



Friends Stick Together

Aim:

To show that true friends care about us, even when things are difficult.

Preparation and Materials:

A chocolate bar.

A toilet brush.

Assembly:

Entry music: Lean on Me, Bill Withers.

1. Show the children a chocolate bar and choose one volunteer. Ask if any of the volunteer's friends would like to share the chocolate bar with him. You might want to comment on how the volunteer seems to have a lot of friends! Then show the children a toilet brush and ask them what it is used for. Explain that you need the volunteer to clean the toilets. Ask if any of the volunteer's friends would like to share this task with him? You might want to comment that his number of friends seems to have decreased! Explain that friendship is about caring with, and sticking by, others even when things are difficult.
2. Tell the following story:
'Once upon a time there was a boy called Mario. He showed off a lot, always talking about how many friends he had at school, and how he was so friendly with everyone. One day his grandfather said to him, "Mario, I bet you a big bag of popcorn you don't have as many friends as you think. I'm sure many of them are nothing more than companions, acquaintances, or partners in crime. They are not true friends." Mario accepted the bet. However, he wasn't sure how he could test whether or not his schoolmates were real friends, so he asked his grandpa. The old man answered, "I have exactly what you need, and it's in the attic. Wait here a minute." Grandpa left, soon returning as though carrying something in his hand, but Mario couldn't see anything. "Take this. It's a very special chair. Because it's invisible it's rather tricky to sit on, but if you take it to school and you manage to sit on it, you'll activate its magic and you'll be able to tell who your real friends are." Mario, brave and determined, took the strange invisible chair and set off for school. At break time he asked everyone to form a circle, and he put himself in the middle, with his chair. "Nobody move. You're about to see something amazing." Mario attempted sitting on the chair. Having difficulty seeing it, he missed and fell straight onto his backside. Everyone had a pretty good laugh. "Wait, wait, just a slight technical problem." he said, making another attempt. But again he missed the seat, causing more surprised looks. Mario wouldn't be beaten. He kept trying to sit on the magic chair, and kept falling to the ground...

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until, suddenly, he tried again and didn't fall. This time he sat, hovering in mid-air... It was then that he finally experienced the magic that his grandfather had been talking about. Looking around, Mario saw George, Lucas, and Diana - three of his best friends - holding him up, so he wouldn't fall. Meanwhile, many others he had thought of as friends had done nothing but make fun of him, enjoying each and every fall. And there the show came to an end. Leaving with his three friends, he explained to them how his grandfather had so cleverly thought of a way to show him that true friends are those who care for us, even when it might cost them something. That evening the four children went to see Mario's grandpa. They had a great time listening to stories, and eating popcorn until full to burst.

3. How did Mario find out who his true friends were? What does this show us about true friends?

Reflection:

True friends are people who care for us and stick by us, even when it isn't always fun or easy. Think of a time when a true friend has cared for you. Can you think of a time when you cared for a friend even when it wasn't easy?

Challenge:

Look out for any friends that are having a difficult time or are sad this week. How can you be a true friend and care for them?