

Sample letter from a parent and teacher about Circle of Friends

Dear Families in Room _____,

This letter is written to let you know about a program that will be offered for interested 1st and 2nd graders in Ms. Emma's class.

I am the mother of Michael. As many of you may know, he is a student in your child's class. Because of his unique learning needs, he receives some specialized instruction each day in addition to being in Ms. Emma's class.

Emma and I are writing to you because we are excited about a program called "Circle of Friends" being used around the country. Our school is working on bringing this program to our school community. As you can appreciate, all children want and need friends. Sometimes children with learning differences or disabilities benefit from having additional support or help to make and maintain friends and peer relations. General education students also often need some assistance in their efforts to connect or interact with their peers who may have learning differences.

The "Circle of Friends" group is a friendly and a bit more formal way to provide information and fun opportunities to hang out, do things together, and engage a classmate who has some disabilities. We have learned from many families that these "circles" have benefited all children, both with and without differences. There are many beautiful stories of growth and discovery for everyone, including families.

We decided to write you so that you are aware of this program. Ms. Emma will be talking about this program in the next week or so with the class and inviting children to participate in this weekly lunch group, which may then grow to include out of school events, planned by the children, with support from me, Ms. Emma and other interested families.

Feel free to call Ms. Emma or me with your ideas, questions, comments, or if you want additional information. If your child isn't interested in participating in the more formal "Circle of Friends," we welcome your interest in helping Michael feel connected to his peers and his community.

We hope this letter will help all of us feel more comfortable in breaking the silence that often accompanies issues of disabilities and differences.

Thank you for the time you took to read this and think about the issues. Don't hesitate to call. We look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Parent Name

Teacher Name