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Age Group: Upper Elementary

[SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE]

Best Friends Forever

Upper Elementary

[BIBLE SOURCE ICON] 2 Samuel 9:1-11

[GOD AT WORK ICON] We need to get along with others

[KEY VERSE ICON] "You are my friends if you do what I command." – John
15:14

[OPENING BOX] Allow 5 minutes

- Welcome each child, and ask kids how they did with last week's Daily Challenges.

- Ask what kids remember about today's large-group lesson.

- Let kids share important news or prayer requests, and pray with them.

- **Partner up**

Say: **There are lots of reasons why people don't get along. If you look hard enough, you can always find a reason. But our story today is about people who worked hard to get along, even when there were plenty of reasons not to. Talk with a partner about what you remember from the story today.** Give kids a few minutes to talk.

[END OPENING BOX]

[MAIN ACTIVITY BOX] Allow 10 minutes

FRIENDSHIP RELAY

YOU'LL NEED • A small bag of jellybeans

1. INTRODUCE GAME

Say: [GOD AT WORK ICON] We need to get along together. Let's play a game to help us understand the importance of extending friendship to others.

This is a relay using a handshake, a personal word of encouragement, the God at Work Idea and jellybeans. It's not a race. It's a chain reaction!

2. DIRECTIONS

1. The person in the front of the line turns to the person behind him/her, shakes his/her hand and says something nice about the person.

2. Then that person turns to the third person in line and does the same thing.

3. When the last person in line has been greeted and complemented, he/she turns and picks up a bag of jellybeans containing a piece for each person in line.

4. He/she takes a jellybean for himself/herself and says the God at Work Point—"We need to get along with others" —to the next-to-last person in line while handing that person the jellybean bag.

5. This repeats until everyone has gotten a jellybean.

[ART: ILLUSTRATE A GROUP OF CHILDREN WITH ARMS AROUND EACH OTHERS' SHOULDERS, OBVIOUSLY GETTING ALONG.]

3. DISCUSS

- **What were you thinking about when you played the game?**
- **What was it like trying to think of something nice to say about your neighbor?**
- **What was it like to have your neighbor say something nice about you?**
- **What are some of the benefits of getting along with others?**

[MAKE THE CONNECTION]

Say: **It was David's deep love and friendship with Jonathan that motivated him to pass on that love to Mephibosheth. And it's our deep love and friendship with God that motivates us to extend that love toward others. [GOD AT WORK ICON] We need to get along with others.**

[END MAKE THE CONNECTION BOX]

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[MEMORY MAKER BOX]

Memory Maker: A FRIENDLY HAND

Allow 10 minutes

[ART: TWO FRIENDLY HAND CRAFTS ON MEMORY MAKERS SHAKING]

YOU'LL NEED • Card stock or construction paper • crayons • small-tipped felt markers • scissors • index cards with verses written on them

1. DESCRIPTION

Using a hand-shaped cutout, the children will make a visual reminder to help in getting along with others. It will then be put in the clip on the Memory Maker to create a sort of "bobble-head"-style shaking hand.

2. DIRECTIONS

1) Have the group say the God at Work Point aloud together — “We need to get along with others”.

2) Then on a blank sheet of paper, have them trace their hand with a crayon. Round off the drawing at the heel of the hand.

3) Prepare 5 index cards, each with a command as a title, followed by a verse reference for the children to look up and read. Here are the 5 commands and references:

- *Accept each other. Romans 15:7*
- *Serve one another. Galatians 5:13*
- *Be patient with each other. Ephesians 4:2*
- *Forgive each other. Ephesians 4:32*

- *Encourage each other. 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

4) Place the cards in a basket or box. Take turns picking out a card and reading it out loud, giving time for everyone to copy the command and reference on one of the fingers of their hand drawing. (Copying the whole verse is not necessary for the activity.)

5) While the children are writing things down, have the leader look up the passage and give the open Bible to one of the children to read the verse aloud.

6) Take turns until all five cards have been read.

7) Turn the hand over and write "We need to get along with others" on the back of the hand.

8) Then cut out the hand outline (kind of like a cartoon hand with five fingers) and clip the hand into the Memory Maker.

This will make a sort of "bobble head" reminder to "shake hands" and get along. They should even be able to put two of the "shaking hands" together, interlocking the thumbs to do a comical "robotic" handshake.

3. DISCUSS

- In what ways did David follow some of these commands as he remembered his friendship with Jonathan and extended it to Mephibosheth?

- How will putting these commands into practice help us get along with others?

[MAKE THE CONNECTION]

Say: **David honored his promise to Jonathan. We need to get along with others like David did by remembering our commitment to follow God's commands for friendship. Let's say the Key Verse together:** John 15:14 "You are my friends if you do what I command."

[END MAKE THE CONNECTION BOX]

[END MEMORY MAKER BOX]

[INSIDE OUT EVERY DAY BOX]

Inside Out Every Day!

1. DISTRIBUTE

Hand out a copy of today's "Inside Out Every Day" handout to each child.

Say: **This paper has ideas for how you can live inside out this week. Let's choose our Daily Challenges.**

2. DAILY CHALLENGES

Ask volunteers to read the Daily Challenges aloud. Have them circle the ones they will do this week.

3. MAKE THE CONNECTION

Say: **This week we want God to help us get along with others by following his commands about friendship. During this week, remember that**

[GOD AT WORK ICON] **We need to get along with others**

4. PRAY

Say: God, help us be faithful to you like David was to Jonathan by making every effort to get along with others. Thank you for Jesus, who stopped at nothing to make things right between God and us. Work in our relationships with others. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[END INSIDE OUT EVERY DAY BOX]

[PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AT THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE]

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[INSIDE OUT EVERY DAY! HANDOUT]

Inside Out Every Day!

[BIBLE SOURCE ICON] 2 Samuel 9:1-11

[GOD AT WORK ICON] We need to get along with others

[KEY VERSE ICON] "You are my friends if you do what I command." – John
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The Inside Truth

David became a friend of Mephibosheth because of his commitment as a friend to Jonathan. We need to get along with others because of our commitment to God.

Do You Remember?

- Why do you think it is important to get along with others?
- How does loving God help us to get along with others?
- What are some of the things we can do that help us get along with others?

[DAILY CHALLENGE BOX]

Choose a Challenge!

Challenge 1

Before school begins each day, pick one of the "one another" commands from your handcraft and read it again. Then for fun, count how many times you

see people shaking hands throughout the day. Each time you see a handshake, quietly repeat the God at Work Point—"We need to get along with others" —to yourself.

[ART: A CHILD SHAKING HANDS WITH SOMEONE IN A WHEELCHAIR]

Challenge 2

Identify someone you know who gets along well with almost everyone. Do you see any of your "one another" commands demonstrated in that person's life? Tell them you appreciate the way they get along with others, and ask God to help you become a better friend.

[ART: SPORT MEDAL WITH "WORLD'S BEST FRIEND" ON IT]

Challenge 3

Think of someone in your family or school that could use a friend. Commit to doing one of the five "one another" commands with him or her before the week is over.

[ART: ONE CHILD WITH TWO ICE CREAM CONES OFFERING ONE TO

ANOTHER CHILD.]

[END DAILY CHALLENGE BOX]

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Living Inside Out at Home

ACTIVITY 1-Getting along as a family

You'll need

- The “Friendly Hand” craft from the lesson

1. SHOW AND TELL: At a family meal, show your handcraft to the rest of the family and read the “one another” commands to the group.

2. SHARE AND PRAY: Ask each member of the family to share a story of where they have seen one of the verses in action. Then hold hands together and pray, asking God to help you all get along, extending God's love through each person to one another.

[ART: FAMILY HOLDING HANDS AROUND A TABLE]

ACTIVITY 2-The Handy Meal

You'll need

- A dinner menu planned with only food that can be eaten with your hands.

1. DIRECTIONS: There are three rules at this meal. Firstly, wash your hands before coming to the table. Secondly, eat using only your hands! And finally, you may not serve yourself! You may feed yourself but the only food you can eat is what others put on your plate for you.

2. DISCUSSION: While you enjoy your meal, discuss how important getting along at this meal really is. Where else is getting along important?

[ART: RED CIRCLE AND SLASH OVER A KNIFE, FORK AND SPOON]

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