

Aim: To look at different types of friends including boy and girl friends

Optional Resource: Great Stories for Kids Volume 3, by Jerry D Thomas © 1999, Pacific Press Publishing Association, page 79, "Mystery of the missing reindeer"

How many different people do you recon you see every day? 10? 20? 50? 100?

Everyday we see people; some people we know, other people we don't. Of the people we know, some we only know a little bit, and others we know a lot better – some people are what we call acquaintances, others are our friends or even our best friends.

Acquaintances: You know what they look like; you might smile at them or say hello; you might know their name, but you probably don't know a lot about them. You've probably never been to their house, unless they had a party and invited the whole class. You probably don't know what their favourite things are, and you don't really care.

Friends: You know their name, you often play together and you talk together; you like doing some of the same things; you may or may not have been to their house. Some people have lots of friends while others only have a few.

Best Friends: Not everyone has a best friend. But if you have one you know it. You spend as much time together as you can; you always sit together. You probably like many of the same things; you might try and dress alike, or even share clothes. You probably go to each other's houses, and do things together on the weekends sometimes. When you don't see them for a few days you miss them. If you had to move away you would really miss your best friend, and you would probably write to each other, at least for a while.

Boy Friend / Girl Friend: Have you ever been afraid of catching boy germs or girl germs? Most people go through that stage, but then somewhere around the teenage years something happens, and suddenly you start noticing girls/boys in a different way.

Having a boy friend or girl friend can be exciting; it can make you feel special. God designed us to want to get married and have a family of our own when we grow up, and having a girl friend or boy friend can be the first step.

What do your friends do at lunch time? Do you run around a play games, or do you like to sit and talk about boys / girls? Do the people in your class have boy friends or girl friends?

A lot depends on what school you go to and what your friends are doing; and sometimes parents say you're not allowed a boy or girl friend until you reach a certain age.

One reason for not having a serious boy friend or girl friend too soon is that there are some things which you need to learn; things which are easier to learn when you are part of a large group of friends.

- You are a valuable person. You don't need to have a boy friend or girl friend. God loves you just the way you are, and your parents love you too, although sometimes parents have trouble showing it. **Read Psalm 139:13-15**
- You need to learn how to work as a part of a team or group **Read Psalm 133:1**
- Learn to make your own decisions; if others are doing something you think is wrong or unsafe, or that you really don't want to do, you need to make your own decision. It takes a strong person (strong in character and strong in your mind) to do the right thing when other people call you a chicken or tease you. **Read Proverbs 1:10**
- Learn to be a leader, to influence your friends to make good decisions **(There is a good story about this in Great Stories for Kids Volume 3, "Mystery of the missing reindeer" - it would be worth summarising it and reviewing the final points from it.)**

And finally, before you have a serious boy friend or girl friend you should have a talk with your parents about what you can do with your boy friend or girl friend. Boy friends and girl friends can be exciting, and many people have been caught up in the excitement and done things they shouldn't have. If you follow God's rules and your parent's rules and advice, then you will have a much happier life.