

THE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE MAKE YOU STRONGER.



DRUG AWARENESS WEEK



**YOU KNOW
ALL ABOUT
SOCIAL
MEDIA.**

**BUT HOW
ABOUT YOUR
OWN SOCIAL
NETWORK?**

**WHICH PEOPLE
IN YOUR LIFE
WOULD BE THERE
IF YOU REALLY
NEEDED THEM?**



There are a lot of people in your life. Some you're close with, others less so. All of these people are part of what's called your social network. In a social network, there are people you trust—people who are there for you when you need them, who listen to you and help you find a solution when you've got a problem. There are also people you share interests and do things with—people you like being around and want to listen to and help when they've got a problem.

WHO'S IN YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK?

- > Your friends: people you spend a lot of time with, but also people you're happy to see socially, like school friends, friends in your neighborhood, and the people you do sports or other extracurricular activities with
- > Your parents, brothers and sisters, and cousins
- > Other adults you get along well with, like grandparents, uncles and aunts, or a teacher, coach, or neighbor

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT HAVING A SOCIAL NETWORK OF PEOPLE WHO ARE THERE FOR YOU?

It lets you:

- > Talk about anything, express yourself, feel understood, and know that someone shares your thoughts and feelings
- > Encourage others and be encouraged, and share advice and useful information
- > Do things with other people and just hang out
- > Find out how other people think and feel, which helps you to understand them and helps them feel understood
- > Know that someone's there for you when you're having a hard time
- > Give and receive love and affection

Building connections with people you trust helps you feel loved and appreciated. It also helps you learn to be assertive, listen to others, and communicate. Using these skills lets you learn more about yourself and the people around you. You'll gain confidence and make better decisions, no matter the situation!

It's good to know that people care about you and are there for you when you need them!

« « "I had a hard time when my parents separated. Luckily my cousin was there for me. She listened to me and would invite me out to the movies with her and her friends to get my mind off things."

- Alex

« « "My Aunt Claudia and I are close and she's really sporty, so when I feel like chatting or getting some exercise, she's the first person I call!"

- Sophie

« « "When I need someone to talk to, I know my sister's there for me, but the person I share the most with is my friend Marianne. We're really similar. We like the same things and we think the same way."

- Stephanie



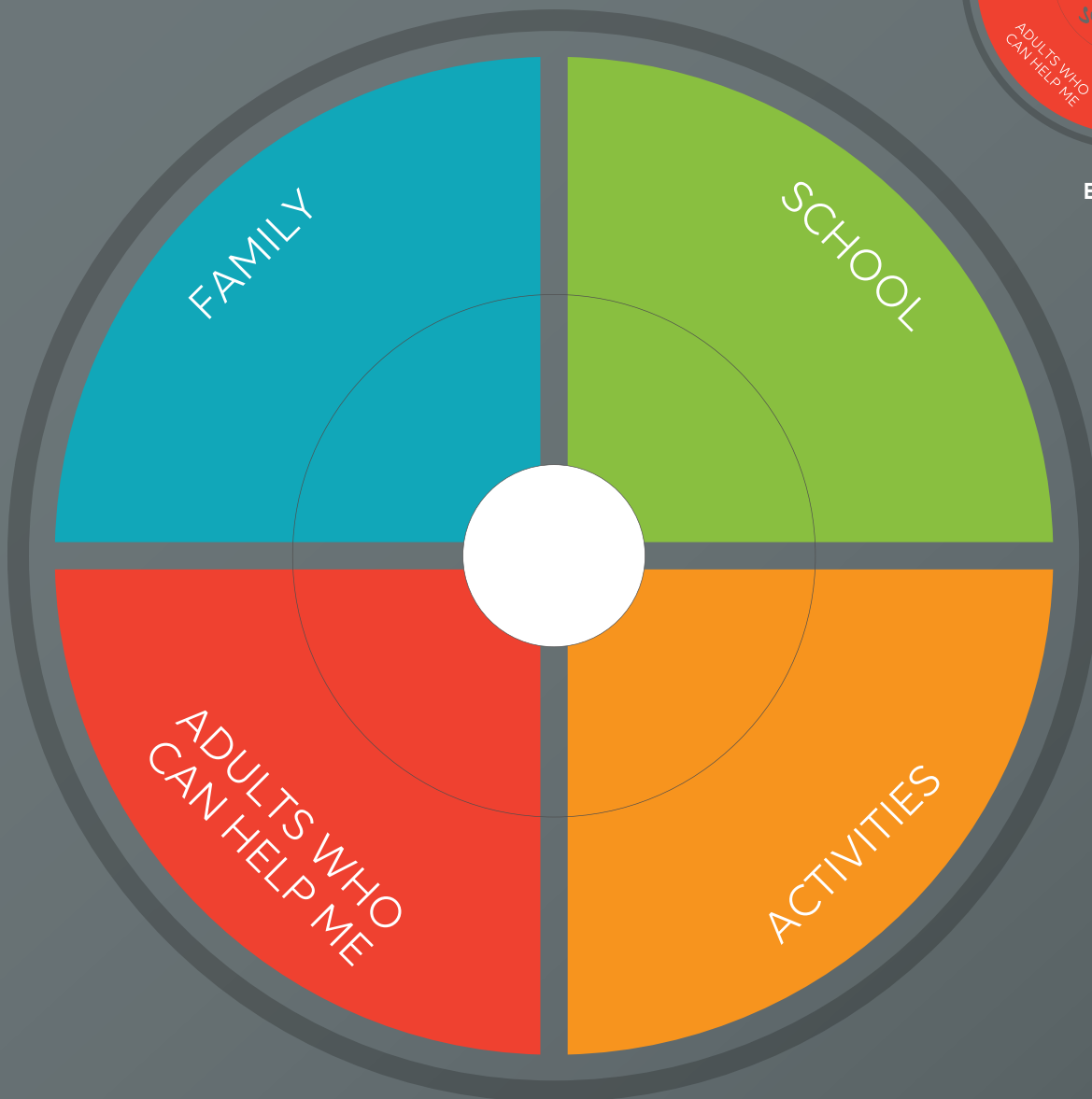
MAP OUT YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK!

Use the example below to place the people in your life on the map.

1. First, put your name in the middle of the map.
2. Write the names of the people in your network for each section.
3. The closer you feel to someone, the closer their name will be to yours on the map.
4. You can put the same person in more than one section.



EXAMPLE



KEEPING AND GROWING YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK

Did you know

you can grow your social network your whole life?

It's true! Here are a few ways of developing your social skills and building or keeping a positive social network.

BE ASSERTIVE



BEING ASSERTIVE means knowing how to express your opinions, feelings, and needs. It also means respecting the needs and ideas of others. It's an attitude that comes from knowing that you matter and have the power to act on your needs and surroundings.



BEING ASSERTIVE gives people the chance to get to know the real you. It helps you build a social network of people like you, who will like the real you.

Of the situations below, which do you think are examples of being assertive?

1. Terry asks his friend Tom to help him with math.
2. Every time Katherine makes a mistake, she withdraws and sulks.
3. Jennifer asks her mom to stop talking to her like a baby.
4. Theo decides to play basketball instead of playing an instrument like his brother.
5. Julie does everything that her best friend Stella does, even when she doesn't feel like it.

If you answered 1, 3, and 4, congratulations!

You've understood that:

- > **About example 2:** Being assertive also means being okay with making a mistake, and knowing that no one's perfect. It also means that you can say when you're disappointed or angry about making a mistake.
- > **About example 5:** Being assertive means knowing how to say no, even to your best friend. Part of looking after yourself is doing things that you like to do.

KNOW HOW TO INTERACT



Getting better at interacting with other people is totally possible!

Here are a few examples of people who could be better at interacting, and things that everyone can do to improve.

THE "I'M ALWAYS RIGHT" KIND OF PERSON

Thomas often interrupts people. He finishes his friends' sentences and criticizes everyone's ideas and opinions.

WAYS OF IMPROVING

- > Good communication starts with good listening! Maybe that's why we have two ears and just one mouth—so that we can listen twice as much and talk a little less! Besides, listening means learning! Hearing someone else's opinion will help you learn about them and the topic being discussed.
- > Ask yourself if what you're saying could hurt someone's feelings. If you think the answer is yes, maybe you don't need to say it or maybe there's a different way of saying it!

THE "RETREATS BEHIND A WALL OF SILENCE" KIND OF PERSON


Audrey barely talks and doesn't respond to verbal attacks. She says the same things as her best friend, so no one knows what she really likes or doesn't like.

WAYS OF IMPROVING

- > Sometimes, people who are shy worry about what other people think of them, which means they pay less attention to what other people are saying. To be a good friend, when you're feeling shy, you can:
 - Start by taking a big breath and letting it all out at once
 - Decide not to play the "I'll bet he thinks that I think..." game
 - Tell yourself that sharing and being interested in others is a lot better than wondering what people think about you!
- > Another idea is to talk about yourself a little each day with your parents or with friends you trust. You can start by talking about a good thing that happened that day. Slowly, you'll learn to open up. Every person is a treasure just waiting to be discovered. Keeping yourself hidden away from the world just wouldn't be fair! 😊

Being interested in others makes you interesting!

When you really listen to other people and ask them questions during a discussion, they feel important. Everyone wants friends who really listen!



**EVEN WITH A
GREAT CIRCLE
OF FAMILY AND
FRIENDS, YOU
MAY NEED
SOMEONE
TO TALK TO.**

Even with a great circle, there are times when you may want to talk to someone who isn't a family member or friend. You might turn to someone else in your life, like a teacher or the school nurse.

If you don't have someone that you feel comfortable talking to or asking for advice, you can call Tel-jeunes, a confidential helpline created especially for young people like you.



TEL-JEUNES

1-800-263-2266 (or teljeunes.com)
