

THE
13
LIFE HACKS



Hack 1
Healthy Friendships:
Teacher Notes

A project of



Government Criteria Alignment Chart

Framework	Criterion / Theme	Covered in Hack 1
PSHE (Health & Wellbeing)	H1: Recognise and talk about emotions	Workbook tasks on friendship types and instincts (pp.13–16)
	H6: Strategies for maintaining healthy relationships	Exploring healthy friendship types and communication
	H10: Managing peer influence	Popularity vs. authenticity, red flag friendships
	H11: Self-respect and happiness	Being yourself and valuing inner worth
	H12: Impact of actions on others	Reflecting on emotional impact of behaviours
	PSHE (Relationships)	R1: Positive relationship characteristics
R2: Trust, respect, communication		Trust and assertiveness activities (pp.14–21)
R3: Bullying and seeking help		Recognising unsafe friendships and instinct signals
R6: Managing conflict		Healthy disagreement and personal reflection
R13: Changing relationships		Letting go of toxic relationships, trusting instinct

Government Criteria Alignment Chart - Continued

Framework	Criterion / Theme	Covered in Hack 1
RSHE (Respectful Relationships)	Kindness, boundaries, unhealthy patterns	Red flags, trust and honesty (pp.14-15)
RSHE (Online Relationships)	Peer pressure and social judgement (light touch)	Discussion on popularity and emotional safety
Safeguarding / KCSIE	Recognising distress or social harm	Instinct-based reflection and emotional red flags
	Knowing when and how to get help	Identifying safe people and trusted adults
British Values	Individual Liberty: choosing true friends	Confidence and friendship choices
	Mutual Respect: empathy and acceptance	Working with different personality types
SMSC – Spiritual	Self-reflection, emotional honesty	Instinct, values, self-awareness reflection
SMSC – Moral	Right vs. wrong in friendships	Recognising red flags, jealousy themes
SMSC – Social	Empathy, jealousy, communication	Group tasks and discussion on social experiences
SMSC – Cultural	Respecting personality and value differences	Respect for difference in friendship styles

Learning Focus

This chapter helps students understand what healthy friendships look and feel like, explore their own friendship patterns, and identify red flags. It also encourages emotional awareness, self-reflection, and confidence-building in social situations.

Key Themes

- Types of healthy friendships
- Recognising unhealthy dynamics
- Popularity vs. authenticity
- Boundaries and respect
- Trusting instincts
- Building confidence in relationships
- Emotional impact of jealousy

Discussion Prompts

True vs. Fake Friendships

- What's the difference between being friendly and being a true friend?
- Can someone be fun to be around but still not a good friend?
- What makes someone a “trusted” friend?

Popularity and Peer Pressure

- Is being popular always a good thing?
- What are the risks of trying to fit in too much?
- Have you ever felt pressure to act differently around certain people?

Friendships and Self-Image

- Have you ever had a friend who made you feel smaller instead of stronger?
- Can friendships affect how you see yourself?
- What kind of friend would you like to be — and why?

Changing and Growing

- Can you change how you behave in a friendship without changing who you are?
- When should you walk away from a friendship?
- What makes it hard to make new friends — and how can we build confidence?

Discussion Prompts

Trusting Instincts

- When should you trust your gut feeling in a friendship?
- What are some red flags to watch out for?

Jealousy and Self-Acceptance

- Why is it so easy to compare ourselves to our friends?
- How can jealousy damage a friendship — even if you never say it out loud?
- What's one way to shift from jealousy to self-acceptance?
- Why is it powerful to feel proud of who you are, even if someone else seems “better” at something?

Imaginative Group Tasks

1. Guess the Friendship Type

How it works:

Groups are given short friendship scenarios. Each group must identify which of the six healthy friendship types is being portrayed.
{see Appendix A for scenario examples}

Why it works:

Encourages students to recognise a range of positive friendship qualities and reflect on what types they have in their own lives.

2. Emotion Charades: Friend Edition

How it works:

Pairs or groups act out different friendship-related feelings (e.g., feeling left out, appreciated, or pressured). The class guesses the emotion and possible situation.

Why it works:

Builds emotional awareness, empathy, and non-verbal communication skills.

3. Red Flag Radar

How it works:

Groups are given a set of friendship behaviours and must sort them into "Green flag" (healthy), "Yellow flag" (potentially concerning), or "Red flag" (unhealthy).
{See Appendix B for a set of different friendship behaviours}

Why it works:

Teaches students to trust their gut instincts and notice early warning signs in friendships.

Imaginative Group Tasks

4. Confidence Card Flip

How it works:

Pairs are given common insecure thoughts (see Appendix C for examples) about socialising (e.g., “I’m too boring,” “They won’t want to talk to me”). Their task is to flip each one into a confident or balanced version.

Why it works:

Strengthens students’ ability to challenge self-doubt and build social confidence.

5. Friendship Tree

How it works:

Students draw a tree with four branches. On each branch, they write or illustrate:

- What I value in a friend
- What I bring to a friendship
- A friendship challenge I’ve faced
- One way I want to grow as a friend

They can add leaves, fruit, or roots to symbolise strengths, growth, and support.

Why it works:

Encourages reflection, self-expression, and emotional insight while reinforcing the themes of healthy friendship and personal growth.

6. Jealousy in Action

How it works:

- In small groups, students are given a short scene to act out showing a jealous reaction (e.g., feeling left out, comparing, putting others down).
- After the first performance, they “swap the script” and re-act the scene with a healthy response — e.g., showing gratitude, self-confidence, or kindness.

Why it works:

Students get to *feel* the contrast between negative and positive responses. It brings jealousy out of the abstract and into real-life decision-making.

7. What I Do Have”

How it works:

Each student makes a two-column list.

- In Column 1: “Things I’ve felt jealous about” (no names or people — just themes like “popularity,” “grades,” “friendship groups,” etc.).
- In Column 2: “Things I already have that matter” — including qualities, values, experiences, and relationships they’re grateful for.

Why it works:

This creates a natural shift from comparison to gratitude, and reinforces the message that *everyone has something valuable — including you.*

Torah Perspectives

Theme in Hack	Source	Hebrew & English (in same cell)	Use in Lesson
Friendships shape who we become	Rambam, Hilchos De'os 6:1	דרכו של אדם להמשך בדעותיו ובמעשיו אחרי רעיו – A person is naturally drawn to the attitudes and behaviours of their friends.	Highlights the deep influence of peer groups.
Learning from everyone you meet	Taanis 7a	ומתלמידי יותר מכלם – I have learned most from my students.	Emphasises that friendships and interactions shape us.
Choosing friends wisely	Chovos Halevavos 8:3	התאמצו להשיג רעים נאמנים וטהורים – Strive to find loyal and pure friends.	Reinforces the “Types of Healthy Friends” section.
A true friend helps us grow	Mesillas Yesharim 23	חבר אמת... המוכיח באהבה ומצילו מרע – A true friend rebukes with love and helps his friend avoid harm.	Encourages students to value honesty in friendship.
You are influenced by your social circle	Taanis 23a	או חברותא או מיתהא – Either companionship or death.	Shows how crucial positive social connection is.
Don't try to be someone you're not	Sanhedrin 106a	הלך הגמל לבקש קרנים ונקצצו אוזניו – The camel went to demand horns and lost its ears.	Connects with pressure to fit in or change to please others.
Be comfortable in your own skin	Bamidbar Rabbah 16	ונהו בעינינו כחגבים וכן היינו בעיניהם – We felt like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and so we appeared to them.	Explores how low self-image affects how others see us.
You can't always know what others think	Bereishis Rabbah 64:2	שבעה דברים נסתרים מן האדם... – Seven things are hidden... including another's thoughts.	Counters mind-reading and social anxiety.
Jealousy destroys from within	Mishlei 14:30	רוב עצמות קנאה – Envy is rot to the bones.	Shows the internal damage of comparing yourself to others.
Everyone is different – and that's good	Berachos 58a	כשם שאין פרוצופיהו שוות, כך דעותיהו שוות – Just as no two faces are the same, no two opinions are the same.	Supports embracing differences and personality types.
Everyone has their own mission	Chafetz Chaim, Va'eschanan	דע שיש לך כל מה שאאתה צריך להשלים את תפקידך בחיים – Realize you have all you need to fulfil your life's mission.	Counters jealousy and fear of missing out.
True wealth is internal contentment	Pirkei Avos 4:1	איהו עשיר? השמח בחלקו – Who is rich? One who is happy with what he has.	Builds self-worth not based on popularity or appearance.
Greet others with warmth and respect	Pirkei Avos 1:12	הוי מקבל את כל האדם בסבר פנים יפות – Greet every person with a pleasant face.	Encourages kindness, warmth, and inclusion.
We are responsible for our actions	Pirkei Avos 1:17	לא המדרש הוא העקר, אלא המעשה – Study is not the main thing, but action.	Pushes students to put friendship values into practice.

Suggested 4 lesson plan

Lesson 1: What Makes a True Friend?

Learning Focus:

- Understand the 6 types of healthy friendships
- Begin reflecting on one's own friendship patterns
- Differentiate between true and surface-level friendships

Key Themes Covered:

- Types of healthy friendships
- Popularity vs. authenticity
- Self-reflection and emotional insight

Discussion Prompts:

- What's the difference between being friendly and being a true friend?
- What makes someone a "trusted" friend?
- What kind of friend would you like to be — and why?

Activity Options:

- *Guess the Friendship Type*
- *Friendship Tree*

Workbook Pages:

Lesson 2: Red Flags and Boundaries

Learning Focus:

- Recognise unhealthy dynamics in friendships
- Understand when and how to trust your instincts
- Learn about boundaries and respectful friendships

Key Themes Covered:

- Recognising unhealthy dynamics
- Trusting instincts
- Boundaries and respect

Discussion Prompts:

- Can someone be fun to be around but still not a good friend?
- When should you walk away from a friendship?
- What are some red flags to watch out for?

Activity Options:

- *Red Flag Radar*
- *Emotion Charades: Friend Edition*

Workbook Pages:

Suggested 4 lesson plan



Lesson 3: Confidence and Self-Worth in Friendships

Learning Focus:

- Build self-confidence in social interactions
- Address common insecure thoughts
- Understand how self-image impacts friendships

Key Themes Covered:

- Building confidence
- Friendships and self-image
- Respecting personality and value differences (SMSC Cultural)

Discussion Prompts:

- Can friendships affect how you see yourself?
- What makes it hard to make new friends — and how can we build confidence?
- Can you change how you behave in a friendship without changing who you are?

Activity Options:

- *Confidence Card Flip*
- *Friendship Tree (if not already done)*
- *Emotion Charades: Friend Edition* (alternate scenario)

Workbook Pages:

Lesson 4: Jealousy and Self-Acceptance

Learning Focus:

- Identify and reflect on jealousy in friendships
- Learn how to shift from comparison to gratitude
- Celebrate individuality and unique strengths

Key Themes Covered:

- Emotional impact of jealousy
- Self-acceptance
- Respecting difference in friendship styles (SMSC Cultural)

Discussion Prompts:

- Why is it easy to compare ourselves to friends?
- How can jealousy damage a friendship — even if you don't say it?
- What helps you shift from jealousy to self-acceptance?

Activity Options:

- *Jealousy in Action*
- *“What I Do Have” List*
- *Multiple Choice Quiz* (optional recap)
- *Word Search* (consolidation/early finisher)

Workbook Pages:

Appendix A

Healthy Friendship Scenarios

1. The Supporter

Shira had a tough week with family issues. Without her asking, Tali noticed something was off and messaged, “I’m here if you want to talk.” Later that day, she dropped off Shira’s favourite chocolate with a note: *“You’ve got this.”*

2. The Real Deal

Motti told Ari he didn’t feel like going to the party this week. Ari replied, “No worries at all. Let’s just hang another time. I totally get it.” Motti felt relieved that he didn’t have to pretend.

3. The Easy-going

Every time Dovid meets Simcha, they just laugh, chill, and enjoy being together. There’s no drama, no pressure — it’s just fun and easy. Even when they’re silent, it feels peaceful.

4. The Independent

Rina and Leah are good friends, but they don’t speak every day. When they do catch up, it’s like no time has passed. Leah never gets upset when Rina spends time with other friends.

5. The Pillar

Yael was nervous to tell Miriam that her constant lateness was bothering her. But when she finally brought it up, Miriam listened, apologised sincerely, and asked how she could improve.

6. The Trusted

Eli confided in Yossi about something very personal. Two weeks later, Eli saw that Yossi hadn’t mentioned it to anyone — not even in a hint. Eli felt safe, respected, and fully trusted him.

▲ Unhealthy Friendship Scenarios

1. The User

Chana only ever calls Esther when she needs help with homework or wants to borrow something. She never checks in otherwise — and ignores Esther in public unless she needs something.

2. The Pusher

Noam kept pressuring Yonatan to sneak out of the shiur and come with him to a party. Even after Yonatan said no, Noam laughed and said, “Come on, don’t be so boring!”

3. The Stressor

Aviva always makes sarcastic jokes about Batsheva in front of others. Batsheva finds herself feeling anxious, overthinking what she wears, says, and does when she’s around her.

4. The Reliant

Tzvi messages Gavriel ten times a day, pouring out all his worries and expecting instant replies. Gavriel feels totally drained and guilty if he doesn’t respond quickly, even when he’s overwhelmed.

Appendix B

● Friendship Behaviours for Sorting

1. They're happy for you when something good happens.
2. They always want to know where you are and who you're with.
3. They check in when they notice you're quiet.
4. They post things about you online without asking.
5. They tease you in front of others, but say "it's just a joke."
6. They respect your decision when you say no.
7. They get upset if you spend time with other friends.
8. They pressure you to do something that makes you uncomfortable.
9. They keep your private secrets safe.
10. They only message when they need a favour.
11. They constantly put themselves down and rely on you to boost them.
12. They support you when you're going through a hard time.
13. They often ignore your messages but expect instant replies from you.
14. They talk about people behind their backs.
15. They listen to you without interrupting or making it about them.
16. They make you feel anxious or drained after hanging out.
17. They can have fun with you without needing to be the centre of attention.
18. They guilt-trip you for not including them in everything.

Appendix C

Example Insecure Thoughts for Pairs:

1. "They didn't reply straight away — I must have annoyed them."
2. "I wasn't invited — they probably don't really like me."
3. "If I say how I really feel, they'll think I'm too much."
4. "They're friends with someone else now — I've been replaced."
5. "They laughed when I said that — they must think I'm stupid."
6. "I always have to be fun or interesting — or they won't want to be my friend."
7. "I didn't get a compliment back — maybe they're upset with me."
8. "If I set a boundary, they'll stop being my friend."
9. "They haven't invited me in a while — they probably don't want me around."
10. "If I'm not useful, people won't keep me around."