



## What is FRIENDS?

Developed in Australia, FRIENDS is a **classroom-based, teacher-friendly** program with proven results in **reducing anxiety** and **building resiliency in children**. FRIENDS was first introduced in B.C. schools in 2004 in support of the *Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for British Columbia*.

## Who is it for?

The program is delivered **universally** to **students in grades K-1, 4-5 and 6-7** by teachers and educators in the BC school system. There is an early years version for K-1, a child program for grade 4-5, and a youth program for grade 6-7 students. *The child program is also available in French.*

## What is it all about?

FRIENDS **strengthens resiliency** and teaches **coping strategies** to reduce anxiety, while building self-esteem. The program addresses **provincial educational learning outcomes** in the **Health & Career Education K-7 curriculum** and the child and youth programs are approved by the **Ministry of Education** as a recommended learning resource. Many teachers using FRIENDS also incorporate the activities into **other curricula** such as English/Language Arts, PE, Art, Math and much more.

## How does it work?

**Teachers attend a 1-day training** which makes them eligible to receive the program materials (leaders' manual, student workbooks, additional program resources) and deliver the program in their respective classrooms. Children and youth participate in 10+ classroom-based sessions that are reinforced by take-home activities.

## How can parents get involved?

**There is a parent component included** - the F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids Mental Health coordinates and leads the FRIENDS parent program in B.C. Workshops and on-line resources are available. For more information, go to the BC FRIENDS Parent Program website.

## Where is FRIENDS being delivered?

FRIENDS has been delivered in all school districts, including many independent schools and First Nations schools throughout B.C.

## To find out more information about FRIENDS ...

- **FRIENDS website:** [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental\\_health/friends.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/friends.htm)
- **Email FRIENDS** at: [MCF.CYMHFRIENDS@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MCF.CYMHFRIENDS@gov.bc.ca)
- **BC FRIENDS Parent Program website:** [www.friendsparentprogram.com](http://www.friendsparentprogram.com)