

Finding Help in the Community

Through Start Smart Stay Safe (S4), your child is learning about trusted relationships in order to be able to identify people to go to for help while at home, at school, or in the community.

Trusted Adults

Children should be aware of supportive adults in the community who they know are safe and who they can go to for help. These are adults who can provide support, guide choices, and help in unsafe or uncomfortable situations. These may be family members, teachers, police officers, or other safe members of the community.

Identifying adults in the community who can be approached in times of uncertainty builds a network of support for children and families. Having a mentor whose beliefs and values can be used as a reference or filter offers an effective strategy for examining and establishing appropriate boundaries.

When talking to your child about trusted adults, these are some questions that you might discuss:

- What does it mean to trust someone?
- How do you know who to trust?
- How does it feel when you trust someone?
- What can you do when you feel uncomfortable with someone?



Trusted Friends

It is important to identify people in our lives that provide us with a sense of belonging and friendship, and who we can trust to support us in making healthy choices. They stand behind us when we have to make hard decisions. These friends also help us feel that we matter and that we are loved.

Having a network of trusted friends (their 'Help') is a critical component of resilience. Identifying who the trusted friends are in a child's life can reduce stress by providing emotional support and resources.

When talking to your child about trusted friends, these are some questions that you might discuss:

- What is a friend?
- How do friends treat each other?
- How do you know if you can trust a friend?
- How does it feel when you have a trusted friend?
- What is the difference between a friend and a trusted friend?



'Universal Truths of Friendship'

When talking to your child about trusted relationships, you can talk about the "Universal Truths of Friendship". These truths state that trusted friends:

- Trust each other
- Listen and care for each other
- Stand up for each other
- Respect each other
- Spend time having fun together
- Can be themselves with each other

It is important that children understand that to have a trusted friend they must also **BE** a trusted friend!

Identifying Trusted Friends and Adults

Discuss with your child who might be trusted people in the following areas of his or her life:

- At school
- In the neighbourhood
- Different groups your family belongs to (teams, clubs, religious organizations, community groups etc.)

Make a list of the people you have identified and create a plan for how your child can reach those supports when needed.

	Trusted Friends	Trusted Adults
School		
In the Neighbourhood		
Other Groups/Teams		