

NAVIGATING THROUGH LIFE: HAVING FRIENDS AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS



SIMILAR INTERESTS

- ✓ Most relationships are easier to have if you have similar interests.
- ✓ Do more than connect through the internet. Be involved with clubs, sports, or church, to make new friends. You can also make new friends through your job.
- ✓ Youth make friends after high school based on what they are involved in such as sports, organizations, work, or college.



OLD FRIENDS AND NEW FRIENDS

- ✓ It is also better to have a few close friends that you can actually talk to than a ton of fake friends on social media.
- ✓ You can make new friends and you want to keep your old friends because they can help you through some hard times. They might know you better.
- ✓ Remember, as time goes on and things change, you will likely get new friends and acquaintances, that is ok.
- ✓ All relationships take effort, just because you are not in a romantic relationship with someone does not mean that a friend or co-worker type relationship does not take effort.
- ✓ It's ok to push yourself because you will not find your limits until you do.
- ✓ Remember you might need to put yourself out there. Take a leap of faith and believe in yourself.
- ✓ REMEMBER, relationships change over time. And always remember to be true to who you are.
- ✓ Try new things and ALWAYS be yourself.



DATING

- ✓ Romantic relationships in high school are different, some people will not be interested in dating at all, some will be short, some will be on and off, while others may last until college and beyond.
- ✓ Try to find a perfect time to ask someone for a date such as going to a homecoming dance or the prom. Friends make good dates when you are starting out.
- ✓ Some people use dating apps, others go through mutual friends or activities they are involved in to find dates. Remember safety. REMEMBER, your safety is the MOST IMPORTANT THING!
- ✓ It can be hard to find a date if you are shy, unsure of your sexuality, or have a disability.
- ✓ Not everyone wants to date; it is your choice.
- ✓ It is ok if you do not date in high school or college.

Info Sheets were developed through interviews with young people with disabilities as part of the Inclusion Project



STAYING IN TOUCH AND BEING SAFE

- ✓ Stay in touch with people you know, who are acquaintances, friends, or people who provide support. You could text, email, call, use social media like Instagram and Pinterest, or visit your friends so you can stay in touch.
- ✓ If you need help figuring out the different roles people play in your life, ask for some help.
- ✓ Always maintain personal safety when you put yourself out there. As you are learning to trust your gut, think about a trusted person to talk things over with. This can be a parent or best friend.
- ✓ Honesty is always the best way to have a good friendship or a romantic relationship.



RESOURCES

Making Friends:

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/making-good-friends.htm>

Dating Tips:

<https://www.seventeen.com/love/dating-advice/>