



# Lesson Seven

- Title:** There's Nothing Better than a Good Friend
- Theme:** Considering the Characteristics of a Good Friend
- Time:** 175 minutes (approx. 3 hours)
- Materials:**
- Want Ad for a Friend - Assignment
  - Friendship Stoplight - Laminated Game
  - Magnets or Masking Tape
  - Chart Paper & Markers
  - Solving Problems In Friendships - Homework Assignment
  - Agree/Disagree Chart Worksheet
  - Ball (beach ball or object that can be tossed between students)
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## Objectives

- to teach students about the concept of positive, healthy friendships
  - to acknowledge the links between healthy friendships and positive self-esteem
  - to consider the reasons it is important to have good friends
  - to allow students to think about their own criteria for healthy friendships
  - to discuss the healthy signs, warning signs and unhealthy signs in friendships
  - to have students explore strategies to deal with difficult situations in friendships
  - to identify the effects of social influences on gender roles and equity
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## Curriculum Expectations

- 4p8 - identify the characteristics of healthy relationships (e.g., showing consideration of others' feelings by avoiding negative communication)
- 4p9 - identify the challenges (e.g., conflicting opinions) and responsibilities in their relationships with family and friends
- 5p9 - identify strategies to deal positively with stress and pressures that result from relationships with family and friends
- 5p10 - identify factors (e.g., trust, honesty, caring) that enhance healthy relationships with friends, family, and peers
- 6p9 - apply a problem-solving / decision-making process to address issues related to friends, peers, and family relationships

**Changes In Me: A Puberty and Adolescent Development Resource for Educators  
Junior Grade Level, Second Edition**

Peel Public Health, Healthy Sexuality Program, 905-799-7700



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## Background Information

This lesson focuses on the issues young people face surrounding friendships during adolescence. This topic is important because while friendships are vital throughout life, peer groups and social relations among friends gain increasing importance during puberty and adolescence. As the peer group becomes a more significant source of influence, friendships begin to take on new meaning. During puberty, children will be making new friends at school and in social settings, and many will also be coping with evolving friendships from their earlier childhood. Friendships are often put to the test during senior elementary and secondary school. Children struggle to maintain relationships with peers who may be changing in a variety of ways. Problems can occur when children form “cliques,” begin to “hang out” with different crowds, or when they simply grow apart from previous friends. Peer pressure can be a problem for adolescents. For example, sometimes young people who choose to use drugs and alcohol try to persuade their friends to do the same. Inevitably, the friends children choose will shape their experiences in critical ways.

This lesson is designed to compel students to think about their own criteria for positive friendships, to discuss ways to evaluate friendships and to explore ways to deal with difficult situations in their friendships.

## Procedure

### ***Activity One: Class Discussion Regarding Friendships - 30 minutes***

Tell your students that you will be discussing friendships during today’s lesson. Encourage students to participate frequently during the discussion, as their input on this topic is very important.



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Here are some ideas you may use to guide your discussion.

- **What kind of things can we do to begin and keep friendships?**

Join a club or a team. Meet a neighbour. Seek out a friend at school. Make contact with the person you would like to know better. Find ways to spend time with him/her. Talk about yourself, sharing more information as time goes by. Talk on the phone, write text and/or instant message or e-mail notes to your friend.

- **What is a friend? Friends are people ...**

...we feel close to. Friends are people who have similar interests, people who care about us, and people we can trust. Friends offer support and understanding when we really need it.

- Last class, we talked a lot about self-esteem or feeling good about ourselves. **How do you think self-esteem is related to friendships?**

When we feel good about ourselves, we are more likely to choose friends that are good for us. There is a saying that says, “we teach people how to treat us”. In other words, how we behave toward ourselves and other people gives them clues as to how *they should behave towards us*. If we feel good about ourselves and respect ourselves, and treat others with respect, we are showing people how we would like to be treated.

- **Why is it important to have good friends?**

True friendship is important. Friends support one another, listen to each other and give advice. When you and your friend share personal information about yourselves, you can learn from each other and explore what you have in common and what makes you different. Friends can teach us many things like how to play a game or how to make a craft. Friends can introduce us to exciting things like delicious new foods and interesting customs or celebrations. You can also learn about acceptance by appreciating the different qualities that make us unique individuals. When you accept people for who they are, you are being a respectful friend.



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- **What kinds of things do you like doing with your friends?**

Ideas might include: playing games (video) and sports, hanging out, having lunch together, attending Girl Guides, Boy Scouts or other community groups, going to classes together (e.g., dance, martial arts, music lessons), watching television/movies, using the computer, working on projects and/or doing homework together.

- **How can we be good friends?**

- Share our interests and activities
- Trust each other and be honest
- Share our thoughts and feelings
- Respect each other's opinions and beliefs
- Try to relate to how the other person feels
- Be sincere with each other
- Accept each other for who we are
- Encourage and support each other
- Commit to the friendship

### **Activity Two: (2 parts)**

#### **Part A: Ball Toss – 10 minutes**

This is a warm-up activity to help students explore the qualities of healthy relationships. Have the students stand up behind their desks or in a circle at the front of the room. Toss the ball to someone in the group, and ask them to call out a word that represents qualities of a healthy relationship (for example; trust, supportive, kind, fun...). Ask that person to then toss the ball to someone else. Each time a new student catches the ball, ask them to share a new quality... and so on.

#### **Part B: Want Ad for a Friend - 20 minutes**

Tell your students that you would like them to think about the characteristics that are most important in a friend. Distribute the assignment entitled, "Want Ad For A Friend". Ask your students to complete this assignment individually. Allow students ten to fifteen minutes of quiet writing time. Once students have written the advertisement, ask some students to share their work by reading aloud to the class. (*Friendship Want Ad handout can be found following this lesson*)

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## Activity Three: Friendship Stoplight Game - 30 minutes

Here are the instructions to set up the Friendship Stoplight Game. (*The Stoplight game cards can be found following this lesson*).



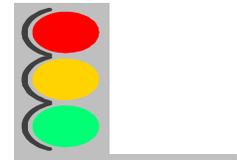
On the top left corner of your board or wall space, use tape or magnets to attach the red stoplight card that reads, “These are bad signs in a friendship”.

Place the corresponding yellow and green stoplights underneath, like in a street stoplight.

Shuffle the stoplight scenario cards to ensure that they are not in order.

The graphic shown below appears on each scenario card.

The object of this game is to decide which scenarios are most compatible with each of the following three statements: “these are **bad** signs in a friendship”, “these are **warning** signs in a friendship” and “these are **good** signs in a friendship”.



Attach the appropriate answers to the board/wall beside the corresponding stoplight with tape or magnets.

There are several ways that you can play this game. You can read the scenarios aloud and ask students where they think they best belong. You can give scenarios out to groups of students and they can arrive at a consensus. You can place the scenarios on overheads or on the document arm and ask volunteers to give suggestions. You might also consider placing the scenarios around the room and asking for volunteers to place them beside the proper stoplight on the board.

No matter what pedagogical strategy you use to play this game, be sure that you ask students for explanations regarding their choices. ***The most important part of this activity is the discussion around whether each scenario constitutes a good, a warning or a bad sign in a friendship.*** It is in this arena that students will be able to discuss their various points of view. Your role in this game is to facilitate and mediate the conversations of your students. When there is disagreement, you might choose not to place the scenario beside *one* statement, but rather choose to set it aside for further debate and discussion. If the scenario clearly represents a bad or warning sign, be sure to make this clear for your students.



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There are fifteen scenario cards. Five scenarios correspond with each coloured stoplight: red (unhealthy/bad signs), yellow (warning signs) and green (healthy/good signs).

While there may be some discrepancies, the following is a list of suggested correct answers.

### **RED LIGHT: These are unhealthy/bad signs in a friendship.**

1. You are afraid of your friend's temper.
2. Your friend criticizes you or people you care about.
3. Your friend threatens to hurt you.
4. Your friend bullies and makes fun of you or other kids at school.
5. Your friend pressures you to do things you do not want to do.

### **YELLOW LIGHT: These are warning signs in a friendship.**

6. You are nervous that if you tell your friend something personal, s/he will tell other people at school.
7. Your friend sometimes makes fun of you.
8. You rarely get to plan what the two of you will do together.
9. Your friend tells you not to hang out with certain people.
10. You say that you agree with your friend, even when you really don't. You are afraid they won't be your friend anymore if you disagree.

### **GREEN LIGHT: These are healthy/good signs in a friendship.**

11. You usually feel happy when you are with this person.
12. Your friend respects your feelings and your opinions.
13. Your friend talks to you about his/her feelings.
14. Your friend is happy when good things happen to you.
15. You enjoy being with this person, but you also enjoy spending time with other friends.

### **Activity Four: Solving Problems In Friendships Homework Assignment - 5 minutes**

Distribute the homework assignment. Remind your students about the IDEAL Decision-Making Model to which they were introduced to in Lesson Five. *(If you have not yet used the model, please refer to Lesson Five for a detailed explanation.)* While it is not necessary, they could use the IDEAL Decision-Making Model to guide their answers.



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## **Activity Five: Putting Girls and Boys In Boxes – 80 Minutes\***

\* Adapted with permission from Rainbows and Triangles: A Curriculum Document for Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in the K-6 Classroom; Toronto District School Board & Elementary Teachers of Toronto, 2002.

### **Activity Overview:**

In the following activity, the class has an opportunity to explore and examine the ways gender-role expectations limit and hurt both sexes. In group discussions, students develop lists of expectations based on gender and as a whole class, begin to challenge these ideas. As a final task, the class develops an action plan to challenge gender-role stereotyping in their classroom and school.

**Teacher Note:** *Because of the content and level of discussion involved, activity five may not be suitable for grade levels under five. The class should have plenty of previous experience working and solving problems in small groups.*

### **PART A:**

1. To begin this activity, have students complete the “Agree or Disagree” chart independently (*Blackline master of this chart can be found at the end of this lesson*). Encourage students to answer honestly and then in pairs, discuss their responses. Encourage students to provide each other with reasons for their answers. Give the class a few minutes (e.g., five to seven minutes) to complete this task. The “Agree or Disagree” chart provides an anticipation guide to assist students in assessing their own knowledge and ideas about the topic of gender roles before study. The following are notes on this teaching/learning strategy:

An anticipation guide is a series of statements with which the students must agree or disagree with and support his/her response with reasons. An anticipation guide:

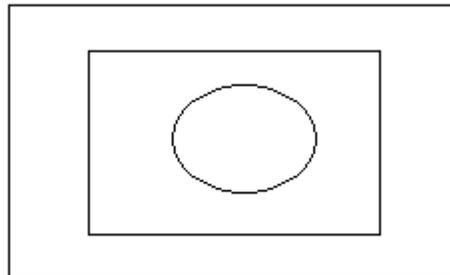
- Activates prior knowledge;
- Supports students in questioning the accuracy of their knowledge;
- Helps identify student misconceptions;
- Provides students with a purpose for reading/viewing/listening;
- Is used individually, but opportunities need to be provided for sharing and comparing responses;
- Builds students’ confidence that they are already familiar with areas of the topic;
- Assists students in making predictions about the topic.

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2. Spend a brief amount of time as a whole class sharing students' responses. Ask for a show of hands about who agrees/disagrees with the statements and have volunteers share their reasons. Open the topic up for discussion, clarifying any misconceptions.

### **PART B:**

3. Organize the students into mixed or same gender groups of four or five. Explain that each person in the group is to have a specific task. If the class has had experience formulating group responsibilities, assign the following roles:
  - 2 recorders (record the information)
  - 1 organizer (keeps time, encourages people to stay focused)
  - 1 idea seeker (reminds students of the task, asks group for ideas, etc.).
4. When these tasks have been distributed among the groups, pass out one piece of flipchart paper and two markers to each group and ask the recorders to copy the following diagram in the middle of the chart paper:



5. Divide the class into two. One half focuses on the male roles and the other half on female roles. (If the class consists of six small groups, three are assigned the task of male roles and three female roles.) Regardless, each group works on its own chart, focusing on one gender.
6. Instruct students to fill in the inner square with words or ideas that express all the things that only boys/males or girls/females can do/be or are supposed to do/be. Have them leave the inner circle blank for now. Explain that these items should reflect what students have been taught, either directly or indirectly, by parents, teachers, siblings and friends. The list does not reflect what is necessarily true. Many of these items may be stereotypes of untrue expectations (e.g., girls/women are soft, sweet, etc.; boys/men are strong, don't cry, like sports, etc.). Provide approximately five to ten minutes to complete this task.

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7. Bring the class together. Ask each group to report back its list (adding only what has not already been stated from the other groups). Compile two master lists – one for males and one for females – on the board or chart paper as students share their brainstorm. In the following discussion, consider the following questions:

- Do you think it's reasonable for all boys/males and girls/females to act in these ways?
- Are there people we know who fit within this square?
- Are there people we know who do not fit within this square?
- What is it called when we make assumptions and put expectations on certain individuals or groups based on their gender?

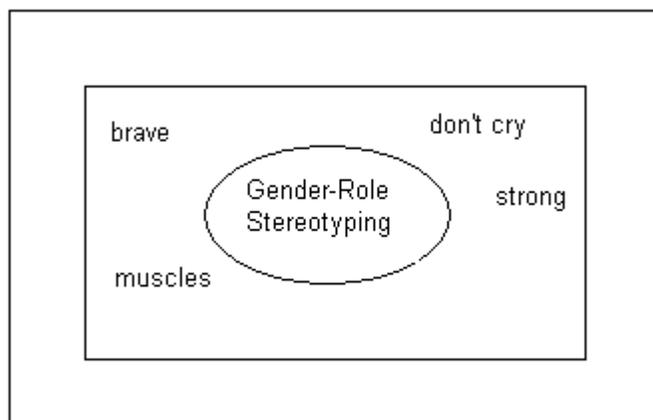
8. At this point, define gender-role stereotyping with students:

**Gender-role stereotyping:** the assumption that males and females are limited by gender in their interests, capabilities and accomplishments. It is the expectation that being a male or female biologically limits what one can do as a human being.

**Simplified version:** thinking that boys can do only some things and should be interested in only some things just because they are boys, and thinking that girls can do only some things and should be interested in only some things just because they are girls.

9. Record an appropriate definition for the class so that it is visible in the classroom.

10. Have students return to their working groups. Before starting the next task, ask the recorders to write in the inner circle the word “**gender-role stereotyping**” e.g.;



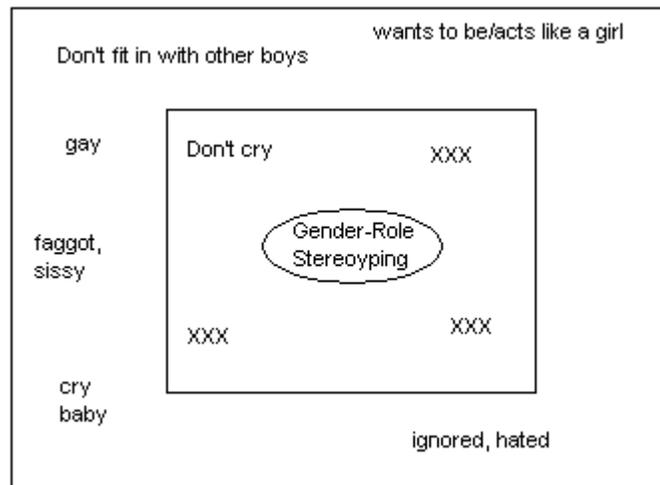
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## PART C:

11. For the next task, have students insert words and ideas they think of if boys/girls don't fit into what is in the box. (e.g., what happens if a girl/female is not skinny, sweet, doesn't like shopping, and likes to build things, etc.? What happens if a boy/male is not strong, cries, doesn't like sports, likes to cook, etc.?) Ask students to consider specific slurs or put-downs that are used, assumptions people may have about the girl/boy, negative behaviours towards the person not fitting into the gender role.

**Teacher Note:** Be sure to create a safe environment by letting students know that it's okay to use slang and/or inappropriate language for the purpose of deconstructing myths and stereotypes. *You may want to discuss this lesson (language use) with your administrator prior implementing this activity.*

For example:



12. As a whole class, discuss the students' results. List in categories the ideas that groups came up with. Create headings, and record appropriate items under the headings as students share.



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For example:

Boys/males who don't "fit in"		
Ideas (stereotyping)	Behaviours (discrimination)	Attitudes (prejudice)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants to be/act like a girl</li> <li>• Is gay, homosexual</li> <li>• Likes boys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name-calling (sissy, faggot, gay)</li> <li>• Left out</li> <li>• Picked on, beaten up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disliked or hated</li> </ul>

13. Share ideas with the class as to how the victim might feel if these thoughts, behaviours and negative attitudes were targeted at him/her (e.g., sad, isolated, angry, ashamed, embarrassed, etc...). What might he/she do to get away from this treatment? (e.g., change to be something he/she is not, pretend to be different, fight back, become violent and angry, change schools, become isolated, depressed, etc.)

Discuss the ways that gender-role stereotyping hurts everybody: males and females. Ask students to provide examples of times that they, or someone they know, have stepped out of the traditional gender role in their lives (e.g., males cooking or taking care of younger siblings, females being athletic or working in construction).

## Possible Extensions

Once their homework assignments have been submitted, think about having students role-play their way through some of the "friendship problems". Consider having classmates judge their performances, offering alternative suggestions for solving the problems.

*Activity Five – Possible Extensions:*

1. *In groups, create posters that express messages of gender equity and anti-homophobia education to place around the school.*
2. *Read stories of same-sex families or gay/lesbian and bisexual characters (refer to the sexual orientation section in the introduction/teacher guide section).*
3. *Research how gender-role stereotyping and homophobic attitudes are perpetuated in our society (e.g., peer behaviour, parents, media, religion).*



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## Possible Assessment

Two opportunities for formal, summative evaluation are presented in this lesson: the “Want Ad for A Friend” assignment and the “Solving Problems In Friendships” homework assignment. As well, if students complete the role-play activity, they could evaluate themselves or their peers.

### *Activity Five – Possible Assessment:*

#### *1. Group Discussion/Chart Work -*

- Do students work effectively and co-operatively in their group?*
- Do they share and listen to each other’s opinions and ideas?*
- Are they able to incorporate prior knowledge of issues (e.g., vocabulary and ideas related to equity)?*

#### *2. Development of Action Plan –*

- Do student understand equity concepts and vocabulary and are they able to utilize the knowledge in a practical way?*
-

# Assignment



## Want Ad For A Friend

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

We are a young couple who is looking to adopt a puppy. We would like to add a golden retriever to our family. The puppy should like children and should enjoy going on long walks.

I am an eleven-year-old girl who is looking for a friend who is also in grade six. I would like my new friend to play volleyball with me. This person should be funny, honest and a good listener.

Have you ever seen a want ad in the newspaper or online? Sometimes people who are looking to adopt a pet write ads describing the type of pet they are hoping to find. Other times, adults write want ads if they are looking to find a friend. Pretend that you are trying to make a new friend. Write an ad that describes a friend you would like to find. Think about what age you would like this person to be. Does it matter if the friend is a girl or a boy? What personality traits are you looking for in a friend? What kind of person do you think would make a great friend? Are there any activities that you would like to share with this new friend? If you spend a lot of time rollerblading, you might want a friend to share this activity with you. Think about all the things you need in a good friend. Today, you will be writing a want ad for a friend. This is how your written assignment will be marked.

Criteria	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Student completed at least five full sentences					
Response shows evidence of careful consideration of characteristics desired in a friend					
Quality of written work including spelling and grammar					

Grade out of 15 .....

/ 15



## Want Ad For A Friend

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In the space provided below, write a want ad for your new friend.

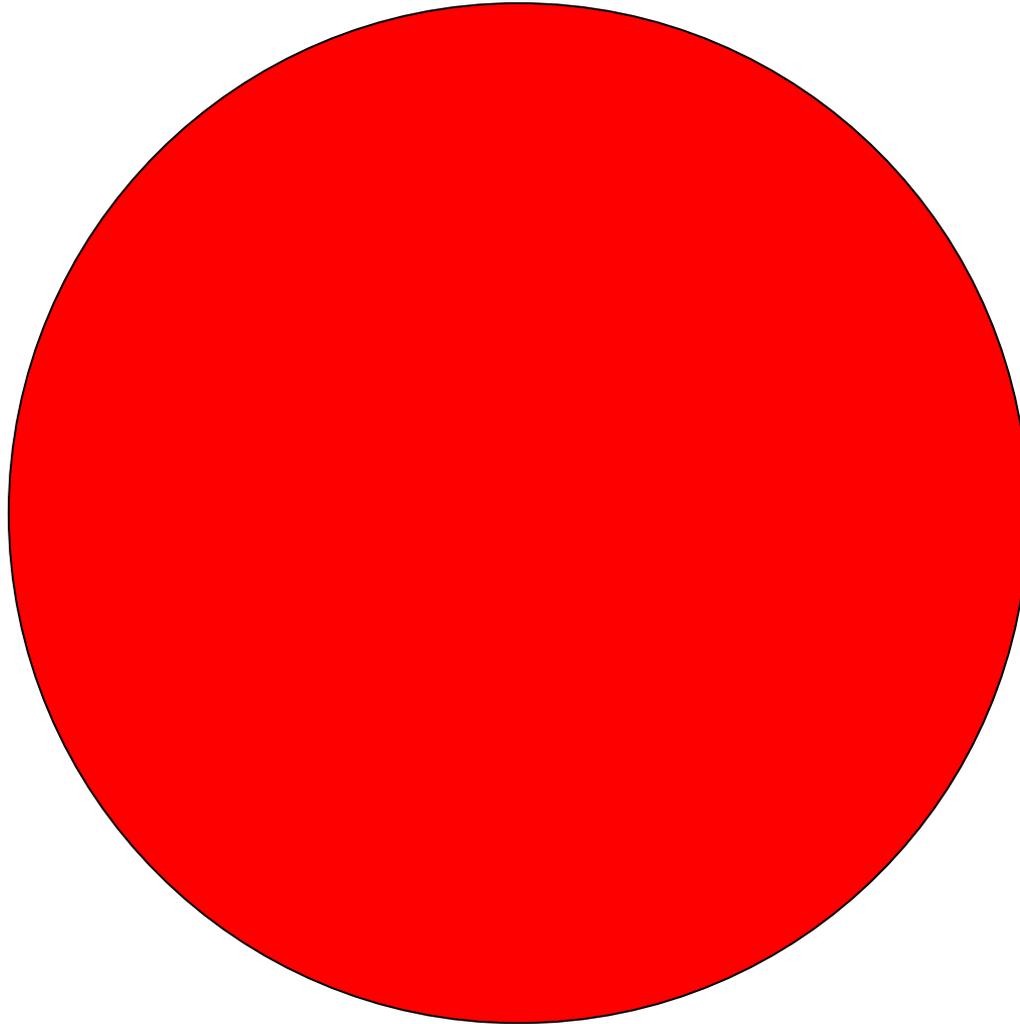
Make sure that you write at least five full sentences.

Use your best spelling and grammar.

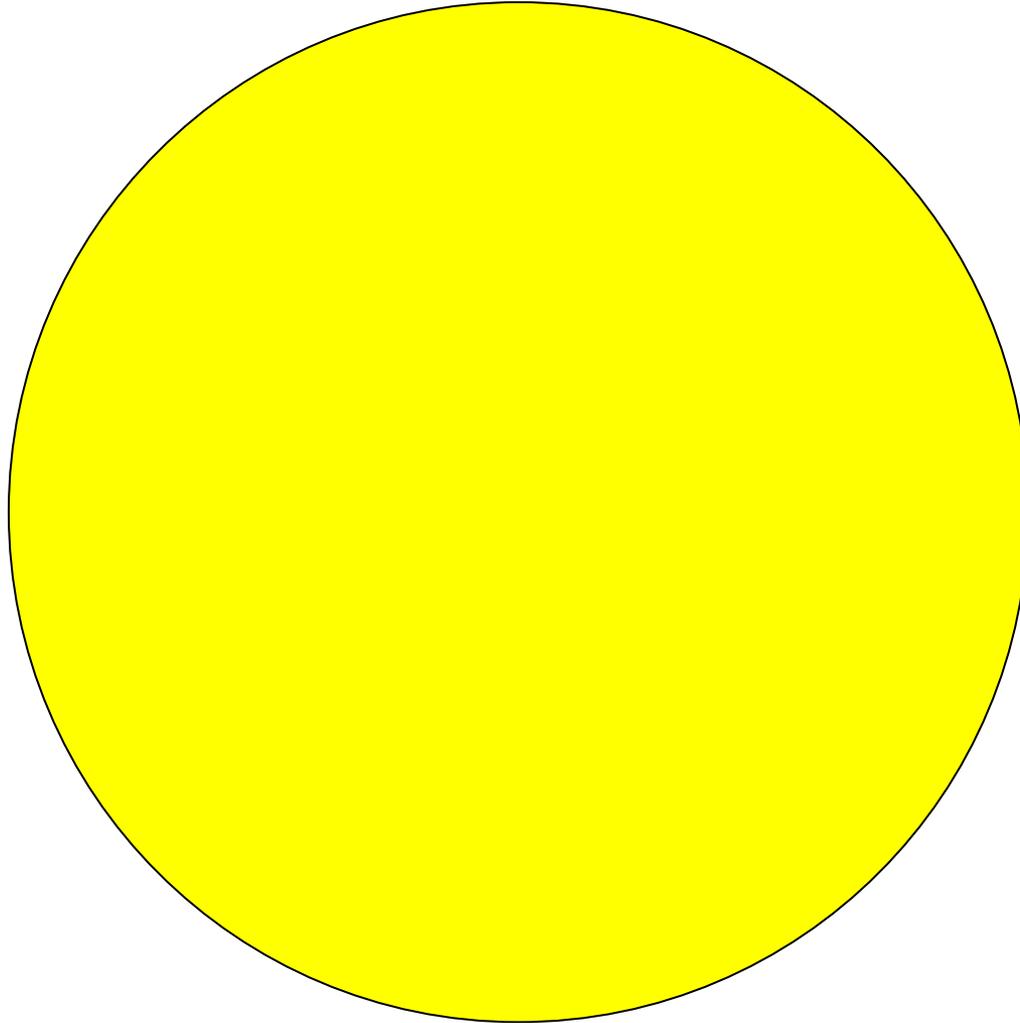

Total Grade out of 15 .....

/ 15

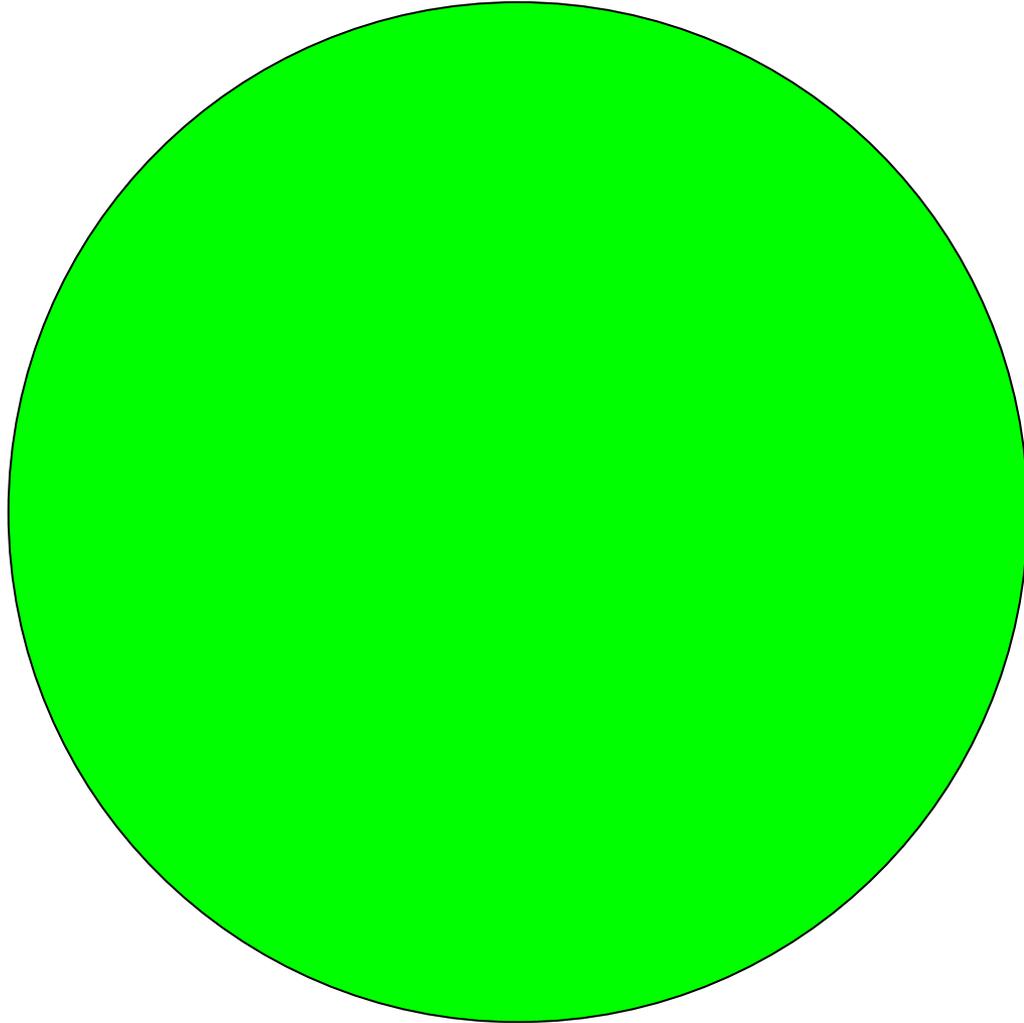
# STOP! These are bad signs in a friendship!

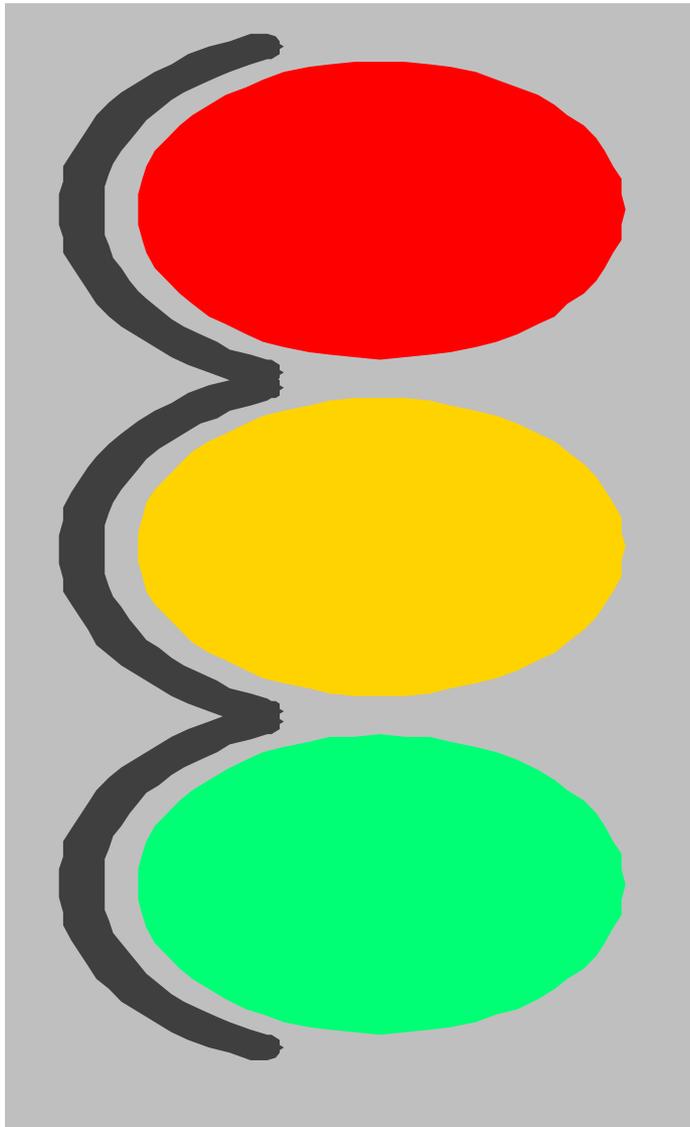


**CAUTION!** These are warning signs in a friendship!

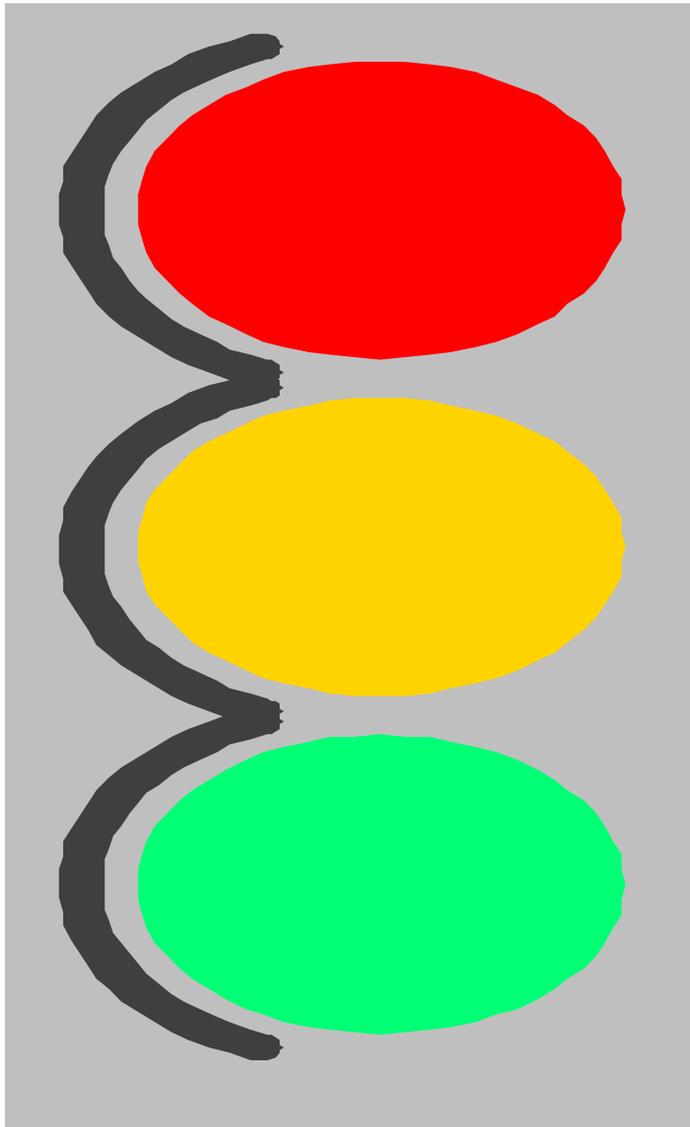


GO! These are good signs in a friendship!

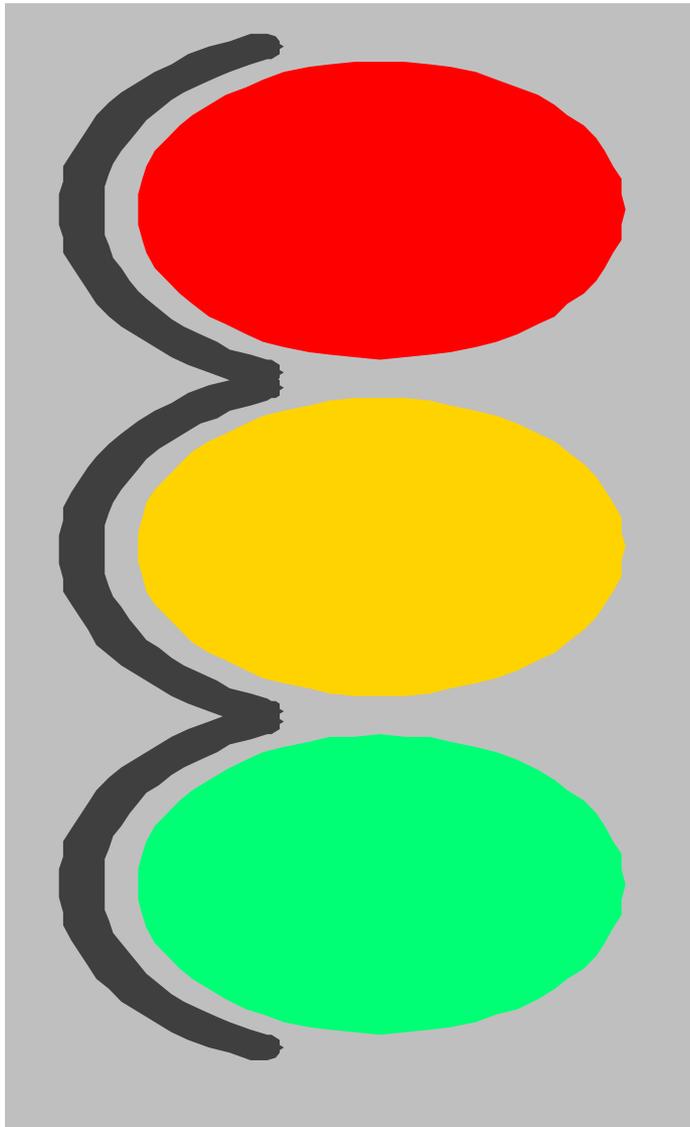




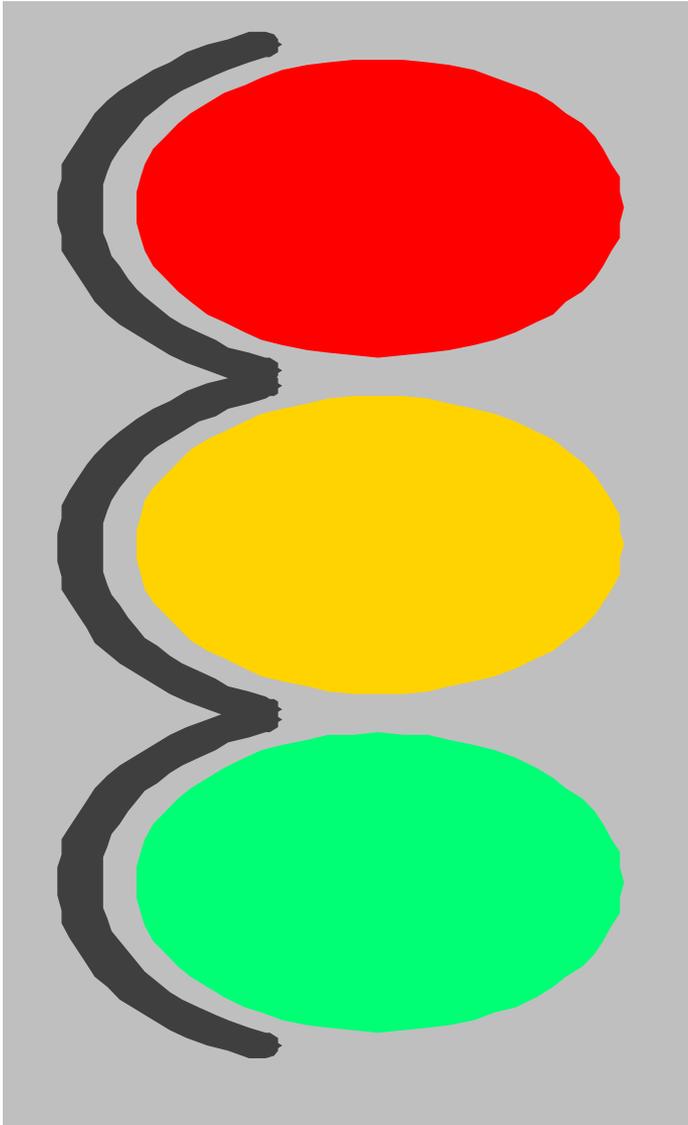
You are  
afraid of  
your  
friend's  
temper.



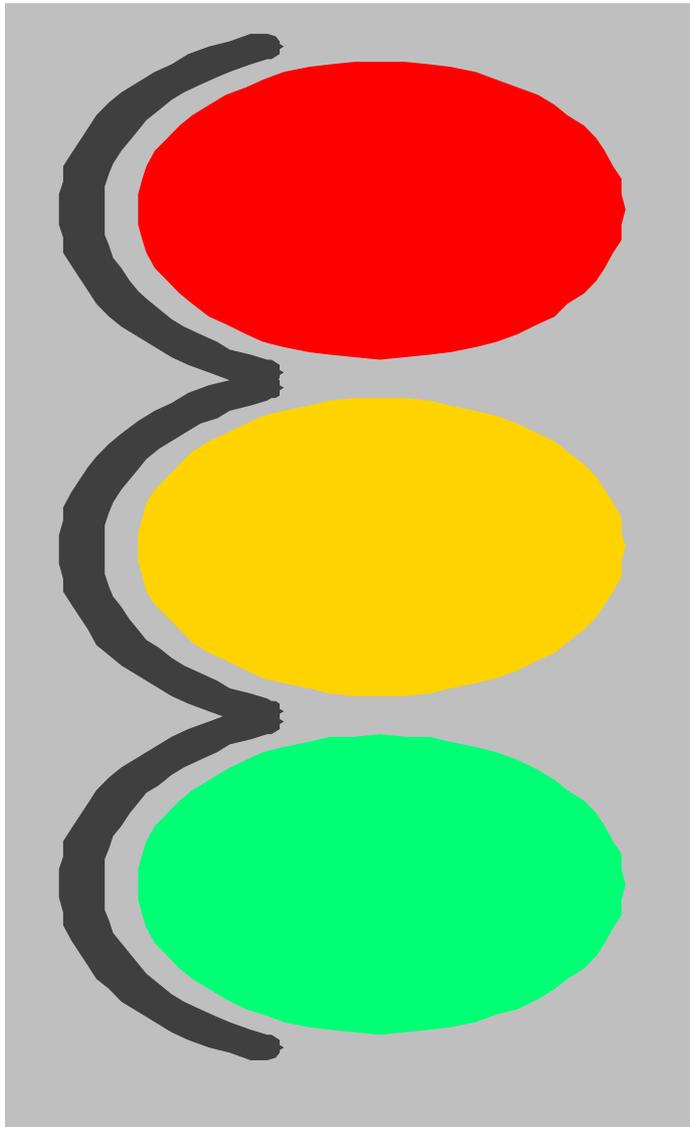
Your friend  
criticizes  
you or  
people you  
care about.



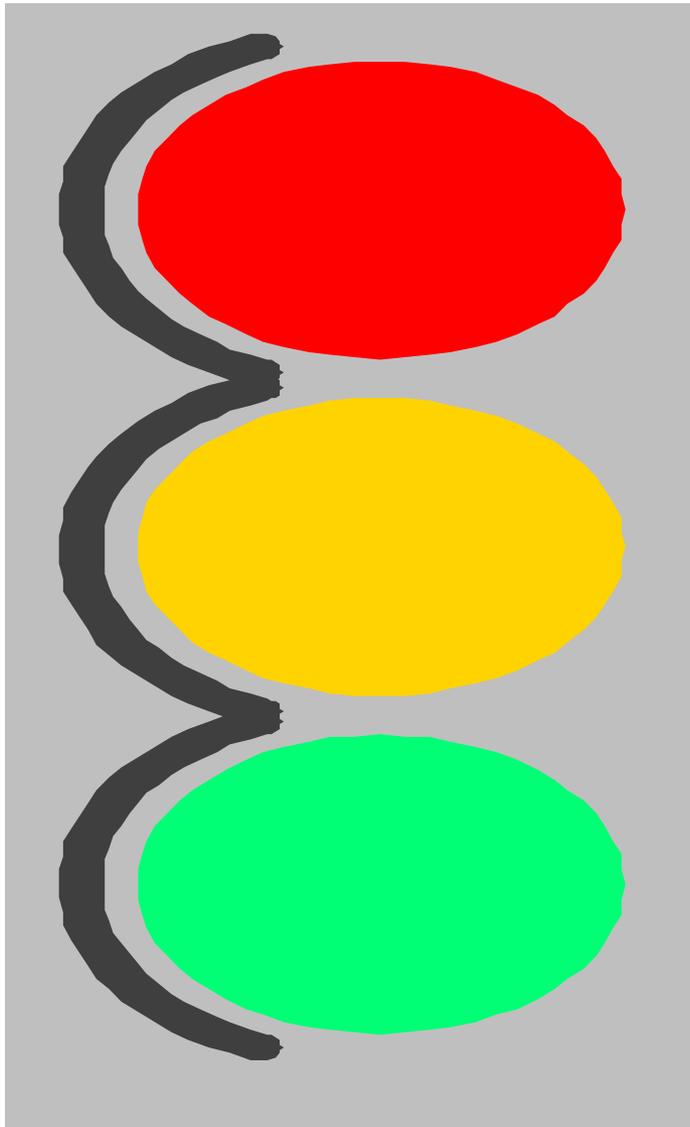
Your  
friend  
threatens  
to hurt  
you.



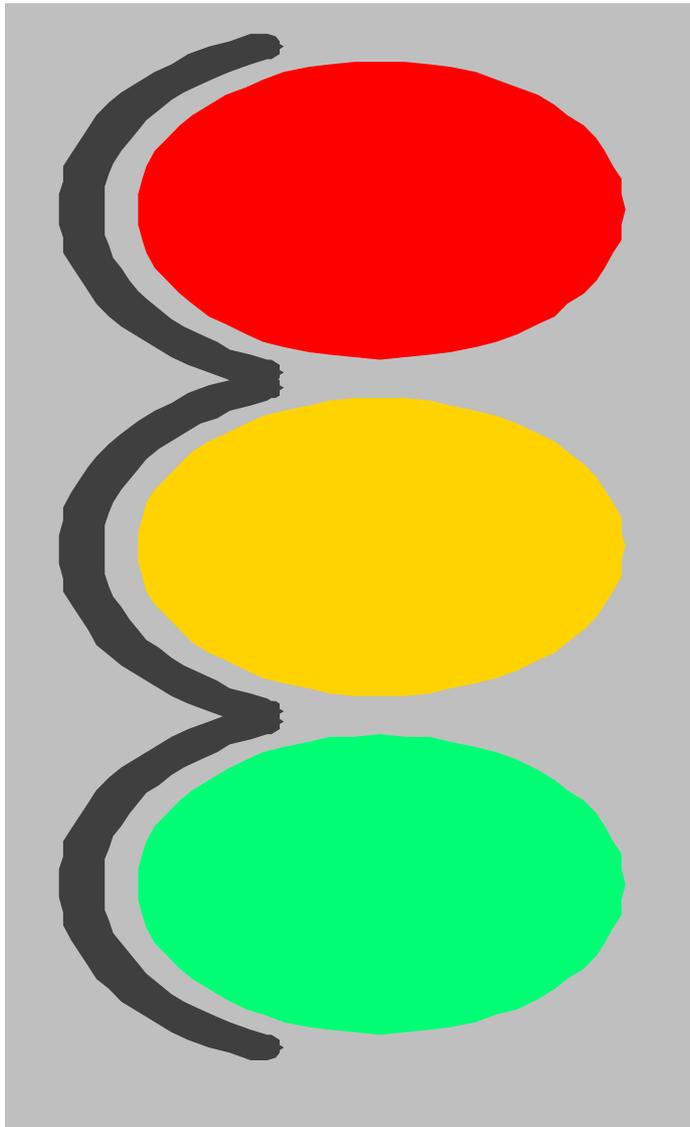
Your friend  
bullies and  
makes fun  
of you or  
other kids at  
school.



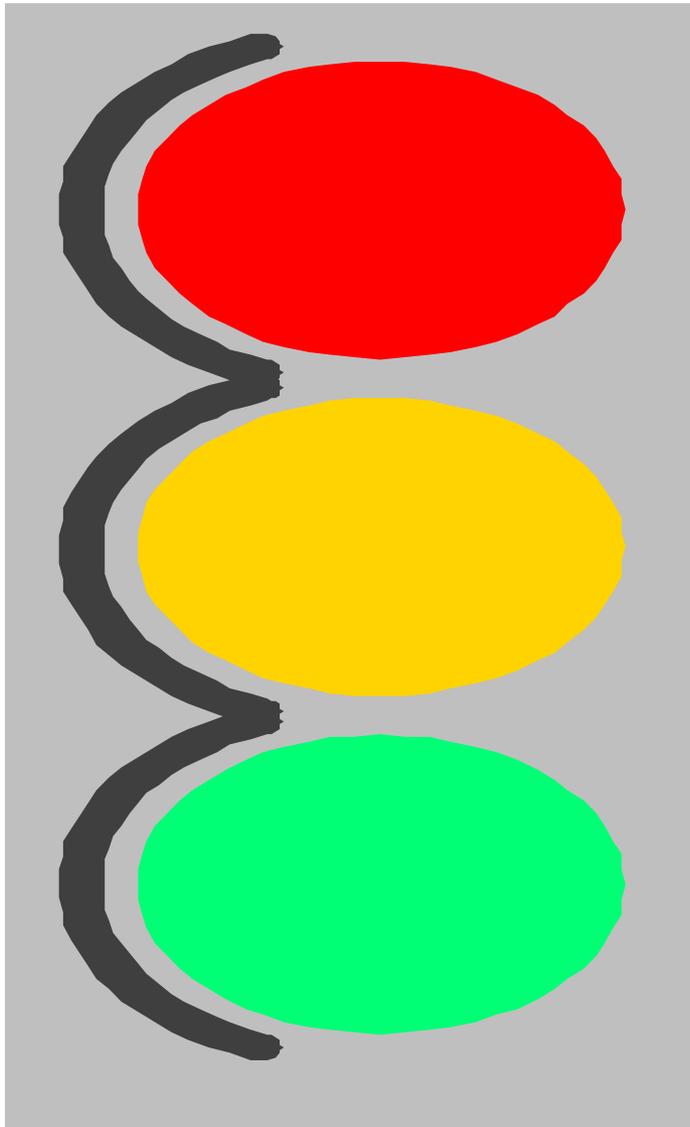
Your friend  
pressures  
you to do  
things you do  
not want to  
do.



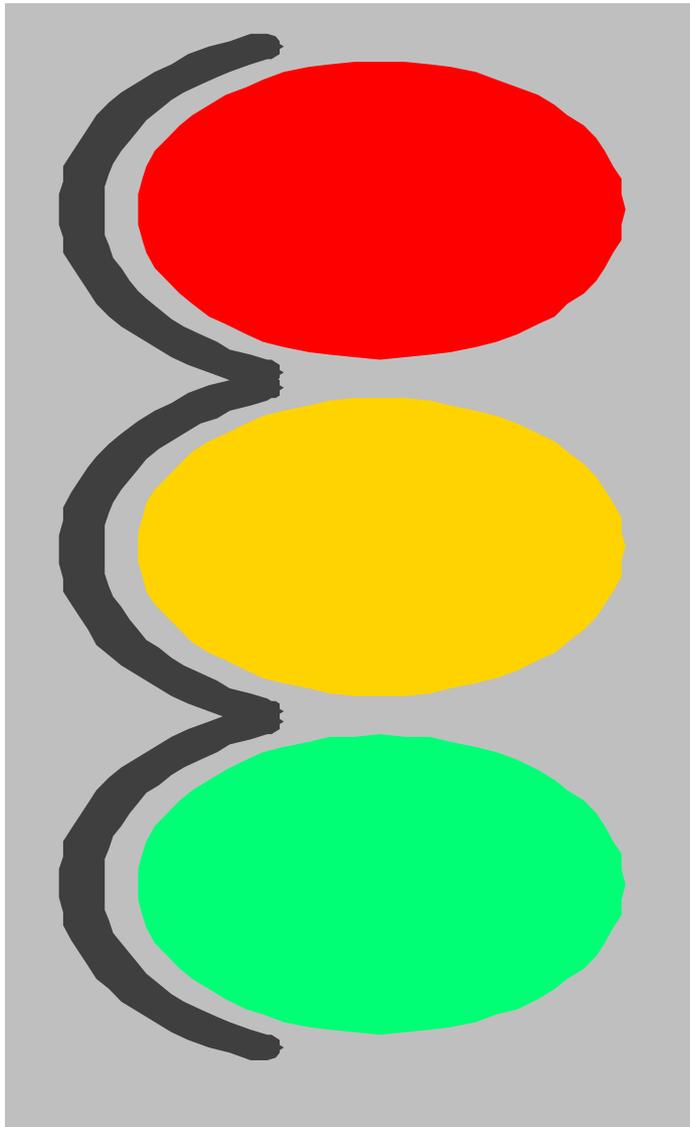
You are nervous  
that if you tell  
your friend  
something  
personal, s/he  
will tell other  
people at  
school.



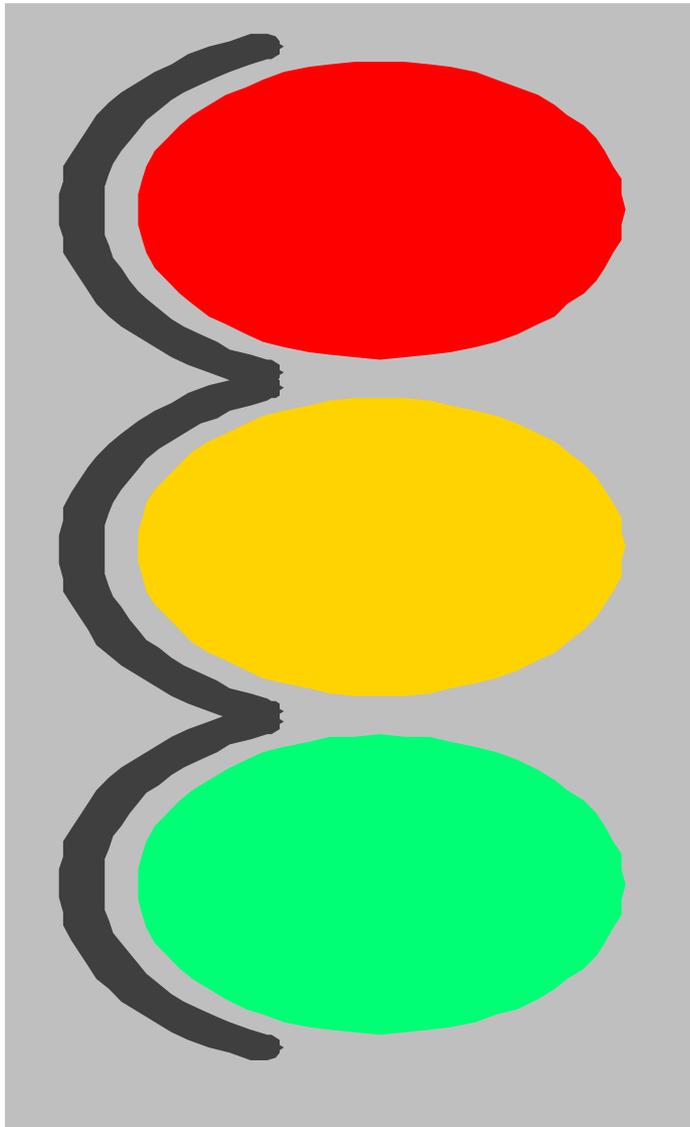
Your friend  
sometimes  
makes fun  
of you.



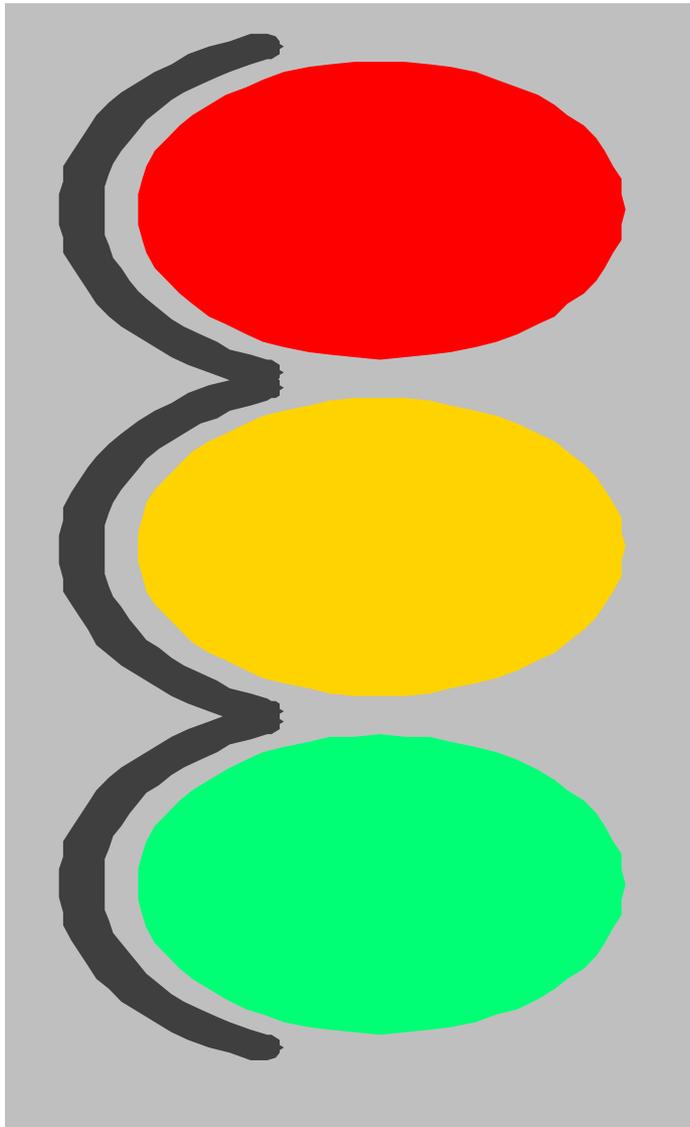
You rarely  
get to plan  
what the  
two of you  
will do  
together.



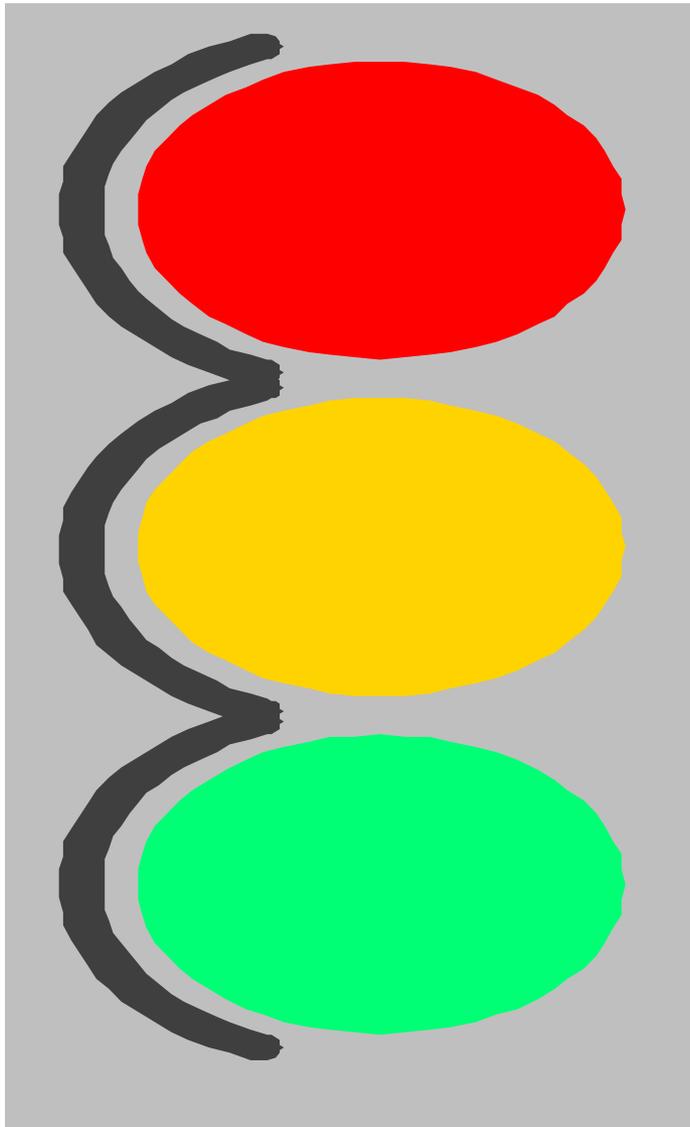
Your friend  
tells you not  
to hang out  
with certain  
people.



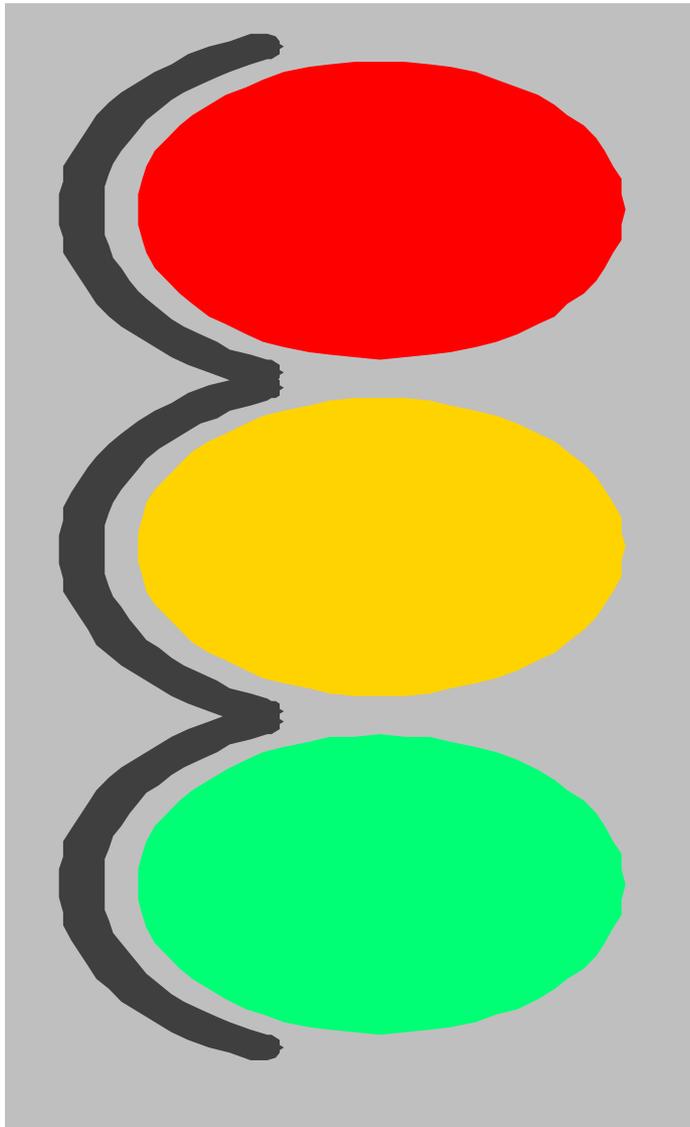
You say that you agree with your friend, even when you really don't. You are afraid they won't be your friend anymore if you disagree.



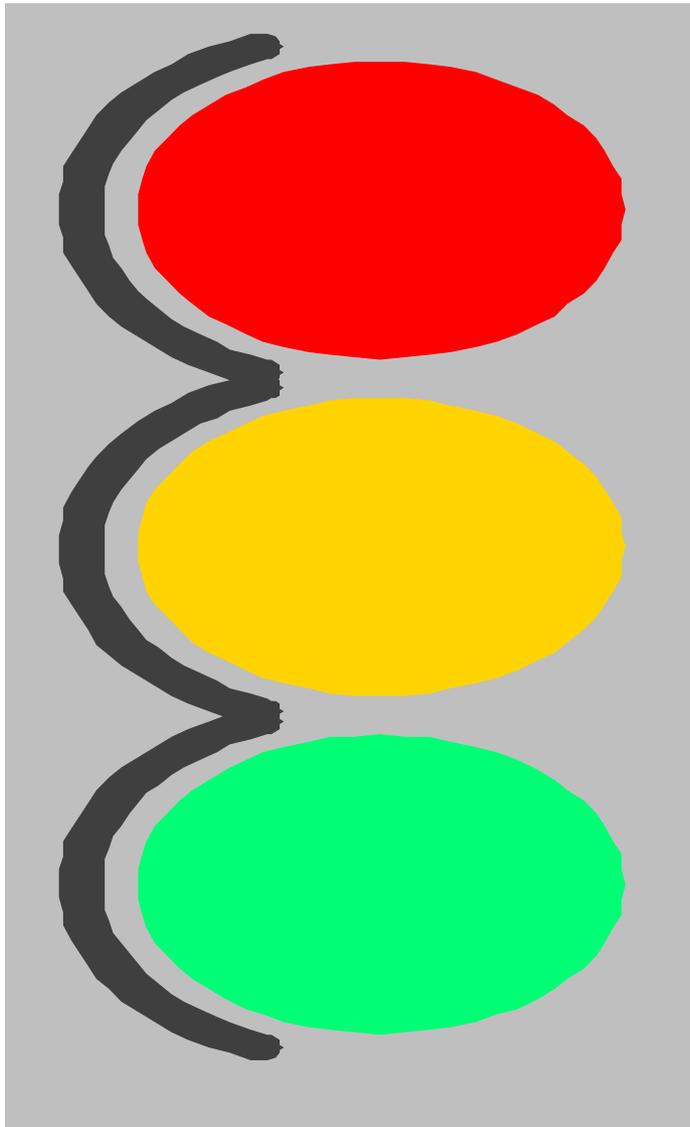
You usually  
feel happy  
when you  
are with  
this person.



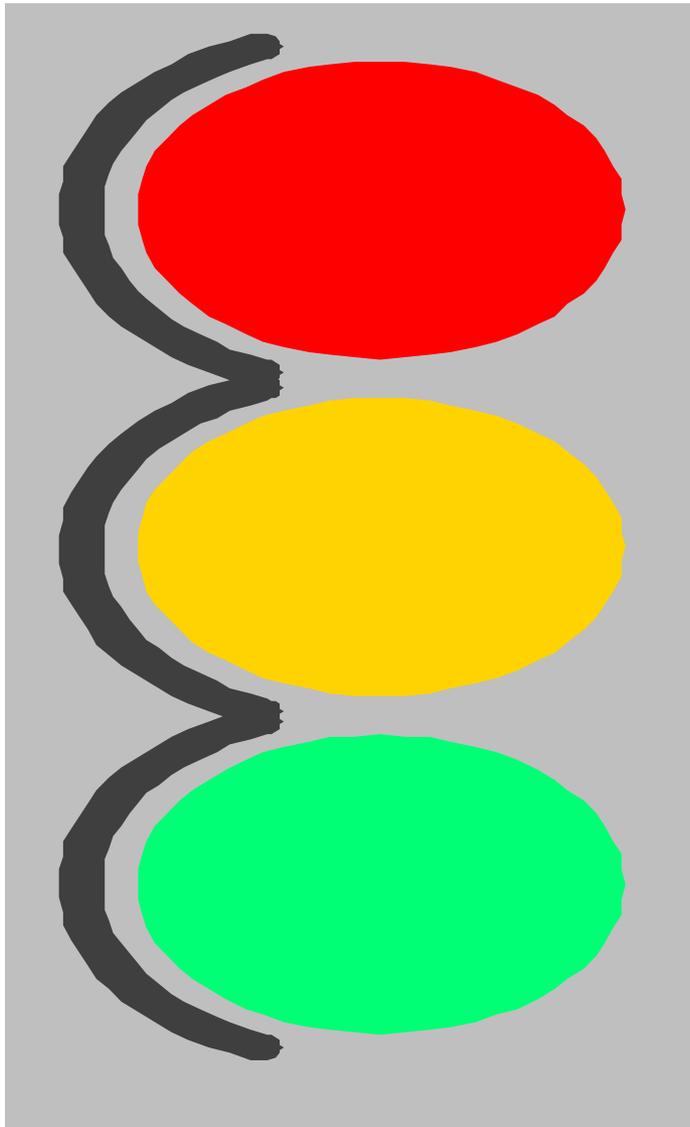
Your friend  
respects  
your  
feelings and  
your  
opinions.



Your friend  
talks to  
you about  
his/her  
feelings.



Your friend  
is happy  
when good  
things  
happen to  
you.



You enjoy  
being with this  
person, but  
you also enjoy  
spending time  
with other  
friends.

# Homework Assignment



## Solving Problems In Friendships

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Everyone will have some difficult times in their friendships. Even in the best of friendships, problems do arise. It is important that you are able to know the difference between good friendships and not-so-good friendships. One way you can do this is to decide if the problems you face with your friend are “warning signs” or “unhealthy/bad signs” in your friendship. By now, you have played the Friendship Stoplight Game with your class. Remember that “warning signs” make you feel a little worried about your friendship, while “bad signs” make you feel very uncomfortable.

Think of a time when you had a problem with a friend. For this homework assignment, you will be writing a solution to a problem in a friendship. The solution can be something you actually *did* to solve a problem, or it can be something you might do if the problem came up again. If you cannot think of a problem in your own life, please provide a solution to either Caitlin’s or Taylor’s problem which are listed on the following page.

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On a lined piece of paper, complete all three tasks below.

- Task # 1:** In one or two sentences, describe the problem you faced with your friend OR write down that you will be trying to solve Caitlin’s or Taylor’s problem.
- Task # 2:** Explain why you think the problem is a “warning sign” or a “bad sign”.
- Task # 3:** Write a solution that you used, or that a person could use, to solve the problem. If you are not sure how to solve the problem, try writing a few ideas that you think might work.

# Homework Assignment



## Solving Problems In Friendships

### Caitlin's Problem:

Caitlin and Suli are best friends. They see each other every day at school and sometimes get together on the weekend. Two weeks ago, an exchange student named Heather joined their class. Caitlin likes Heather and she wants to be her friend. Suli is not happy about this. Suli is jealous of the attention Caitlin is paying Heather and she is nervous she will lose Caitlin's friendship. Suli tells Caitlin not to be friends with Heather. Caitlin wants to be friends with *both* Suli *and* Heather. Caitlin is scared that Suli will be mad at her and stop being friends with her if she keeps spending time with Heather.

How can Caitlin solve this problem in her friendship with Suli?

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### Taylor's Problem:

Taylor and Lee are good buddies. They sit beside each other in class. Lee is really funny and he makes Taylor laugh. Sometimes, Lee acts like a "class clown". Taylor likes school and is a good student. Lee struggles in school, usually goofs around during class and often gets in trouble with their teacher. When Taylor is trying to pay attention in class, Lee often talks to him and writes notes to him. Their teacher sent home a note to Taylor's parents telling them that he is not paying attention in class. Taylor is not happy. He usually feels proud because he is a good student. Now, Taylor is nervous that his grades will drop but he is also worried that if he does not act like Lee, he will lose his friend.

How can Taylor solve this problem in his friendship with Lee?

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Criteria	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Student thoroughly completed all three tasks					
Quality of the solution(s) provided					

Grade out of 10 .....

/ 10



## Agree or Disagree?

Read the following statements by yourself. Check off whether you agree or disagree in column 1. Think about the reasons why. Then, share your answers with a classmate. Give reasons for your choices. After talking it over, if you change your mind, check off your second answer in column 2.

Statements	COLUMN - 1		COLUMN - 2	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1. Girls are different from boys.				
2. Girls are better babysitters than boys.				
3. Boys are naturally better at sports.				
4. Being a secretary is a woman's job.				
5. Being a construction worker is a man's job.				
6. It's not right for little boys to play with dolls.				
7. Little girls shouldn't be playing with cars and trucks.				