Welcome to the Best Friends Foundation Seminar

Since 1987 the Best Friends model has been implemented in over 150 schools in Washington, DC and across the nation. Our staff takes great pride in the fact that research on the Best Friends/Best Men program has demonstrated significant reduction in risk behavior and increased positive peer relationships. However, we are alarmed at the recent resurgence in sexual activity, drug use, and relationship violence among pre-teens and teens. A recent front page article in the Washington Post stated that sexual violence is now occurring at an increased rate in the lower grades. In response to the current issue of adolescent violence and abusive behavior, the Best Friends Foundation has developed the Violence and Substance Abuse Prevention Seminar: Stop the Silence, Prevent the Violence. For the younger elementary students, the Foundation has developed a musical seminar Kindness is Cooler.

The Best Friends Foundation was a recipient of the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Healthy Marriage/Healthy Relationships grant for middle and high school students. An important component of the grant is the focus on teen violence and abuse in intimate relationships. We have expanded our program to offer our HHS approved curriculum and Violence and Abuse Prevention Protocol to more students and teachers in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. This year as a response to requests from guidance counselors and after school coordinators we have developed a bullying prevention program for the elementary schools with a focus on second to fifth grade. The Kindness is Cooler Program is designed to be entertaining and instructive on the importance of consideration for others in your home, school, and community.

It is estimated that almost 30% of youth in the United States are involved in bullying and abuse as either a perpetrator or a target. In addition, one out of every ten high school students has been a victim of relationship violence. Adolescents involved in violence and abuse tend to get in trouble more often and do more poorly in school than youth who do not experience such behavior. They are also more likely to fight, drink, use drugs, and smoke than their peers.

The Best Friends seminar for elementary students includes a new play and music “It’s Not Cool To Be Mean.” This seminar is designed for large numbers of student participation in singing and dancing with the positive message in our theme song Make Music Not Madness. Our goal is to promote among our children “music” activities which enrich, inspire, and uplift instead of “madness” activities which degrade, depress, and lead to danger.

If you have any questions regarding the Best Friends Foundation seminar and your students’ participation, please contact me at 202-394-4501/ebennett@bestfriendsfoundation.org or Jossy Huffstetler at bffseminar@gmail.com for more information.

With best wishes for the best future for our youth,

Elayne Bennett
President and Founder

Best Friends Foundation

Best Friends, Best Men, Diamond Girl Leadership, and Best Men Leadership Programs

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1. Does anyone remember the dog’s name?

2. What acts of kindness did Connor and Raquelita do for Puddles?

3. What kind thing did Raquelita do for Abuelo and Abuelita?

4. Does anyone know what Connor did for his dad?

5. Who carried clean laundry upstairs?

6. What was David’s one nice kindness?

7. What were some of things the rest of the class did when they realized they wanted to do acts of kindness?
When answering the Express Lane questions, check as many answers that you think are correct.

1. What is a friend?
   A friend is someone:
   - You can depend on no matter what the situation.
   - You like and respect.
   - Who will let you do whatever you want, even if it is wrong.
   - You can confide in.

2. What are the traits that you look for in a friend?

3. How would you help your best friend make a good decision?
   - Be truthful about the situation.
   - Share your feelings about the situation.
   - Explain the negative consequences.
   - Don’t say anything.

4. Should you tell your friends when you think they are doing something wrong?

VIDEO: KINDNESS IS COOLER, MRS. RULER

8. What did Connor do that showed that “kindness is cooler?”

9. Because Connor shared with David what did David decide to do?

10. Remember David couldn’t think of anything kind to do? What did he do at the end that nobody else really wanted to do?

11. What did Mrs. Ruler say about David’s act of kindness?

12. How many acts of kindness did the class do?
“It’s Not Cool To Be Mean”

Don’t Be A bully
Don’t be a bully
(Don’t do it!)
Don’t be a bully
(Don’t do it!)
Don’t be a bully
(Don’t do it!)
Don’t be a bully
(Don’t do it!)
Don’t be a bully
(Don’t do it!)

(Chorus:)
It’s not cool to be mean
If you know what I mean (2x)
No intimidation
No domination
Stop the violence across the nation

Friends it’s very simple
We gotta follow - this principle of life
Do to others what you’d like done to you
Choose the right path and don’t ya dare cause strife

It’s not cool to be mean
If you know what I mean (2x)
No intimidation
No domination
Stop the violence across the nation

Stop the madness with the words you say
When you Snap, Tweet, or IG
Learn to love and be kind to others
Let’s take a stand all across the land

It’s not cool to be mean
If you know what I mean (2x)
No intimidation
No domination
Stop the violence across the nation

We all - have a responsibility
To protect the ones who are bullied everyday.
Tell a teacher, or responsible adult
Or be the one to tell the bully, “STOP!”

It’s not cool to be mean
If you know what I mean (2x)
No intimidation
No domination
Stop the violence across the nation

Written by: Lori Williams
Music by: Glenn Douglas
Concept by: Elayne Bennett
“Better As One” (People)

We are the people
It doesn’t matter what comes our way
We got to fight to see another day
We will get through it
We are the people
We got to have faith in what we do
No matter what we got to stay true to who we are
Cause we’re better as one
Cause we’re better as one

It’s not about gain or for profit
It’s about giving a simple helping hand, hand
You got to fight for the cost
To regain everything we lost
So don’t you miss out on your chance
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh

We are the people
It doesn’t matter what comes our way
We got to fight to see another day
We will get through it
We are the people
We got to have faith in what we do
No matter what we got to stay true to who we are
Cause we’re better as one
Cause we’re better as one

We the people
We got to be strong
We got to be brave
And we got to stand tall
We got to love one another
Trust one another
We got to forgive and forget
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh

We are the people
It doesn’t matter what comes our way
We got to fight to see another day
We will get through it
We are the people
We got to have faith in what we do
No matter what we got to stay true to who we are
Cause we’re better as one
Cause we’re better as one

We got to do our part to help out our nation
It does not matter if your black or white, Chinese,
Hispanic or Haitian

We are the people
It doesn’t matter what comes our way
We got to fight to see another day
We will get through it
We are the people
We got to have faith in what we do
No matter what we got to stay true to who we are
Cause we’re better as one
Cause we’re better as one

Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh

Written by Eli White
9th Grader DCPS
Best Friends Want You to Know

- The **best friend** to have is the one who makes you a **better person**.

- **No** one **deserves** to be picked on or **bullied**.

- Kindness is cooler... It is **not cool** to be **mean**.

- Take a **stand against bullying**.

- Bullies win **when** good kids **do nothing**.

- Telling is **not** tattling. If you see something that scares or worries you, **say something** to someone in authority (parents, teachers, guidance counselors, social workers).

- You should **not be afraid** of your **friends**.

- **Remember**, what you send in a **text lasts forever**.

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**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

**800-799SAFE (7233)**
When answering the *Express Lane* questions, check as many answers that you think are correct.

1. **What is a friend?**

   A friend is someone:
   - You can depend on no matter what the situation.
   - You like and respect.
   - Who will let you do whatever you want, even if it is wrong.
   - You can confide in.

2. **What are the traits that you look for in a friend?**

3. **How would you help your best friend make a good decision?**

   How would you help a friend make a good decision?
   - Be truthful about the situation.
   - Share your feelings about the situation.
   - Explain the negative consequences.
   - Don’t say anything.

4. **Should you tell your friends when you think they are doing something wrong?**
5. How can you tell a friend that you think he or she is doing something wrong?

- I don’t want you to hurt yourself.
- I like you and I can’t let you break the law.
- I don’t care what you do, it is your life.
- Let’s go to the movie or to the park and have some fun.

6. What can you say to a friend who tries to get you to do something you know is wrong, i.e. hurt an animal, hurt another student, or post a mean or nasty picture?

7. What are some things friends should NOT do for each other?

- Friends do not turn their backs on each other.
- Friends stand by each other during difficult times.
- Friends will encourage you to seek help from a trusted adult.
- They don’t care what you do.

8. How do friends support each other?

9. What are some pressure situations in which you must tell a friend NO?
10. How do you say NO to your friends and mean it?

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**Best Friends and Best Men Know The Facts**

Bullying is being mean to another kid over and over again. Bullying often includes:

- Teasing
- Talking about hurting someone…making threats to hurt them.
- Spreading rumors
- Letting a kid know that he/she was left out on purpose
- Attacking someone by hitting them or yelling at them

Bullying does not always happen in person. Cyberbullying is a type of bullying that happens online or through text messages or emails. It includes posting rumors on sites like Facebook, sharing embarrassing pictures or videos, and making fake profiles or websites.

Bullying can affect you in many ways. You may lose sleep or want to skip school. If you feel helpless or hopeless, call LIFELINE at: 1-800-237-TALK (8255)

My Shield of Self-Respect

Decorate the three areas of shield to express your self-respect.
The group activity provides the opportunity for each student to say something positive and good about every other student in the group.

- The students get to know each other better.
- The activity helps build respect for fellow students.

**Instructions for the Discussion Leader**

**Step One**
Open the exercise by explaining that part of a good self-image is being aware of the impression you make on others and the things others like about you.

**Step Two**
Divide the group into smaller groups of no more than 10. Each small group should form a circle and have an adult leader who helps move the exercise along and reinforces the comments made by the students.

**Step Three**
Within each group, select a student to begin. Go around the circle asking each student to say something positive about each student in the group. As the remarks are made, encourage the student to write them down under #1 “What’s good about me.” Students may want to help each other spell some of the words. Each student must say something positive about every other student.

Discourage students from repeating what others have said or commenting about hair or clothes. Encourage comments about character traits, personality and abilities.

Then go to the next student for the others to say good things about them. Repeat the exercise until every student in the group has commented on all the other students and written the good things about him or herself.

**Step Four**
Ask each student to read aloud what was said about them.
1. What's good about me?
Students are to list the things the other students say about them.

2. Did you learn anything about yourself that surprised you?
The students should answer question numbers 2 – 8 alone.

3. How do the people I respect make an impression on me?

4. What are the traits of a person I would like for a best friend?

5. How do I feel when people talk about me? How do I feel when people say negative things about me? When people say good things about me, do I believe them?

6. How can I be a better friend?

7. How can I be a better person?

8. How can I be a better student?
Traits of a Leader

**leader**: n. one who guides or is in command; one in a position of influence or importance; a role model.

✧ A Leader is honest and fair.
✧ A Leader listens and asks questions.
✧ A Leader develops a plan.
✧ A Leader has courage.
✧ A Leader has vision for the future and sets long-term goals.
✧ A Leader sets objectives and follows them through to completion.
✧ A Leader can be assertive when needed.
✧ A Leader treats others with respect and dignity.
✧ A leader admits to his or her mistakes and takes responsibility for his or her actions.
✧ A Leader hears a problem and creates a solution.
✧ A Leader has integrity and can be trusted.
✧ A Leader inspires and motivates others to take action in pursuit of the common good.
✧ A Leader has self-control.
✧ A Leader stands up for what is right.
Profile of Me

Name ____________________________________________

Grade ________ Age ________ Date ____________________

School ____________________________________________

1. My favorite food/snack is ___________________________

2. I like to _________________________________________

3. What I like best at school __________________________

4. My favorite place to go is __________________________

5. The name of my best friend is ______________________

    Why I like him/her ________________________________

    What I like most about him/her ______________________

6. What my mom/dad or guardian does that I like the most

    ________________________________________________

7. Who I would most like to be _________________________

8. What I wish people knew about me ___________________

9. My goal is to _____________________________________

10. If I could do anything in the world, I would ___________

11. Draw a picture,
Boys Town National Hotline
800-448-3000
Counselors answer questions and provide short-term crisis intervention and make referrals to crisis prevention centers in most cities for both adults and children.

Child Help U.S.A. National Child Abuse Hotline
800-4-A-CHILD
Stay on the line to talk with a professional crisis counselor who is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Covenant House Hotline
202-610-9600
A direct 24-hour crisis hotline for runaways providing counseling and assistance.

Teen Dating Abuse Hotline
866-331-9474
24/7 number to call for help with dating violence and abuse.

National Domestic Violence Hotline
800-799-SAFE (7233)
A referral service for battered women’s shelters, support groups, counseling agencies, and legal consultants.

Alcohol Use and Abuse
800-ALCOHOL
Provides information and referrals regarding alcohol use and abuse.

Feeling helpless or hopeless? Call LIFELINE
800-273-TALK (8255)
Call goes to the nearest crisis center in our national network. These centers provide 24-hour crisis counseling and mental health referrals.

National Runaway Switchboard
800-786-2929
Confidential hotline for runaways and families – provides crisis intervention, gives area shelter listing for runaways, also serves as a resource for other agencies which can help in reuniting runaways with their families.

National Drug Helpline
1-800-662-HELP (4357)
Provides names and telephone numbers of treatment facilities for those dependent on drugs. Available 24 hours a day.

National STD Hotline
800-227-8922
A service of the National Centers for Disease Control which provides information and answers about transmission and symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases. Provides referral telephone numbers for clinics where you can be tested for STDs.

LIFELINE at
1-800-237-TALK (8255)
24/7 number to call to help to report bullying or need to speak someone if you are feeling alone or helpless.
Best Friends Theme Song

1st Verse
As You Walk This Road
You Will Feel The Load
Of Responsibility Beyond Your Years
Keep Your Wits In Tow
’Cause Inside You Know
What To Do To Keep Your Dreams Alive

Chorus
Don’t Give In To Wisdom From The Crowd
When They Pull You Down, Just Listen To…

Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends,
Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends

2nd Verse
Don’t You Believe That Lie
"Being Cool is Getting High"
You’ve Got Your Life Ahead of You
Cool Starts With Self-Respect
No One Can Give You That
Listen To The Voice That Says “Do What Is Right”

Chorus
Don’t Give In To Wisdom From The Crowd
When They Pull You Down, Just Listen To…

Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends,
Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends

3rd Verse
You’re Only A Kid One Time
Make It A Special Time
Save Your Growing Up For The Life Ahead Of You
Reach Out To A Friend
You Won’t Be Alone, And Then
With Your Friends You’ll Walk That Road With Pride

Chorus
Don’t Give In To Wisdom From The Crowd
When They Pull You Down, Just Listen To…

Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends,
Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends, Best Friends
Lead:  Best Men
All:   Best Men
Lead:  Best Men
All:   Best Men
Lead:  We are Best Men
All:   We are Best Men
Lead:  Best Men
All:   Best Men

All:   Striving to be the Best Men we can be
       Honoring the shield of manhood
       The coat of arms to protect our souls
       We’re leaders...YES!
       We are Best Men!
       We are Best Men!

       The gavel (stomp) – truth and justice
       The eagle – foresight for the future
       The lion (roar) – strength and courage
       The anchor – we’re taking a stand!

Lead:  Best Men
All:   Best Men
Lead:  Best Men
All:   Best Men
Lead:  We are Best Men
All:   We are Best Men
Lead:  Best Men
All:   Best Men

All:   The gavel (stomp) – truth and justice
       The eagle – foresight for the future
       The lion – strength and courage
       The anchor – we’re taking a stand!

We are Best Men!
We are Best Men!
"Don't Mess With Me"

Don't mess with me, *(no, no, no, nooo)*  
Don't mess with me,  
Don't mess with me/*(say it one more time)*  
Don't mess with me

*I won't* let you put tears in my eyes,  
*I won't* take it... anymore,  
*You* just stop and... apologize,  
*You've done this to me before*

Hear what I say-ay Just, keep away-ay-ay,  
uh-uh-huh!

Don't mess with me, *(no, no, no, nooo)*  
Don't mess with me, Just leave me alone/  
Don't bully me, Get a life of your own,  
Don't bully me

Now there's *something* I know, I know where to go,  
*I'll tell* them all about you,  
And *when* I do, they'll come after you...  
The *bully* is gonna be through!

Hear what I say-ay  
Just keep away-ay-ay, uh-uh-huh

Don't mess with me, *(no, no, no, nooo)*  
Don't mess me, Just leave me alone,  
Don't bully me, Get a life of your own,  
Don't bully me

---

8 bar interlude - dance moves

*We gotta* new rule, no bullies at school/  
*No bullies* allowed anymore!  
*It's not* really cool... to be mean and cruel,  
*You can be* more than you are

Hear what I say-ay  
Just keep away-ay-ay, uh-uh-huh!

Don't mess with me, *(no, no, no, nooo)*  
Don't mess with me, Just leave me alone,  
Don't mess with me, Get a life of your own,  
Don't mess with me, Report a bully and see,  
Don't mess with me, How much better we'll be,  
Don't mess with me, Don't be a bully and see,  
Don't mess with me, Don't be a bully and see,  
Don't mess with me, Say it one more time!  
Don't mess with me, Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah,  
Don't mess with me, Yeah....YEAH!

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"Make Music Not Madness"

**Chorus**  Make music, not madness  
Make music...music  
Make goodness, not badness  
Make goodness, goodness

**Verse 1**  
Best Friends, they want you to know  
Choosin’ positive people is the way to go  
No matter who you happen to be  
Make the right choices and let others see...

**Chorus**  Make music, not madness  
Make music... music  
Make goodness, not badness  
Make goodness, goodness

**Verse 2**  
The way you act reflects who you are  
Bullies pull us down  
You've got to raise the bar  
Choose the higher road  
Don't poison your mind  
Be with positive people, leave the madness behind

**Chorus**  Make music, not madness  
Make music... music  
Make goodness, not badness  
Make goodness, goodness

**Rap**  
In the past we set the stage  
Speaking about peace and love, not anger and rage  
Today there are drugs, abuse, disturbing topics  
We gotta change the track and bring about positive logic  
No more degradation  
No more fighting each other  
Respect yourself and all your sisters and brothers  
Gotta change the illusion the world is full of sadness  
We've gotta make some goodness  
Do away with the badness

**Chorus** (repeat)

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