripts to kindly decline offers and strengthen boundaries
Friendship Sandwich	Develop scripts and strategies to avoid being caught in the middle of conflict between friends
Gossip & Rumours	Develop scripts and strategies to end gossip & rumours
Navigating Friendships Online	Identify their top challenges and reflect on strategies to keep friendships healthy online
Romantic Relationships	Apply friendship skills to romantic relationships, discussing topics like break-ups and consent
Kindly Decline°	Practise honouring their boundaries by using one of the strategies to kindly decline
SESSION 7: FRIENDSHIP BOUNDARIES	STUDENTS WILL:
Influence of Friends	Reflect on the powerful influence of friends, identifying both positive and negative influences
House Friends	Identify qualities of best friends and how close friendships prevent feelings of loneliness
Yard Friends	Identify qualities of people that are friends, but not best friends, and how they prevent feelings of social isolation
The Fence	Identify qualities of people that should be kept at a distance, acknowledging they're still valuable community members
Friendship Boundaries	Differentiate between quality v. quantity, friendly v. friendship, fitting-in v. belonging, and friend v. best friend
Friendship Boundaries Online	Define and reflect on what "friend" means when it comes to social media and what their boundaries look like online
Social Media Experiment°	Experience one week without social media & reflect on how they feel
SESSION 8: KIND + STRONG	STUDENTS WILL:
Review	Review and highlight the key friendship skills they learned throughout the sessions
Kind + Strong	Reflect on how Kindness & Strength work together to protect our Mental Health & Wellbeing
If These Shoes Could Talk°°	Demonstrate Self-Awareness + Social-Awareness (empathy) by presenting projects, deepening their connection with their classmates



TEACHING FRIENDOLOGY 101

THE LOGISTICS:

WHAT GRADES DO I TEACH IT TO?

To create a harmonious school culture, you want to ensure that ALL students are learning these skills and using the same language and strategies (i.e. bottom of the triangle on the RTI model). This also allows the teachers and parents to use a common approach to support the students. It is important to think about how you can embed URSTRONG's friendship strategy across your school.

It is recommended that your school teaches Friendology 101 to every single grade, ideally near the beginning of the school year. For example, commencing Friendology the third week back to school allows the student and teachers to set the foundation for the rest of the school year. Teachers can then revisit sessions, supplementing with resources from URSTRONG's Educator Resource library, based on the friendship issues and challenges that arise as the year unfolds.

Friendology is meant to be repeated year-by-year to help lock in learning. Like basic math skills, you will build on their friendship skills by reviewing the foundational principles at each stage in their development guiding them further through the higher-order thinking skills.

WHAT IF WE CAN'T TEACH IT TO ALL GRADES?

While it's definitely the recommended approach, it can be difficult to get every teacher onboard to teach every grade. We know that is sometimes tricky!

Here are a few alternative ways of teaching Friendology 101 in your school:

- Focus on a particular grade group. If your school has an intake year where students are coming from various schools, focus on that particular year group and use the Friendology 101 program to proactively create a positive social dynamic.
- If your school has a Guidance Counsellor or Wellbeing Director, have them take the lead and go into the various classrooms teaching Friendology 101.
- Combine classes. We have not seen any negative impact on these lessons being taught in large group settings. Teachers can then follow-up with and engage in more intimate discussions with their classes afterwards.

A NOTE OF... **CAUTION!**

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT FRIENDOLOGY 101 IS PRESENTED IN A POSITIVE LIGHT, AS IT WAS NOT DESIGNED TO BE A REACTIVE PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE STRUGGLING & IS COUNTER TO URSTRONG'S PHILOSOPHY & FOCUS ON PREVENTION.





SHOULD I TEACH THE BOYS AND GIRLS TOGETHER?

It is highly recommended that you do not separate the genders. Doing this reinforces gender stereotyping and suggest that friendship is different for boys and girls. Research, however, shows that there are more similarities than differences and it's incredibly important to be mindful of children who are still figuring themselves out. In addition, there is tremendous value in fostering mixed-gender friendships.

By way of background, all kids want to be liked, they want to be cool, popular, and *"fit-in"* with their friends. Girls, boys, transgender, non-binary – all kids, regardless of gender, have feelings that sometimes get hurt. They experience gossip, relational aggression (typically assigned to *just* girls), physical aggression (typically assigned to *just* boys), along with being on the receiving end of The Silent Treatment. Kids have had their friends lie to them, brush off their feelings, put them down for liking different things... boys and girls have very similar **Friendship Fires®**!

While their friendships are mostly the same prior to adolescence, there are some noteworthy differences stemming from the way kids are historically socialized based on their gender, including:

- While girls are often told, *"Just ignore her! She's just jealous,"* boys are often told, *"Suck it up! Be a man!"*
- While girls are encouraged to maintain a sweet façade (*"Be friends with everyone!"*), boys are expected and sometimes even allowed to get physical with their friends (*"Boys will be boys!"*).
- While girls are expected to cry, boys are sometimes shamed for expression through tears.

Children are highly affected by gender stereotyping and it's no surprise that these damaging messages inevitably leak into the way they build and interact within their relationships.

Through Friendology 101, these gender-stereotypes are challenged and woven throughout the discussions, giving the kids a common language. By teaching ALL CHILDREN, your students will learn to honour and celebrate their unique differences, not as boys or girls, but as individuals.

If you choose to separate the genders or are at a single-sex school, opportunities are mentioned in the [teaching notes](#) to dig deeper to explore some of these misconceptions.



WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF ME, AS THE TEACHER?

You have a very important role to play. While the content is laid out for you, your job is to bring it to life and make it meaningful for your students.

Ensuring your teaching style is engaging, dynamic, and fun is critical. It's also extremely important to consider all learning styles to help your students lock in the content. Be sure to make each session multi-sensory and integrate movement as much as possible. While some opportunities for movement are suggested, be sure to get your kids 'feeling' the material as much as possible and connecting to it on a personal level.

As part of the License Agreement, Friendology 101 must be taught by qualified teaching professionals who understand how students learn and are masterful at teaching the diverse needs in a classroom. We only license this curriculum to schools for this reason to ensure top-quality instruction by people trained in Education.

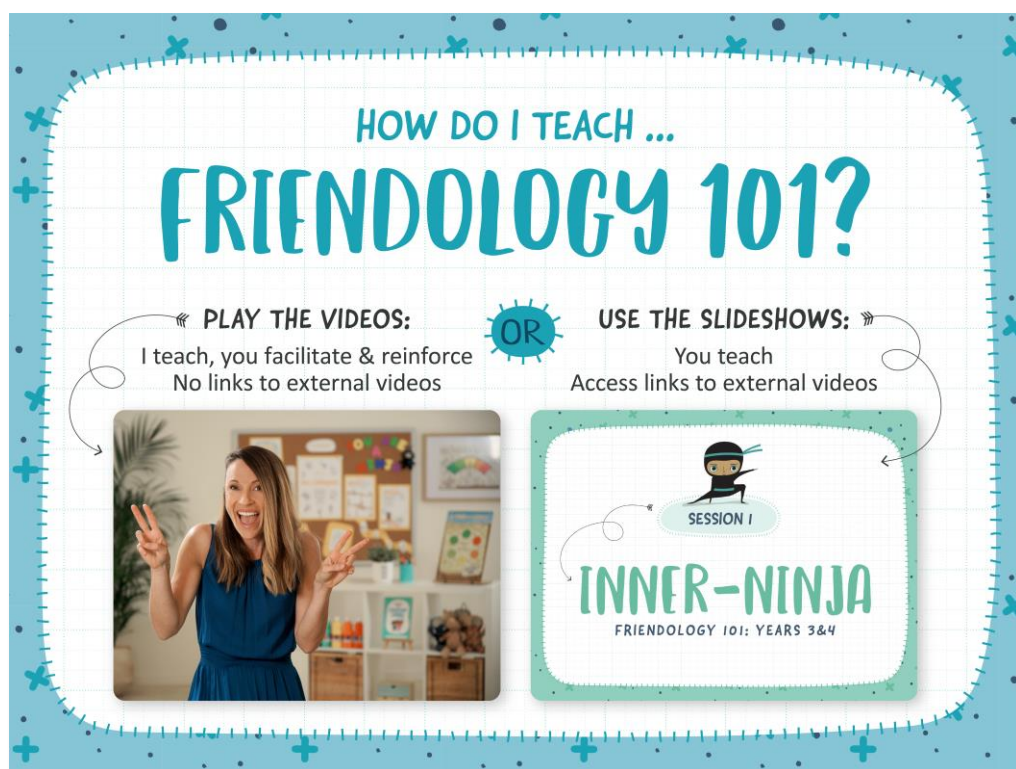
HOW DO I TEACH IT?

Through the guidance of a slideshow created specifically to appeal to kids and prompt discussions, your students will learn the foundation of understanding and maintaining healthy relationships.

There are two methods of delivering Friendology 101 to your students:

1. By using the **SLIDESHOWS** and teaching notes as a guide, teach Friendology 101 yourself.
2. By using the **VIDEOS**, have Friendology 101 taught by our Founder & Friendship Expert, Dana.

**YOU CAN DELIVER
FRIENDOLOGY 101
AT YOUR OWN
PACE, WITH YOUR
OWN TEACHING
STYLE, TO MEET
THE UNIQUE NEEDS
OF YOUR
STUDENTS.
HAVE FUN WITH IT
& GIVE IT YOUR
OWN PERSONAL
FLARE!**





ABOUT THE >>> SLIDESHOWS:

The slides are provided in PDF format, the most universal option for our global team of URSTRONG Schools. This allows us to maintain the integrity of the curriculum, preventing teachers from editing or altering the content. PDFs also ensure that the design elements show up properly on your device, no matter where you are in the world.

Display the slides on your preferred platform. You can play them as a slideshow directly from your PDF reader (e.g. Adobe) or import the slides into your preferred platform (e.g. Google Slides, PowerPoint, QuickTime, etc).

You might find it helpful to have a “clicker” (a presenter remote), which allows you to move around the classroom and simply click to the next slide from wherever you are. A wireless mouse also works, but you will need to ensure you’ve “pushed play” on your presentation.

In the bottom corner of the presentation slides, you may see these images that symbolize the following actions:

A QUICK KEY TO KEEP YOUR LESSONS FLOWING:



There is a video to go with the concept (e.g. YouTube). Click on the image to connect you to an external web browser. This requires internet access.



There is a suggested activity to get the kids active. Be sure to integrate movement as much as possible.



There is a handout to accompany the concept (found in the Materials section). Be sure to have these printed and ready in advance.



ABOUT THE >>> VIDEOS:

The videos are ready to go with each session so that you can literally “push play” for your students. Make the video widescreen and ensure you have good speakers so that your students can hear clearly.

Throughout the videos, a pause icon will come up, instructing you to pause the video and facilitate the activity. Once they complete the activity, simply return to the video by unpausing. **This means you need to pay attention and be actively involved throughout the session.** Given this program is all about fostering relationships, it’s essential that you still continue to take a lead role - even if you’re using the videos.

If you choose to use the videos, it is important to note the following:

- The videos were designed to ‘speak’ to a wide range of children, regardless of background, gender, or country. We have URSTRONG Schools around the globe and have tried our best to develop a curriculum that is as ‘universal’ as possible.
- The videos do not link to other YouTube clips or external supports, like the slideshows. You are encouraged to still look at the slideshow teaching notes so that you can take advantage of these opportunities.
- Dana is Canadian. Your students might notice she has an accent or uses different words or spelling, depending on where you are in the world. Use this as an opportunity to point out how we are all different. Feel free to pause the video throughout to ‘translate’ for your students or elaborate on certain concepts. You might even weave in a conversation on global citizenship and diversity; respecting and honouring our shared humanity.

DON'T FORGET!

Whether you use the slides or videos (or a combination of both!), remember...it is just a guide. Create a Friendology 101 experience that works best for you and your unique group, addressing their specific needs and challenges.

It’s up to you to make it relevant and to contextualize the experience as much as possible for your students.

**FRIENDOLOGY IS
MEANT AS A
JUMPING OFF
POINT, A
FRIENDSHIP
FRAMEWORK,
FOR YOU TO
BRING TO LIFE IN
A MEANINGFUL
WAY FOR YOU
& YOUR
STUDENTS!**





HOW IS IT ORGANISED?


Friendology 101 was created by a teacher for teachers. Knowing how busy the life of a teacher can be and how little extra time you have, this program requires very little preparation. It's meant to be easy for you to deliver.

Each session can be found within the Friendology 101 section of the URSTRONG Schools member area and contains:

- **OBJECTIVE:** A synopsis of the lesson
- **KEY OUTCOME:** The many outcomes covered in the session
Note: The Friendology sessions are dense, sometimes covering a lot of big themes and concepts. Consider it like an introduction, then dig deeper with the related resources or by revisiting the concept. ➡
- **MATERIALS:** A list of the items you will need, including links to the slideshow, teaching notes, any external videos, and printable handouts
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** The steps for teaching the session, which follow a similar format each time
- **NEXT STEPS:** Designed to remind you what is coming next for Friendology

Additional activities, videos, and lesson plans can be found in the [online library](#), tagged alongside each session to enrich the content, focusing on specific outcomes.

Session 5: Friendship Fires



Overview

Hurt feelings, misunderstandings, disagreements...Teach your students how to Talk-it-Out until the Fire-is-Out!

Objective

This session teaches students, step-by-step, how to resolve conflict with a friend. They learn how to respond to both a positive and negative reaction, plus practice giving a genuine apology.

[Watch Lesson →](#)

Related Resources

Video

4 - 7

URSTRONG CLASSROOM: Be a Friendship Ninja

Keeping Kids Connected

Friendship Fires & Mean-on-Purpose moments are the worst! Learn tips + strategies to manage conflicts like a Friendship Ninja.

[Keep reading →](#)

Video

7 - 8

QuickTip: Sleep on it!

Conflict resolution

Here's a little tip for kids who aren't sure if they need to put out a Friendship Fire or not!

[Keep reading →](#)

Article

3 - 8

Mean-on-Purpose Tracker

Supporting Documents

It is important to track Mean-on-Purpose behavior and have a plan for victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. Here's our tracking tool & plan!

[Keep reading →](#)

ABOUT THE >>> HANDOUTS & TEACHING NOTES:



Within the [Materials](#) section, you will find a link to the session's [Handouts & Teaching Notes](#). You may want to print these out to have a hardcopy to refer to or simply have them available on your computer to guide you along.

The [Teaching Notes](#) sometimes include opportunities to expand on concepts with your students. Occasionally there's a suggestion to keep the conversation going or an activity to accompany the slide. If there is a link to a video, the url is also provided.

Note about External Videos: We try to limit the number of external links, as we cannot control if these links get taken down or are no longer available. If you find a broken link, it usually means the video is no longer available on YouTube or wherever the video is from.

Even if you are using the Friendology videos, it is recommended you still refer to the [Teaching Notes](#) so that you can follow along step-by-step with suggested activities and questions. Real-life scenarios are presented throughout the program and can be easily adapted to suit the needs of your students. Again, these scenarios are fairly general to connect with children from all walks of life – make it real for your students by relating real examples you have witnessed in your classroom.

WHAT DOES THE COPYRIGHT MEAN?

Similar to other publications or programs, there are laws that protect the Intellectual Property (IP) of Friendology 101 and maintain the integrity of the curriculum. This means:

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations and non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Curriculum materials, teaching notes, concepts, language, and strategies are all part of this stand-alone curriculum and not permitted to be embedded into other programming. Teachers using Friendology 101 must be from a URSTRONG School with an active membership. Under no circumstances are resources allowed to be shared anyone outside of these parameters.

Follow the Teaching Notes (or the directions in the videos), discuss the concepts, & let your students do the rest. You'll be amazed at how interested they are & how many questions they'll have for you! Let your students guide the ship.





LAUNCHING A >>> WHOLE-SCHOOL FRIENDSHIP STRATEGY:

Research continues to support that whole-school wellbeing strategies are the most effective and impactful. URSTRONG Schools around the world have had great success, anchoring our friendship strategy in their school cultures. During our Friendology 101 Educator Training, we share examples and stories of the many creative ways our team of schools have brought Friendology 101 to life.

While it is highly recommended that you attend our [Friendology 101 Educator Training](#), here are just a few of the ways to introduce, implement, and embed our program at your school:

INTRODUCE: HOW DO I KICK IT OFF?

Getting the students, parents, and educators excited about Friendology 101 is an important consideration and a great way to introduce the whole-school friendship strategy.

Here are a few ways to introduce and kick-off Friendology 101 to set it up for success:

- Invite one of URSTRONG's Licensed Presenters to facilitate a **Language of Friendship parent-child workshop** either online or in-person. This allows the students, parents, and educators to get onboard right away, learn the lingo, and serves as a professional development opportunity for you! Watching one of our "Friendship Experts" teach the program will give you greater insight into the best way to approach the program, enhancing your teaching practices and getting you rolling.
- Introduce Friendology 101 at an assembly to the whole school. Get creative! You could get a group of teachers to role-play some of the common Friendship Fires® that are witnessed in the classroom and on the playground, letting the students know your school is here to help. Dress like ninjas and throw on a superhero cape – Friendship Ninjas to the rescue!
- Share one of URSTRONG's many videos or articles for parents in your school newsletter or on your school's social media channels. This is an easy way to introduce the program to the parents!
- Consider a weeklong Festival of Friendship or a Day of Friendship. Book in-school workshops with one of our "Friendship Experts", use lessons and activities from URSTRONG's resource library, and prepare fun activities and events for your community.
- Encourage the Principal or Headmaster send a letter to parents providing background on what Friendology is all about and how it aligns with the school's values and overall wellbeing programming.



IMPLEMENT:

WHERE DO I BEGIN?

We have a number of [Supporting Documents](#) in our online library of resources to help you devise your implementation plan. Every school is different, but on average it takes about 3 years for the students, teachers, and parents to become 'fluent' in our friendship language. As you map out your journey, it's critical to remember that this is a whole-school approach designed for kids, parents, and teachers.

- Most schools either assign a team to take on implementation or have a School Counsellor who's in charge; they decide on the implementation plan and lead the teachers. (If there isn't anyone guiding the ship, as you know, teachers will feel lost and ultimately take on a reactive approach to friendship issues – which is the opposite of what we're trying to achieve.)
- We have developed a number of **Scope & Sequence** documents, including an annual plan that details how to use the resources all year long. There are hundreds of activities, videos, and lesson plans to choose from, allowing you to continue revisiting the concepts and strengthening your students' friendship skills.
- Be creative and think of fun ways to foster that culture of kindness at your school.
- A few other considerations to ensure your school is ready to implement our whole-school friendship strategy include:
 - Where do your students go to Talk-it-Out?
 - How are you tracking Mean-on-Purpose behaviour?
Be sure to check out the [Mean-on-Purpose Tracker](#) in the [Supporting Documents](#) online.
 - What will you do with the data in the pre and post assessment surveys provided with Friendology 101?
 - How are you and your colleagues creating a friendly social climate and modelling the behaviour you want to see in your students?
 - Where do your students typically engage in unkind behaviour (e.g. bathrooms, hallways, overnight camps, field trips, school bus)? How can you inspire kindness and prevent Friendship Fires® in those 'hot spots'?



EMBED:

HOW DO I KEEP IT GOING?

Once you have taught Friendology, it is important to continue to reinforce the language and strategies all year long. A few ways to embed the friendship strategy include:

- URSTRONG Schools are allowed to display murals or other materials related to Friendology 101 (e.g. the Friend-o-Meter, classroom posters, etc) as long as URSTRONG is appropriately referenced and the integrity of the program and designs have been maintained. For questions or permission requests, please email info@urstrong.com.
- Supervision Lanyards with the **Friend-o-Meter** and **Friend-o-Cycle** are a great way to reinforce the language and strategies on the playground.
- Some URSTRONG Schools have had great success with student leaders on the playground supporting younger students. We've heard creative names like "**Friend-o-Leaders**" and "**Frambassadors**".
- Many URSTRONG Schools have a section of their newsletter that is devoted to Friendology, ensuring the parents are aligned and reinforcing the approach at home.
- Assemblies are a great place to reinforce our whole-school strategy, reminding students of the schools overarching philosophy and values. Our URSTRONG Schools have shared stories of students performing plays, songs, and all sorts of creative presentations at assemblies to reinforce lessons learned in Friendology.
- Events are a great way to reinforce a whole-school approach and review core concepts. Whether its Harmony Day, Pink Shirt Day, or a Mother's Day Breakfast, events are a perfect way to amplify the messages of friendship and connection.
- Weave Friendology into everything you do! If your students are going on camp, or your students are doing group work in science class, or you're teaching them about sportsmanship in advance of the swimming carnival, circle them back to their friendship skills. How can what they learned in Friendology help them? What skills can they draw on?

THE MORE YOU
CAN TIE THE
LANGUAGE AND
SKILLS INTO
EVERYTHING,
THE STRONGER
THE
'FOUNDATION OF
FRIENDSHIP'
BECOMES.





HOW DO I >>> STAY CONNECTED?

We want to ensure you are successful as you begin (and travel) this friendship journey with URSTRONG. Don't hesitate to reach out if you need some assistance mapping out your plan. A few ways to stay connected include:

- We often host free webinars and events for URSTRONG Schools around certain topics, spotlighting schools. This is a great way to stay on the pulse of what's happening, including updates to the curriculum, and get fresh ideas.
- Be sure to join our private Facebook Group specifically for educators at URSTRONG Schools. This is a place to share, collaborate, and ask questions. We are a team and we're all here to support you!
- You will receive our newsletter and the occasional email with updates. Be sure to review these, as they often have upcoming events or feature new resources you might be interested in.
- Follow our social media channels on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) to stay on top of the latest research and get ideas from other URSTRONG Schools.

WELCOME TO OUR TEAM OF
URSTRONG SCHOOLS!



OKAY, I'M READY TO GO! WHAT'S MY NEXT STEP?



You've reviewed the entire program and have a good handle on Friendology 101 and what it means to be a URSTRONG School. You've developed an implementation plan, launched in a fun way, and are ready to start teaching.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Here are a few items for your to-do list to prepare you for that very first session with your students:

- Ensure your students have completed the Pre-Assessment posted within Session 1 in the Materials section. Be sure to analyse the results and get a handle on the students' social-emotional competence coming in to Friendology 101. (Your students will complete the same assessment after the final session to demonstrate learning or help you identify areas that require reviewing.)
- Review the Instructions so you know what your teaching process looks like.
- Review the Materials list and gather anything you need, including copying enough handouts for the students.
- Test out the slideshow or video on your A/V equipment and make sure everything is working. If you're using the slideshows, be sure to test the links (internet required).
- Prepare your **Friendology Shoecase** as an example for your students.
- Where do you want your students to keep their work? You might want to gather enough Friendology folders for each student to help keep them organized.
- Decide how you're going to take questions. If you want to use a Q&A box, get that ready for day one!

By teaching Friendology 101, you will be giving your students the most special, precious gift of all...the foundation they need to develop healthy relationships for the rest of their lives.



YOU ARE AMAZING!
THANK YOU FOR
PRIORITIZING SOCIAL-
EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AT
YOUR SCHOOL. HAVE FUN
AND ENJOY THIS VERY
SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP
JOURNEY WITH YOUR
STUDENTS.

IMPROVING THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN THROUGH FRIENDSHIP SKILLS



If you talk to any teacher, they will tell you that there are “good years” and “bad years” in the classroom. Almost every time, the underlying factor that determines which way a year will go is entirely based on the social dynamics of a class. Certain classes are cohesive, harmonious and they just seem to click, while other classes are constantly full of drama. Social dynamics can make or break a year and have a huge impact on the wellbeing of students, parents, and teachers. This is where URSTRONG comes in and changes the social dynamics of, not only a class, but an entire school. Shifting a generation of children towards kindness and respect is part of the URSTRONG movement.

The URSTRONG programming enhances the social-emotional wellbeing of children through friendship skills. With sequential workshops for children, parents, and educators, an in-school curriculum and professional development for educators, and supplemental resources to support the ongoing integration of the URSTRONG curricula, children form a solid foundation of affective functioning, conflict-resolution, and interpersonal skills. The framework and methodology aligns with emerging wellbeing science and a strengths-based, proactive approach, giving children the skills to “flourish” and create a positive, harmonious learning environment.

The URSTRONG curriculum identifies a variety of learning outcomes, targeting both skills and attitudes, that ultimately equip and empower children to take control of themselves and their social world. With URSTRONG’s learning outcomes as the foundation, the peripheral benefits are enormous for the students, teachers, and parents. When children have the skills and confidence to create healthy relationships and advocate for themselves, there is an overall improvement in their wellbeing.

The URSTRONG programming has seen the following results:

- Children feel happier
- Children feel better about themselves
- Children feel empowered and more in control of their social lives
- Children feel more confident
- Children feel more comfortable talking to their parents and teachers about peers
- Children feel lighter and more focused
- Children perform better academically
- Children start to engage in more leadership roles
- Children transfer the skills in other relationships, making better decisions



With the growing awareness of mental health, educators and parents are starting to recognize that social-emotional learning (SEL) is essential in setting students up for success.

Daniel Goleman's wildly successful book released in 1995, *Emotional Intelligence – Why it Can Matter More than IQ*, brought to light the important work of psychologists who spent decades researching EI. The book outlined the preliminary evidence suggesting that SEL programs could change the culture of a school. As stated by Goleman himself in 2016, "Now the case can be made scientifically: helping children improve their self-awareness and confidence, manage their disturbing emotions and impulses, and increase their empathy pays off not just in improved behaviour but in measurable academic achievement." This form of 'emotion coaching', focusing on the development of a child's feelings and impulses, has proven itself and supports the need for URSTRONG.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), as defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), is: "the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions."

To improve student achievement and wellbeing, children must first learn to understand, navigate, and control how they respond both inwardly and outwardly to the world around them. Learning how to make sense of the rollercoaster of thoughts and feelings associated with being social beings is a critical first step in a child's emotional development.

CASEL has identified five competencies that, together, support "positive social behaviours and peer relationships, fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, and improved grades and test scores." URSTRONG targets each of the five SEL competencies, empowering students to develop healthier relationships, in the following ways:

SELF-AWARENESS: The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behaviour. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

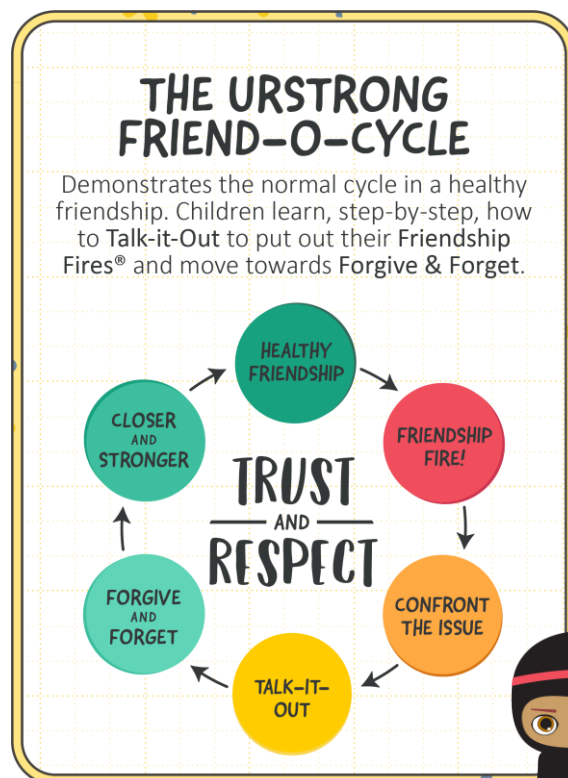
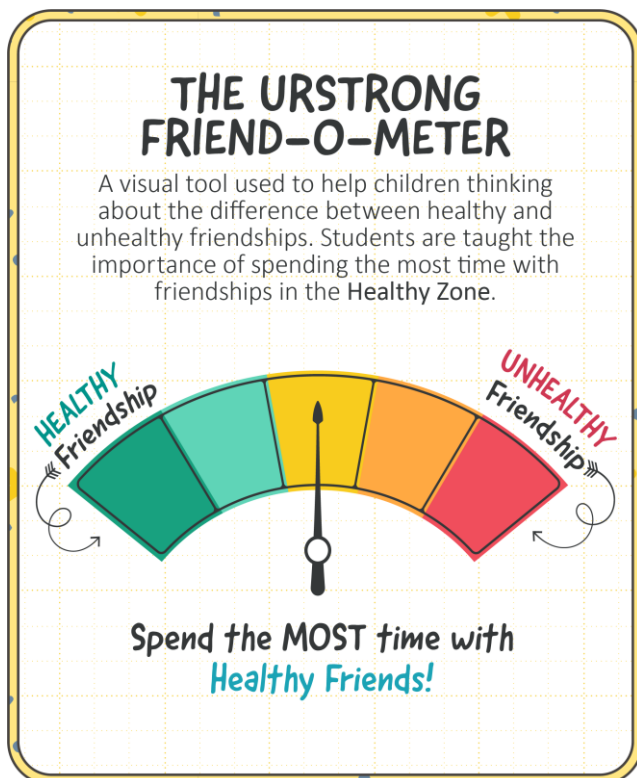


URSTRONG walks children through the process of recognizing their feelings as it relates to friendships. They learn to identify and name their emotions so they can move towards a respectful conversation to put out **Friendship Fires®**. Children learn about body language and the importance of non-verbal communication. Students also identify their own strengths and weaknesses as a friend and learn how to move towards forgiveness through respectful, honest conversations.

The program also teaches children the importance of self-compassion and self-love, respecting themselves enough to value and acknowledge how they feel and put a voice to those feelings.

SELF-MANAGEMENT: The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

URSTRONG gives children the skills and language to feel in control of their emotions within their social domain. Through scripts and role-play, children practise common scenarios that they experience with friends in the classroom, on the playground, and outside of school (e.g. birthday parties, playdates). They learn, step-by-step, how to move towards **Forgive & Forget** on the **Friend-o-Cycle** to keep their friendships in the healthy zone of the **Friend-o-Meter**.

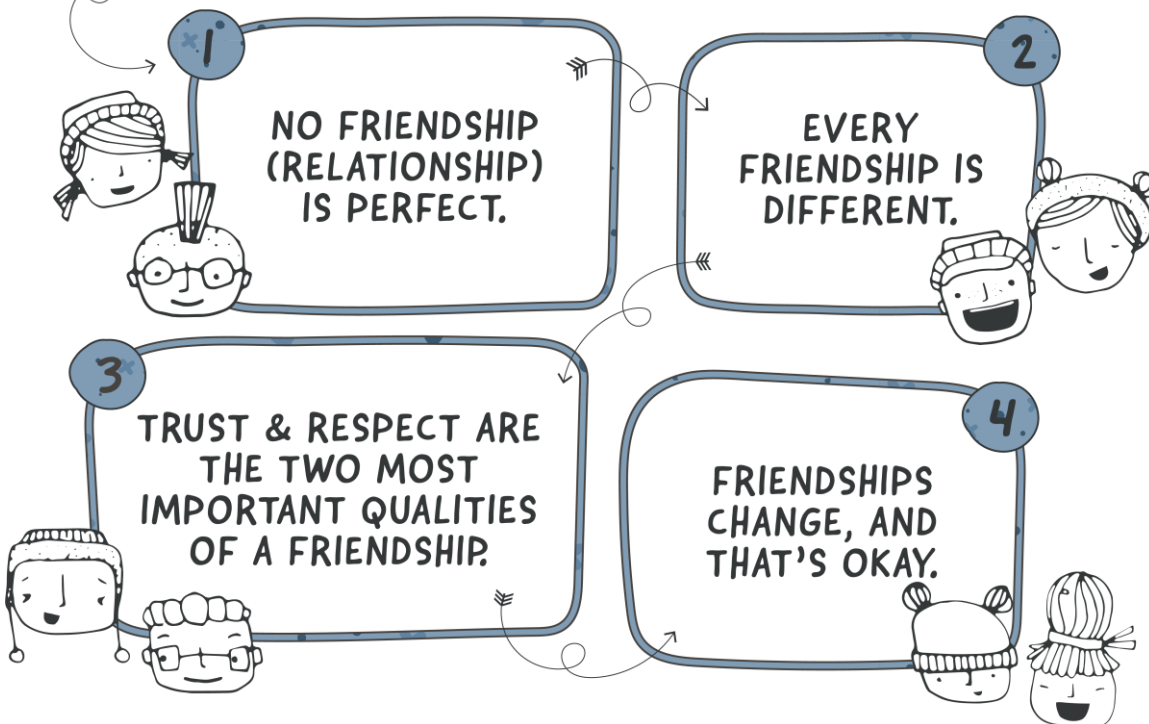




SOCIAL AWARENESS: The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

URSTRONG's **4 Friendship Facts** give children a foundation for friendship, developing their awareness around what is normal in a relationship. They learn that no friendship is perfect and conflict is a normal part of a relationship. Students learn that no two friendships are the same and are led to recognize what works and what does not work within each friendship. Children learn that trust and respect are the two most important qualities in a friendship. They learn what each of these qualities look like in a friendship, the importance of understanding our differences, and how to honour each person's unique perspective. Children also learn that friendships change because they change and this is a normal part of a relationship.

4 FRIENDSHIP FACTS!



A big part of the URSTRONG programming is teaching children how to resolve conflict by respectfully putting out Friendship Fires®. They learn to listen and truly try to understand their friend's perspective, strengthening their ability to empathize with others and understand that everyone is different.



RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

As a skills-based friendship program, the URSTRONG curriculum completely centres on teaching children how to create and maintain healthy relationships. They learn that relationships are a choice and that they can survive conflict. Through the steps to put out **Friendship Fires**®, they walk through the process of resolving conflict, keeping friendships healthy and transparent. Students learn how to be on both sides of that conversation, also practicing how to give and receive genuine apologies.



STEP ONE:
Retell the situation

STEP TWO:
Explain how it made you feel

STEP THREE:
have an open & honest conversation



WHEN SOMEONE IS MEAN-ON-PURPOSE, SAY YOUR QUICK COMEBACK IN A STRONG VOICE LIKE A NINJA!

A QUICK COMEBACK IS A SHORT STATEMENT SAID IN A STRONG VOICE THAT LET'S THE PERSON KNOW:

- YOU HEARD/SAW WHAT THEY SAID/DID
- YOU'RE NOT COOL WITH IT!

PLEASE TAKE **NOTE!**

THE TERM "BULLYING" IS PURPOSEFULLY NOT PART OF THE URSTRONG PROGRAMMING FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

1. The term is misused,
2. The term leads people to label children as "bullies" (which URSTRONG is strongly against), and
3. With URSTRONG's effective SEL programming, bullying is prevented.



With students in grades 3 to 6, we introduce the concept of **Mean-on-Purpose** and the word "bullying" is specifically avoided. "Bullying" is a confusing term for children, with lack of clarity around the meaning and misuse of the word. Instead, the URSTRONG programming classifies conflict into two categories: **Friendship Fires**® (normal conflict) and **Mean-on-Purpose** behaviour. Children learn how to put out **Friendship Fires**® and learn to use a **Quick Comeback** (short statement) when someone is **Mean-on-Purpose**. When someone is **Mean-on-Purpose**, students learn to say their **Quick Comeback**, walk away, and report the incident to an adult. They practise effective reporting and learn the difference between tattling and reporting.



RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING: The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

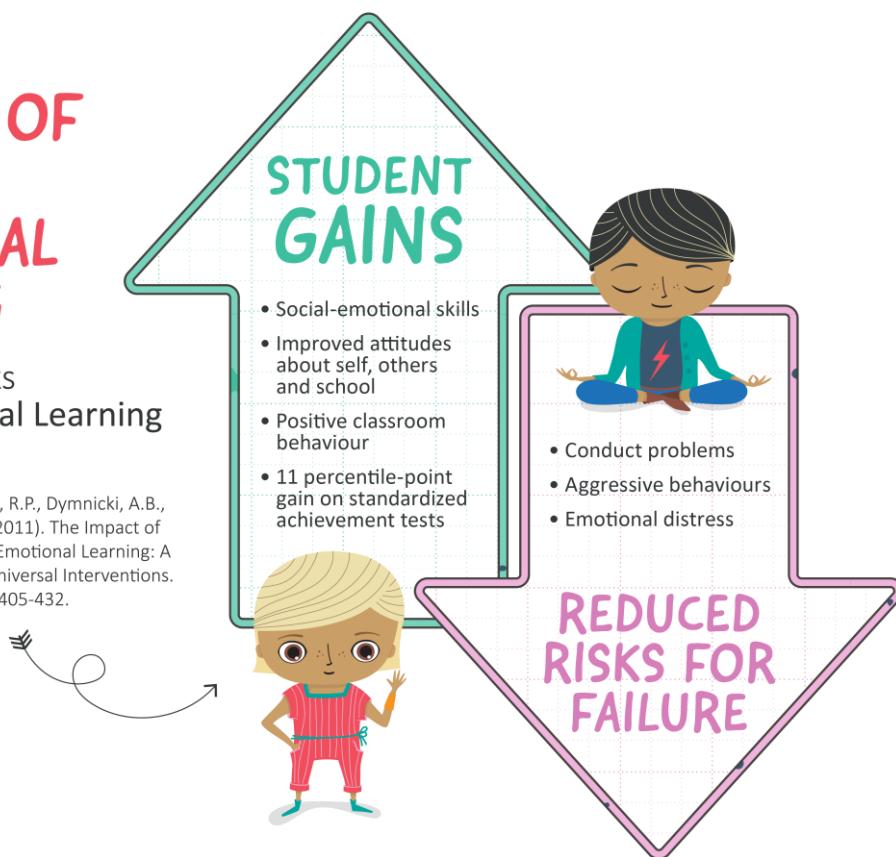
URSTRONG helps children to make wise decisions about how they spend their time. They are encouraged to spend the most time with friendships in the healthy zone on the Friend-o-Meter. They also learn strategies for improving a friendship and moving into the healthy zone, through responsible choices focused on what works with friends. Children learn the importance of standing up for themselves.



BENEFITS OF SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Good science links Social & Emotional Learning to the following:

SOURCE: Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., and Schellinger, K. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions. *Child Developments*, (82) 1, Pp. 405-432.



Giving children the skills, language, and self-confidence to be better friends and develop healthier relationships is at the core of the URSTRONG curriculum and the research linking social-emotional learning to positive wellbeing is extensive. In a 20-year study released in 2015 by researchers from Pennsylvania State University and Duke University (published in the *American Journal of Public Health*), **social skills are proven to be a greater indicator of future wellness over all other factors**. The children who had problems resolving conflicts, sharing, cooperating and listening as kindergartners were less likely to have finished high school and college, and were more likely to have substance abuse problems and run-ins with the law.



CASEL, WHO HAVE CONDUCTED COUNTLESS RESEARCH STUDIES, STATE THAT:

SEL can have a positive impact on school climate and promote a host of academic, social, and emotional benefits for students. Durlak, Weissberg et al.'s meta-analysis of 213 rigorous studies of SEL in schools indicates that students receiving quality SEL instruction demonstrated:

- **BETTER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:** achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL instruction;
- **IMPROVED ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS:** greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behaviour;
- **FEWER NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS:** decreased disruptive class behaviour, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals; and
- **REDUCED EMOTIONAL DISTRESS:** fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal.

URSTRONG & POSITIVE EDUCATION

Positive Education, the application of the science behind Positive Psychology, focuses on untapping the full potential of students and the explicit teaching of wellbeing. Positive schools create an environment that focuses on strength-based practice and teaches children to embrace a growth mindset. The Positive Psychology model moves beyond psychology's historic focus on dysfunction (i.e. weaknesses) to focus on function (i.e. strengths) – those qualities that cultivate happiness and fulfillment.

URSTRONG aligns with the Positive Education philosophy, using a positive approach to teaching prosocial skills. Rather than reacting to negative behaviour, the URSTRONG programming sets the foundation by teaching children the skills to create and maintain healthy relationships. URSTRONG goes beyond basic interpersonal skills (like sharing and fairness), helping children learn emotional literacy, self-regulation strategies, and wellbeing practises – all through the lens of friendship skills. URSTRONG digs deeper guiding children towards kindness, empathy, and resilience in relationships.



“Flourish”, a term described by Positive Psychologist, Martin Seligman, recognizes the factors that lead to authentic happiness and wellbeing. Flourishing is sometimes defined simply as, “Feeling good and doing good.” Within the growing field of Positive Psychology, Seligman’s wellbeing model is based on 5 measurable elements:

- Positive Emotion
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Meaning and Purpose
- Accomplishment

The five pillars of **PERMA**, put emphasis on the whole child. This holistic approach encompasses each facet of a child, from mental and emotional wellness to their physical health.

While the URSTRONG programming addresses each of the 5 pillars, the biggest alignment comes within, what is arguably the most important domain in the PERMA model: Relationships. Positive social connections, promoting social integration and social support, have been linked to positive health behaviours and positive emotional states like feelings of belonging and purpose (McGonigal 2007). There is also overwhelming evidence to support that children with healthy friendships:

- perform better academically,
- have higher self-esteem,
- develop a more positive body image,
- get involved in more leadership roles,
- and make smarter decisions in future relationships.

Relationships can offer a powerful positive influence on our overall health and happiness (Peterson 2006).

The role of **Positive Emotions** in **Positive Psychology** is to activate broader learning. Research shows positivity expands the mind’s capacity, making it more accessible and open to learning. In the URSTRONG programming, efforts are made to create a fun, inviting environment. Music is an integral part of the workshop delivery; songs that appeal to children are chosen. Workshops begin and end with music and dancing is encouraged at the end to put the ‘cherry on top’ of their experience. Humour and a light-hearted approach is central, helping to make learning fun. With younger children, teddy bears and toy characters from home are brought in to serve as a comfort and allow children an opportunity to role-play with toys they are personally connected to.



Engagement is achieved through URSTRONG's multisensory approach, targeting all learning styles. Dr. Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences suggests that "students learn in ways that are identifiably distinctive. The broad spectrum of students - and perhaps the society as a whole - would be better served if disciplines could be presented in a numbers of ways and learning could be assessed through a variety of means." Efforts are made to integrate the various learning styles, engaging students in diverse ways, to teach children the URSTRONG principles, language, and skills.

While **Meaning** can be expressed in different forms, the URSTRONG programming allows children to personally identify with the concepts, connecting it to their own lives. The scenarios and examples are common experiences for children and provide them with context that makes the information real and meaningful, applicable to their day-to-day interactions. The programming also integrates the educators and parents, embedding it in a more holistic, cultural way in the world around them.

The feeling of **Achievement** comes from setting and meeting goals. Children are encouraged in URSTRONG to push themselves to be the best version of who they are and are given step-by-step instruction around how to improve their friendships. Within the Friendology 101 curriculum, students are given weekly projects – personal and social experiments that encourage them to accomplish a task with positive results (e.g. invite a new friend for a playdate, interview their parents, spend one lunch recess alone, write in a gratitude journal every night). Children leave lessons feeling lighter and more in control, knowing exactly what to do the next time they encounter conflict with a friend.

The Journal of Positive Psychology published a report titled, *A Multidimensional Approach to Measuring Well-being in Students*, detailing the research supporting the importance of adopting a Positive Education approach. It states, "Positive education provides an antidote to youth depression, serves as a pathway to increased life satisfaction, promotes learning and creativity, enhances social cohesion, and promotes civic citizenship. Positive education introduces and normalizes self-inquiry and self-management of one's mental health from a young age, which may lead to long-term benefits as youth move into adulthood with greater self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Further, the positive psychological characteristics developed through positive education have been linked to academic achievement, fewer risky behaviours, and better physical health in adulthood."

Social-emotional learning can be taught, is essential in contributing to a child's success, and needs to be a daily practise. When the entire teaching team (parents and teachers) are working together to provide children with common language, strategies, and expectations, true potential is unlocked and children flourish.

URSTRONG

