

THE POWER OF INCLUSION



AT SHUTTERFLY, WE MAKE LIFE'S EXPERIENCES UNFORGETTABLE.

And in a world where celebrating life's most memorable moments may feel challenging to some, Shutterfly knows how important a friend can be to those who aren't always seen or celebrated for who they are.

BECAUSE A FRIEND CAN GO A LONG WAY IN MAKING US FEEL INCLUDED.

A FRIEND is someone who we feel connected to, that we share a special bond with.

A FRIEND is someone who we trust and open up to.

A FRIEND is someone we can laugh and cry with.

A FRIEND is someone we can rely on.

A FRIEND makes us smile.

A FRIEND pushes us to try new things.

A FRIEND is someone we care for and who cares for us.

A FRIEND makes us feel included in life's special moments.



WHAT IS INCLUSION, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Close your eyes, and picture this:

You walk into a school assembly and don't have anyone to sit with. A classmate looks at you, smiles, points to a larger group, and says, "Do you want to sit with us?"

A sigh of relief. A fresh start to the day. A feeling of being seen or appreciated. A sense of hope.

THAT'S THE POWER OF INCLUSION.

Because being included by others is critical for all of us. Having friends teaches us to form healthy attachments, makes us feel secure and confident, and reduces our stress and anxiety, which improves our school performance, focus, and overall quality of life.

Unfortunately, not everyone feels included. It can be challenging for some people to make friends; they feel isolated and alone.

HOW YOU CAN HELP!

YOU have the power to make someone else feel special, included, and seen.

Psst... it's easier than you think. Here are a few tips on how to get started.



1 START WITH A SMILE!

Whether you're meeting someone for the first time or sitting next to a classmate for the hundredth time, start with a smile.

A smile is a sign of **friendliness** and **warmth** — and is scientifically proven to be contagious!

Imagine it's your first day of school, and you see a classmate sitting alone. How can you make them feel included?

A smile can make a big difference! Who knows, it could be the spark to a whole new friendship.



2 SAY HELLO!

Sometimes it's hard to strike up a conversation. We all get shy and nervous sometimes.

Do you notice someone keeping quiet? Afraid to speak up? Playing by themselves? Walk over, flash them a smile, and say hello! Saying "hello" will let them know you're a safe space.

There are lots of ways to say it. Try one of these:

WHAT'S UP?

HOW'S IT GOING?

HI

Hello

How are you?

HOWDY

HI THERE

Hey



Or give a little wave, a fist bump, a peace sign, a head nod. It's one small act, but one huge invitation.

3 FIND SOMETHING IN COMMON.

The hard part is over — you’ve broken the ice! Now comes the fun; find out what your friend likes and dislikes, and what you have in common.

Here are a few ideas to get started:

- Ask your friend to read your favorite book with you.
- Invite your friend to join you at recess.
- Ask your friend to tell you their favorite joke.
- Invite your friend to sit next to you in the cafeteria and share your favorite foods.
- Ask your friend to play you their favorite song.

The options are endless. It doesn’t have to be big, just together, so everyone feels included!



4 APPRECIATE EACH OTHER'S DIFFERENCES.

While finding interests and activities in common is a lot of fun, friends can be different from each other in many ways — and that’s great, too! Our differences can actually bring us closer and teach us new things.

Maybe your friend talks differently than you do or speaks a different language. That’s okay. Have patience and ask for help when you need it.

Does your friend like dancing, but you prefer to watch? Put on your dancing shoes! Your friend can teach you. That will help you feel more comfortable — and you’ll learn some cool moves, too.

Your friend may like different things than you, but that’s what makes them, them! And think of all the fun things you can learn from each other.



5 MAKE PLANS FOR NEXT TIME.

Did you enjoy getting to know your friend? Maybe even doing new things with your friend?

Guess what. You can do it again. All you have to do is ask.

- Would you like to read another book next class?
- Do you want to play at recess tomorrow?
- Can we have a play date this weekend?
- I want to get ice cream with you. What do you think?



NOW THAT YOU KNOW HOW TO BE A FRIEND, GIVE IT A TRY!

Next time you see someone alone, remember these steps. You never know how you could change someone's world — and how they might change yours!

HOW DO WE FEEL WHEN WE HAVE A FRIEND?

Best Buddies knows a thing or two about friendship. Hear what some buddy pairs have to say about their experience of being included.

“I look forward to Best Buddies. I like being with friends. I like going to lots of parties. It is an important part of my life. I like being friends with Allison. She does lots of fun things with me. I am excited and happy when I am with Allison. I hope we will be friends for a long time.”

– Catherine

“When I was young, I told my parents I would never make any friends. Then, along came Rohan. We’ve been buddies ever since! His friendship has impacted me so much. He’s been there for me and supports me and all the people and things I love. Having a friend like Rohan has changed my life.”

– Ian

“My favorite things about Sofie are that she’s a good listener, and she’s fun to be around. We do everything together. I especially love when she picks me up, and we go places together.”

– Caroline

Learn more about the Shutterfly Open Door Project at www.shutterflyinc.com/open-door-project



MEET
Catherine & Allison
Best Buddies in Maryland



MEET
Ian & Rohan
Best Buddies in Hawaii



MEET
Caroline & Sofie
Best Buddies in Nashville