



## FRIENDSHIPS: BUILDING A GOOD LIFE

### Our Mission

The mission of the PEAL Center is to educate and empower families to ensure that children, youth and young adults with disabilities and special health care needs lead rich, active lives as full members of their schools and communities.



## The Friendship Toolkit



Entire Toolkit and Tip Sheets can be downloaded at:  
[www.pealcenter.org/inclusion](http://www.pealcenter.org/inclusion)

## Participants will:

1. Review the **principles and philosophy** regarding the importance of friendship development for people with disabilities
2. Identify possible **barriers** to friendship development
3. Review and discuss the 3 **Guiding Principles** used in the development of the book
4. Review strategies for **active friendship facilitation** relevant to their role
5. Generate additional strategies across the 6 Elements of friendship development

## Who is your best friend?

- How did you meet?
- What do you do together?
- Would you describe yourself as the same or different?
- How do you maintain your friendship?
- Are there any barriers to spending time together?

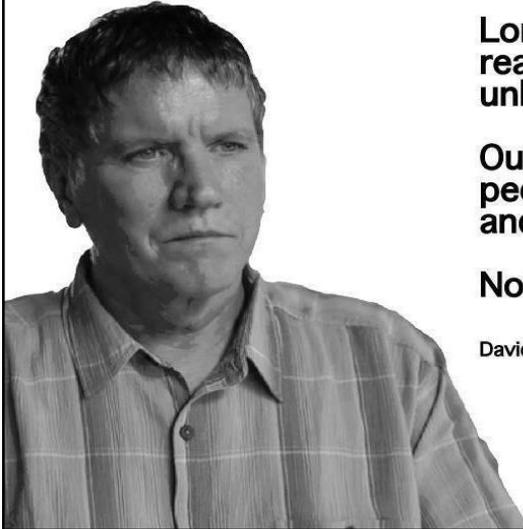


## Foundations to Relationships

- Al Condoluci-Social Capital
  - Communalilty, Difference, Regularity
- Robert Waldinger- “The good life is built with good relationships.”
  - Lessons from the longest study on happiness, TED Talk, December 2015
- Daniel Gottlieb-Letters to Sam
  - “I wanted him to be fully loved and to savor every sensation that love elicits.”



## Our Work



**Loneliness is the central reason why so many are unhappy and distraught.**

**Our work is to help people find meaningful and enduring relationships.**

**Nothing is more important.**

David Pitonyak

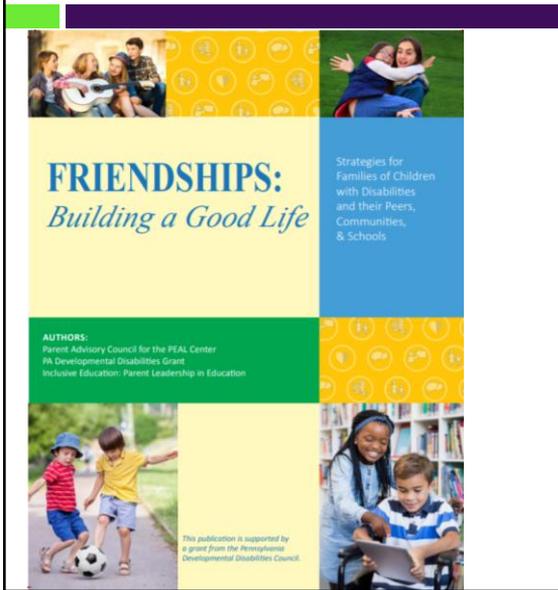
[openfuturelearning.org](http://openfuturelearning.org)

## Why this resource?

- Why this topic?
- Why is this important?
- Who is this important to?
- Who can benefit from friendship development?



# What's in there?



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# Our Intended Audience



**Parents** including Parent Teacher organizations, family groups, play groups, disability support groups



**Siblings** regardless of age



**Peers** including those in the neighborhood, in school, in clubs and at events



**Teachers & Support Personnel** including anyone who interacts with the child in the schools or other settings



**Communities & Society** including faith-based groups, community centers, scout troops, libraries, etc.



**Teens & Young Adults** including self-advocates and young people with disabilities and special health care needs

## 6 Elements

- Shared Activities
- Shared Interests
- Valued Roles for All
- Share Information with Each Other
- Just Enough Support from Adults
- Reflection



## Shared Activities



Same activities, Same time,  
Same place

→ **What is the parents' role in supporting these activities?**

## Shared Interests



Things in common to share and enjoy with others

→ **How can I engage my sibling in a shared interest?**



## Valued Roles for All



Valuing and respecting the contributions of everyone

→ You can create systemic change within the school culture by your actions.

→ **How can peers naturally support others?**

## Share Information with Each Other



Schools must create a culture where all are welcome.

→ **As a teacher, how do you become knowledgeable, so that you can support all students?**



## Just Enough Support from Adults



Create opportunities for all people within the community to come together

→ Resist the temptation to create “special activities” for “special people.”

→ **How can we . . . ?**



# Reflection



Friendships don't just happen— they take time and effort!

- Everyone has a role to play in the development of Friendships
- Friendships are important to all
- Everyone benefits when we support friendship development for kids with disabilities

→ **What is your role?**

# Strategies Tip Sheets

## tips for parents



Friendships:  
Building a Good Life



## tips for

communities  
&  
society



Friendships:  
Building a Good Life



## tips for siblings



Friendships:  
Building a Good Life



## tips for

teachers &  
support  
personnel



Friendships:  
Building a Good Life



## tips for peers



Friendships:  
Building a Good Life



## tips for

teens &  
young adults



FRIENDSHIPS:  
Building a  
Good Life





Unless someone like you  
cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get better.  
It's not.  
*The Lorax, Dr. Seuss*

What can you do to make it better?  
Tomorrow, next week, this month?

## Thank You!



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Serving families across PA  
with offices in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia