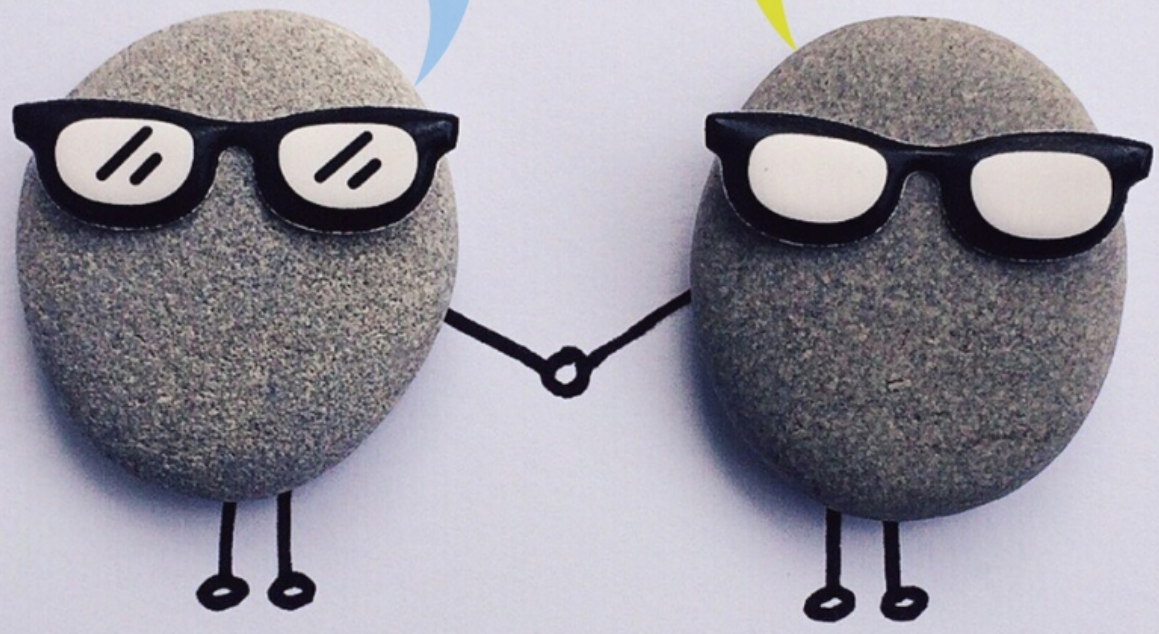


u want
2 hang? 🙏🥳

👍 Yes PLZ!
need 2 🤣



Friends with Everyone ...

Tween Small Group

Week 4: Why Do We Need Friends?

GOD KNOWS US

ACTIVITY: Friendship Tree

Supplies: Paper, Mini Ink Pads (I found some on amazon in multiple colors for under \$10.)

Directions: Print out a picture of a tree on a regular piece of computer paper and make a copy for each participant. Have each girl pick a different color ink pad, and make one fingerprint on everyone's tree picture.

Family Trees allow us to see how we are all connected. We've learned a lot about how God places people in our lives. We made friendship trees today to remind us how we are connected. While we can't choose who our families are, we can choose who our friends are. We're learning how to be friends with everybody, and that means being open to friendship with everyone God places in our lives. It's modeling kindness to everyone we come into contact with, but choosing wisely who we spend the majority of our time with. Friendship with Everyone, is loving the people in our lives well. Smiling when we walk down the hallway at school, praying for friends, being a good friend to our friends.

Besides being invited, let's each share how why we came to this group and what we hope to learn.

This weeks challenge!

I bet, if you hang your friendship tree on your refrigerator, in your locker at school, or somewhere in your room, the other friends in your life will recognize some of the names on your friendship tree. Many people in the same community often share mutual friends. This is a great thing! Add as many prints to your friendship tree as you can! (Take an ink pad with you when you go, today!) I bet, if we brought these back here in a week or two, many of you would have even more of the same fingerprints on the branches of your tree.

Friendship is an important part of any community, not just because we need each other, but because it gives us an opportunity to share our faith with friends who already believe in Jesus ...and with those who don't!

We are amazing witnesses to Christ when our lives are overflowing with kindness and love for others! Keep adding fingerprints to your branches. Not everyone will become a bestie, but you never know the impact you have just by being a kind and loving friend.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN: "Consider the power of your presence in another person's life."

GOD SPEAKS TO US.

The love we have for our friends begins with the love He has for us.

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.” John 15:9 NIV

We have five senses that let us know what’s going on around us, but when one of those senses aren’t working right it makes our lives more challenging. Think about what a challenge it is when we cannot see, hear, smell taste or touch. It’s hard to know what’s going on around us, and what’s up ahead, when we cannot see.

One day, I was walking down the pier in our town, like any other day. Accept this particular day, it was foggy. REALLY foggy. I couldn’t see the lighthouse at the end of the pier, but I knew it was there. I walked slowly, trusting I would see it when I got close enough ...and that is just what happened. But when I turned around ...I couldn’t see the way back! Once again, I walked slowly until the lighthouse disappeared into the fog again and the place where I started came back into view.

Life can get a little scary when we can’t see. I knew the river was on one side of me, and just hoped my sense of direction didn’t fail me, leaving me to fall into it!

You are growing up, and life isn’t always easy. Sometimes, we can’t clearly see where we are going. Other times, we don’t know how to get back to where we started. God not only knows us and sees us, but He loves us. Jesus is the voice in the fog that guides us when we don’t know what to do. When we are having trouble seeing or hearing Him, He places people around us to help us. Those people are our family ...and many times ...our friends.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN: “You are always forgiven, and never loved less.”

God places people to speak truth into our lives.

As you grow up, there are a lot of new experiences coming your way! It can be scary and exciting at the same time. Remember to keep the conversation going. Read the Bible, pray, and talk to your parents, mentors and friends.

When your friend is Jesus ...can you imagine having to saying good-bye?! His friends did not want to part with him, but He encouraged them to let go of their fear of “letting go.” There is a lot of possibility in making a change. Sometimes our parents move. That’s a hard change. Other times we lose people we love. Also, so hard. Certain subjects in school may be extremely hard for us. We may try out for the team and not make the cut. It’s easy to find reasons to be afraid in all of those situations, and pretty normal to feel that way.

Don’t stay there. Instead, look around. I promise, God will place a friend in your life when you need it. Make sure you’re paying attention.

We can trust His placement of friends in our lives, because He is trustworthy.

GOD LOVES US.

The word “love” in “so the Father has loved me, so I have loved you,” is not the same kind of love we talk about every day. We only have one word for love in English, and we use it to tell our mom how much we love her the same way we talk about our love of french fries! This verse in John was written in Greek, and they have different words for different kinds of love. This love isn’t ‘french fry’ love. This love is called agape love. It describes God’s love. He loves us so much more than we love our moms and we love our french fries. He knows every single bit of us, and because He knows us fully He loves us fully.

And that’s how He knows what we need. Friends, included.

Jesus promises never to leave us, and sometimes places a friend by our side to remind us.

The apostle Paul traveled to many foreign places to share the Gospel. Along the way, he was shipwrecked, beaten up a lot, thrown in jail, and even bitten by a

deadly snake. He faced some terrible trials, but along the way God never failed to place friends to encourage him. Other people who believed in Christ. They encouraged Paul, and he knew God was watching out for him.

We live in a time very different from Paul, but we still need friends in Christ just like He did. When we follow Christ, it leads us to live differently, and that can feel lonely, sometimes. Everyone faces a lot of pressure as they grow up. Our friends in faith understand us fully. They can pray for us when we are having a hard time and we can pray for them, too. We can talk to our “God girls” (remember?) about what God says when we face tough choices.

As you grow in your faith, you’ll understand this a little more. And as you grow, you will enjoy talking about what God is doing in your lives.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN: “Keep the conversation going.

Wrap Up:

Challenge of the Week: Hang up your friendship tree and collect more prints.

This week, let’s be sure to thank God for the friends that have helped us through some really hard times in life. Looking back to remember who was there when things were hard helps us to see how He has blessed us and loved us along the way.

Let’s Pray

Tween Break Out:

1. Sit in a circle.
2. Think about a time in your life when things were hard. Were you sick? Did you move? Was school hard?
3. Think about who was there for you during that time.
4. Go around the circle and each share about that friend.
5. Go back around the circle and name a friend that was there to celebrate a great time in your life.
6. Go around the circle one more time, this time in prayer, thanking God for these people and praying to be a good friend like that to your friends.

Mom Discussion;

Conversation is Key.

Here is a brief checklist that has really helped me in some of the tough conversations about tweeness and friendship:

1. Empathy. Our daughters need to know we are human, make mistakes, and understand how they feel.
2. Forgiveness. Remind them they are always forgiven, never loved less ...by you and Jesus! Encourage them to pay it forward, and start the process of forgiveness right away when they have been hurt by someone.
3. Reminders. Tell them who they are, often. Beautifully and wonderfully made! They need to know that what they are going through is normal, and hear often that we are proud of them.
4. Equip them. We don't have to quote Bible verses perfectly in order to pass down godly wisdom to our girls. Sometimes, just seeing us seek God in His word says a lot. Sooner or later, they will trust the source of our advice.
5. Pray. Teaching them to take everything in prayer to God helps to remind us, too!