

The Need

Students with developmental and physical disabilities are often isolated, ignored and invisible on school campuses, eating lunch alone or at segregated special education tables. In class, they typically spend time with peers with special needs, limiting their opportunity to interact with nondisabled students. Sadly, they are often the targets of bullying...



Who We Are

Circle of Friends (CoF) is a K-12 school inclusion program for students with special needs that takes place at lunch on campus. Social and language skills improve for all students. CoF breaks down barriers as students learn that we all want to be accepted for who we are... and we all want friends. CoF promotes understanding at schools and within communities.

What We Do

FOSTER UNDERSTANDING

CoF builds a circle of nondisabled peers around a student with special needs. Starting with weekly lunches, they gain an understanding that we are all more alike than different.

INSPIRE ACCEPTANCE

As students spend time together, they see that we each possess unique strengths and talents. This creates a culture of acceptance at school.

BUILD FRIENDSHIPS

Genuine friendships grow as students share common interests, support each other, and just have fun together!

CREATE INCLUSION

Student leaders help plan activities on campus and in the community. The line between disabled and nondisabled is erased and real inclusion occurs. Lives are touched and lives are changed!



Outcomes

Kindness is contagious! The Circle of Friends program increases engagement and cooperation among students of all abilities, promoting a school culture of respect and acceptance.

- Students with disabilities develop genuine friendships and improve social skills
- General education students develop compassion and leadership
- Bullying decreases, creating safer schools and communities

Learn More, Follow Us!





"My sweet daughter graduated from high school last night. Years ago her teacher brought the Circle of Friends program to their school...Circle of Friends has made a huge difference in not only my daughter's life but also the young adults at her school."

-Sarah Corley, CoF Parent

OUR MISSION

The mission of Circle of Friends is to provide inclusion for students with disabilities on school campuses by establishing the understanding and acceptance of differences, building genuine friendships, decreasing bullying and making a significant social impact within communities nationwide.

EMPATHY: AN ANTIDOTE TO BULLYING

- More than one out of every five students report being bullied at school.
- Students with special needs are 2-3 times more likely to be the target of bullying.
- More than half of bullying stops when a peer intervenes.

*Circle of Friends makes schools a
safer place for everyone!*



CONTACT US

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Circle of Friends
THE PATH TO INCLUSION

*Changing Lives...
One Friendship at a Time*

