Group at a glance

Eight weekly sessions that build on each other

Week	Session	Goal	Date planned
1	**What makes a good friend?**	Students meet the group, build agreements and name the qualities that make a friendship healthy and worth keeping.	
2	**Green flags and red flags**	Students tell the difference between healthy, rocky and unhealthy friendship behaviors and decide what to do about them.	
3	**Group chats and online drama**	Students learn how texts get misread, how drama spreads online and what to do before they post, reply or screenshot.	
4	**Speak up with I statements**	Students compare passive, aggressive and assertive communication and practice I statements for real middle school situations.	
5	**Work it out: five conflict steps**	Students learn five steps to resolve a conflict and tell the difference between a conflict and bullying.	
6	**Repair and apology**	Students learn the parts of a sincere apology, how to repair trust and how to accept an apology or set a boundary.	
7	**Left out and pressured**	Students build a plan for handling exclusion and peer pressure without losing themselves.	
8	**Upstander and my support map**	Students learn safe upstander actions, map their trusted adults, reflect on their growth and celebrate.	

Group members

Day, time and place

Session flow

Opener 5 min, teach 10 min, practice 15 to 20 min, wrap up 5 min.

Check in every week

Start each session with a quick friendship weather report: sunny, cloudy or stormy.

Keep it real, keep it private

Use real situations students bring, but no names of peers outside the group.

Session 1: What makes a good friend?

Lesson plan for the group leader

Goal

Students meet the group, build agreements and name the qualities that make a friendship healthy and worth keeping.

Materials

Group agreements page, pre group check, sticky notes in two colors, markers

Opener 5 min	Find someone who: students get a short list (has a pet, plays a sport, likes the same show) and find a group member for each item, then share one thing they had in common.
Teach 10 min	Explain the group: a place to practice the skills that make friendships stronger and conflicts smaller. Teach that friendships change a lot in middle school. New classes, teams, phones and growing interests mean friend groups shift, and that is normal. Healthy friendships have a few things in common: trust, respect, kindness, honesty, loyalty, fun and the freedom to be yourself. Separate must haves (trust, respect) from nice to haves (same music, same lunch table). Build agreements together (listen, respect, keep it private unless someone is unsafe, no names of students outside the group, it is okay to pass, phones away).
Practice 15 min	Friendship qualities sort: students write qualities they want in a friend on sticky notes, then sort them as a group into must haves and nice to haves. On the student page they choose their top five must haves.
Wrap up 5 min	Each student signs the agreements and shares one quality they bring to a friendship. Complete the pre group check.
Take home	Notice one moment this week when a friend showed one of your must haves.

What I noticed (skills, needs, who to praise)

Follow up or adjustments for next week

Session 1: What makes a good friend?

Know what you want in a friendship, and what you bring to one

My name _____ Grade _____

Ideas: trust · respect · kindness · honesty · loyalty · fun · good listener · keeps secrets · same interests · makes me laugh · lets me be myself

My must haves in a friend (top five)

Nice to haves (great, but not deal breakers)

Qualities I bring to a friendship

One friendship skill I want to get better at

Friend groups change a lot in middle school.
That is normal, and it is not a sign that something is wrong with you.

My friendship weather report today

Circle one: Sunny Partly cloudy Cloudy Stormy

Why I picked that

L&T

Lotus & Tulip

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Middle School Friendship Small Group Curriculum

Printable PDF, 25 pages: 8 sessions, each with a one page lesson plan and a matching student page, plus a family permission letter, group agreements and a pre and post skills check

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