



## **FUN FRIENDS PROGRAM:**

**A play-based program for building resilience in kindergarten and grade one children.**

- ➔ **The Fun FRIENDS program focuses on increasing social-emotional skills, coping skills, and resilience to prevent the onset of emotional and behavioural problems in later life.** Children, parents, and teachers are taught the intervention skills with the aim of promoting wellness and providing children and families with the skills needed to conquer challenges and adversity.
- ➔ The Fun FRIENDS program is based on this conception – that the *majority* of children will feel pressure at some stage in their life and it is important to provide these children, **early on in life**, with the effective coping and resiliency skills needed to “bounce back” in those situations (e.g. teaching children how to be brave, problem solving, positive thinking, relaxation, self-soothing skills).
- ➔ The program is to be **delivered in the classroom over 12 weeks to all students** (once a week, or two shorter sessions). Each of the 12 sessions is broken down into several learning activities so that the program objectives are reinforced through experiential, play-based activities such as the use of play, dramatic role-play, puppets, games, story telling, music, movement and art.



## The Fun FRIENDS program teaches children and families the following skills:

- ✓ Smiling and looking people in the eye
- ✓ Speaking with a confident voice
- ✓ Talking about feelings and also understanding other people's feelings (development of empathy)
- ✓ Helping other people - peers, family and teachers
- ✓ Body clues
- ✓ How to relax
- ✓ Making friends
- ✓ Being brave and happy
- ✓ Trying new things - making step plans 'Red' and 'Green' thoughts, and other essential life skills

### The Acronym for Fun FRIENDS used in activity books and manuals

**F**eelings (talk about your feelings and care about other's feelings)

**R**elax (do "milkshake" breathing, have some quiet time)

**I** can try! (we can all try our best)

**E**ncourage (step-by-step plans)

**N**urture (quality time together doing fun activities)

**D**on't forget - be brave! (practise skills everyday with friends /family)

**S**tay happy

**FRIENDS....Skills for Life!!**