

**Discuss and understand people's differences and why they're beneficial**

At Committee for Children, we strive to foster the safety and well-being of children through social-emotional learning and development. Part of that goal is teaching students about diversity and inclusivity. This exercise, which is adapted from one of our *Second Step* Middle School Program's advisory activities, helps students talk about what may be challenging about understanding other people's differences and how to accept and celebrate them.

**Activity**

**Objective:** Examine the benefits of having friends who are different

**Preparation**

1. If possible, seat the class in a circle.
2. Sit where you can participate comfortably in the discussion.

**Warm-Up**

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question: **Are your friends similar to you or different from you?**

**Discussion**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts:

- **What can make it difficult to make friends with someone who is a different gender, race, or ethnicity?**
- **How can you overcome these difficulties?**
- **Tell us about a friendship you have with someone who's different from you.**
- **Why is this friendship important?**

**Reflection**

Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:

**What are some benefits of being friends with people who are different from you?**

Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.