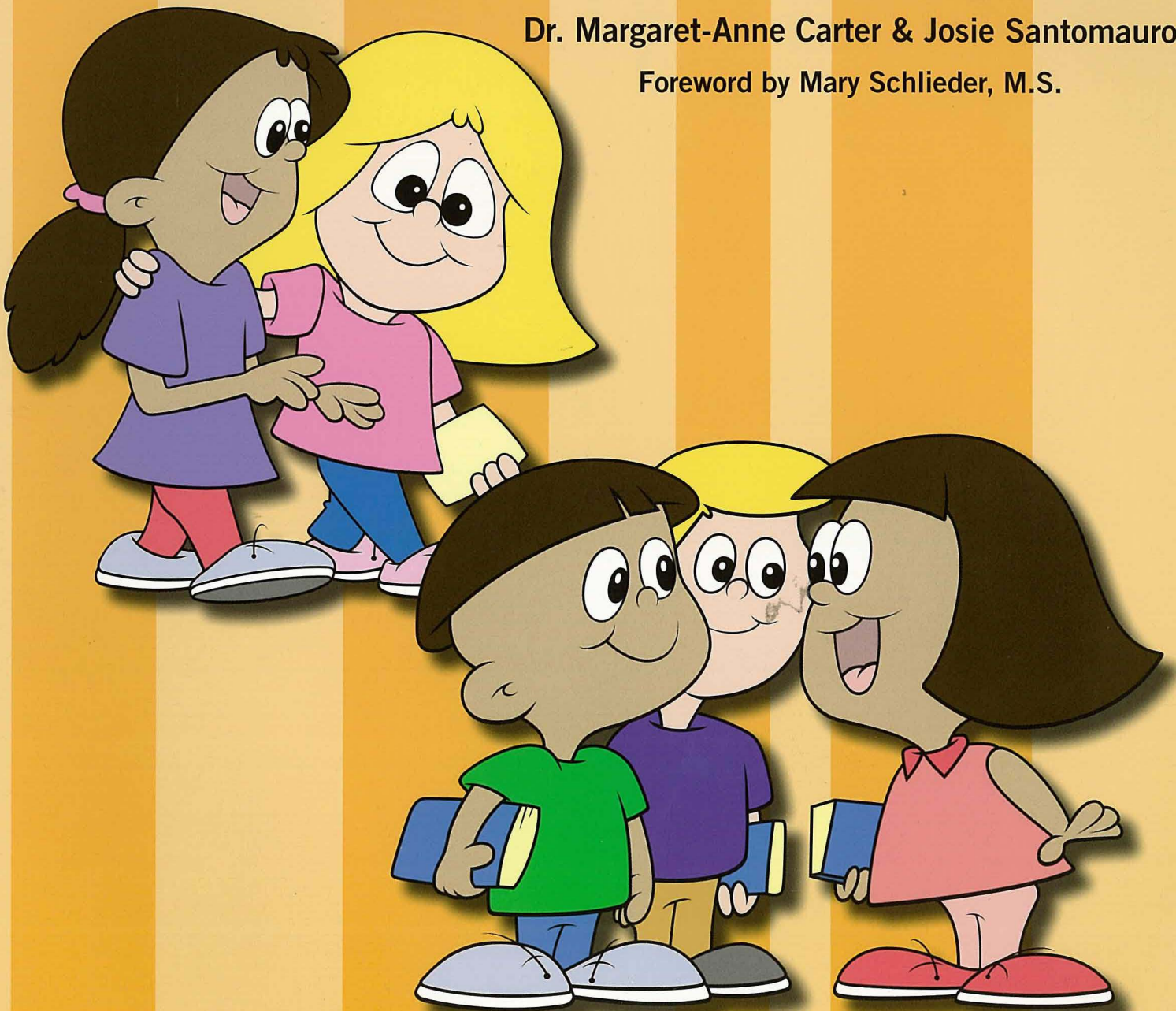


Friendly Facts

A Fun, Interactive Resource to Help Children Explore
the Complexities of Friends and Friendship

Dr. Margaret-Anne Carter & Josie Santomauro

Foreword by Mary Schlieder, M.S.



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The only way to have a friend is to be one.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

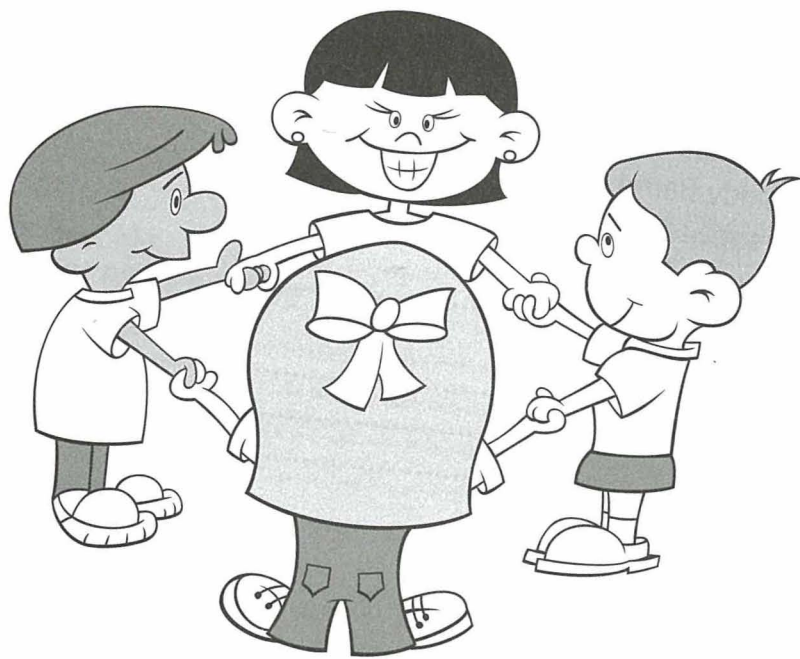
What is a friend? A single soul in two bodies.

Aristotle

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Foreword

Oh, the exciting life of a special education teacher!

A typical day starts with a before-school IEP meeting, followed by a phone call from a parent to bring me up to speed on her son's medical information and a quick check of the most pressing emails from my principal and colleagues. Then a few minutes spent on a mental inventory of the supplies I'll need for my first lesson, a quick conference with my paraprofessionals to go over the game plan for the day before I greet my students at the door. And, all of this before the buses have even arrived!

In my role as a special educator, I have the opportunity to teach students with special needs every day. My students are amazing! They have unique personalities and talents easily recognized by most adults, but less obvious to their peers simply because often their social interactions are few and far between. All children have a universal need to feel accepted. Children with special challenges long to be chosen to join in a game at recess, to have a seat saved for them at lunch, or to share conversation on the bus. And the parents and teachers in their lives wish this for them, too.

Yet, in this age of increased academic accountability, where do we find the time to teach students friendship skills that are so important? Dr. Margaret-Anne Carter and Josie Santomauro have literally provided educators and parents the gift of time with *Friendly Facts*. All the work has been done.

Friendly Facts is a comprehensive program that teaches children with social skills needs about five categories of friendship: what a friend is, how to be a friend, the process of making friends, characteristics of true friends, and how to keep friends. The book's interactive format not only makes learning fun for both students and teachers, it also ensures that children retain what they learn and have plenty of opportunities to practice both individually and in groups.

In my crazy, busy teaching world, *Friendly Facts* is a welcome, easy-to-use tool I can add to my bag of tricks. I appreciate the work these authors have done so that at the end of the day, as I reflect upon each little social triumph my students have achieved in making friends, in being a friend, I will have had the opportunity to make a difference. A special thanks to Margie and Josie for helping to make this possible.

Mary Schlieder, M.S.

2008 Nebraska Teacher of the Year; author of *With Open Arms: Creating School Communities of Support for Kids with Social Challenges Using Circle of Friends, Extracurricular Activities, and Learning Teams*

Fun, interactive activities help children ages 7-11 make and keep friends ... in the process they learn skills that will last a life time.

"*Friendly Facts* is fantastic! This user-friendly program is full of fun and engaging activities to help develop social insight and understanding in elementary-aged children. It is a wonderful resource that can be used by anyone!"

- Judith Coucouvanis, MA, PMHCNS-BC, author of *Super Skills: A Social Skills Group Program for Children* and *The Potty Journey: Guide to Toilet Training Children with Special Needs Including Autism and Related Disorders*

"Making friends can be difficult for kids with ASD. This book does a great job of explaining what a friend is and how to be a friend. I really liked the lists and the worksheets. I think they will be very helpful to kids everywhere!"

- Jordan Blackwell, 11, diagnosed with autism, national presenter, and co-author of the *2010 Hidden Curriculum Calendar for Kids*

"*Friendly Facts* is a well-written, easily accessible and fun way to discover 'facts' about friendship. Gaining friends and maintaining friendships is an art that takes cultivating. This workbook is a neat, contemporary, and interesting way to explore together, whether in small groups or as an individual with another person (it takes two to build a friendship), the many facets of building successful relationships. I highly recommend this book to any explorer who is searching to understand the art of friendship and who wants a variety of maps to assist in uncovering the journey."

- Dr. Wendy Lawson, author of *Understanding and Working with the Spectrum of Autism: An Insider's View and Friendship the Aspie Way*

"*Friendly Facts* is a fantastic educational resource that you can just pick up and start using. It is a must-read for parents and professionals supporting a child on the autism spectrum. The book is a product of the authors' combined personal and professional experience and is the first hands-on how-to manual addressing crucial preteen friendships. The social complexities of friendship are deconstructed through a series of delightful activities and games. Friendship is cleverly demystified into how to identify who your friends are, how to be a good friend, and how to make and keep friendships. *Friendly Facts* teaches skills that are vital to children with ASD as they move forward towards high school and more complex social challenges."

- Rachael Bareket, MSC, author of *Playing It Right – Social Skills Activities for Parents and Teachers of Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Including Asperger Syndrome and Autism*

"Thank you, Josie and Margaret, for another excellent book for children with ASD. Human interaction is one of the most misunderstood areas of life skills, and this interactive book will guide children to make and maintain friendships."

- Stefanie Evans, Honorary Secretary of Asperger Services Australia

Dr. Margaret-Anne Carter is an educational consultant in care and education settings across Australia. She is recognized as an exemplary educator, creating teaching and learning environments that are inclusive of all children. Margaret-Anne is the designer of high-quality, up-to-date professional development resource materials based on current research and legislation and tailored to children's social behavior and emotional well-being. The author of books, curriculum texts, and parenting resources, she regularly presents at conferences and publishes in scholarly journals.

Josie Santomauro is a full-time writer (www.booksbyjosie.com.au). She is the author of 14 fiction books for children/young adults and 11 resources on Asperger Syndrome, including *Asperger Download – A Guide to Help Teenage Males with Asperger Syndrome Tackle Life's Challenges* (with son Damian), *Pirates: An Early-Years Group Program for Developing Social Understanding and Social Competence for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Related Challenges* and *Space Travelers*, the latter two co-authored by Margaret-Anne Carter and published by AAPC.



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