



Smooth Moves:

Transition Ambassador Training

Revised June 2025 v1

PRIORITY 1-54

1. WHY TRANSITION SUPPORT MATTERS

Starting secondary school can be both exciting and scary for young people. Transition Ambassador training is about equipping students with the tools, confidence, and empathy to support their peers, as they take the next step in their academic journey.

This training is designed to help Transition Ambassadors reflect on their own experiences, learn how to listen and respond supportively, and build a school environment where every student feels like they belong. These notes provide guidance for delivering each section of the training in a clear, engaging, and inclusive way.

Starting secondary school is a major life change for young people. It brings new routines, unfamiliar environments, and different expectations - all at a time when children are already navigating personal, social, and emotional changes. While this transition can be exciting, it can also feel overwhelming or isolating for some.

Effective transition support helps young people feel prepared, welcomed, and understood. It creates space for their questions, worries, and hopes to be heard. One of the most powerful forms of support comes from peers - those who have recently experienced the move themselves. That's why the role of a Transition Ambassador is so valuable.

When schools invest in structured, youth-led transition programmes, they help new students build a sense of belonging from day one. A friendly face in the corridor, someone to walk with to class, or a kind word at lunchtime can make all the difference.

Transition Ambassadors not only support others - they also grow in confidence, empathy, and leadership along the way.

'We deliberately recruited students from our current Year 7's who we knew had struggled with their move to secondary school because we felt that they would have greater insights and empathy with the new Year 7s who might also be struggling.'

Head of Year 7

'We've been able to recruit over 38 Transition Ambassadors as we are going to assign two to every tutor group, so they'll be able to get to know the Year 7's and help them settle in, particularly those who might be more vulnerable.'

Transition Manager

2. WHAT THE TRAINING COVERS

- **Group Agreement:** We begin by creating a respectful space together. When young people help shape the rules, they're more likely to feel safe, speak up, and support each other throughout the day. This models how Ambassadors can help build trust in groups they support.
- **Icebreakers:** These early activities break down barriers and show how many experiences we share - like being nervous on the first day. They help Ambassadors build empathy and practise the kind of inclusive behaviours they'll need to model.

- **Reflecting on Transition:** Ambassadors reflect on what it felt like to move to secondary school. This helps them connect with the worries Year 7s may face and reminds them that many challenges are shared and temporary. Their own stories become valuable tools for reassurance.
- **Dealing with Change and Worries:** We explore the types of change Year 7s face - from new routines to friendships. Ambassadors think about how those changes can affect emotions and confidence, and how small acts of kindness can make a big difference.
- **Understanding Year 7 Needs:** Using creative activities, we explore what Year 7s might need help with - from finding classrooms to managing emotions. This builds awareness and prepares Ambassadors to be proactive, not just reactive.
- **Belonging:** A sense of belonging is vital to emotional well-being and learning. Ambassadors explore what belonging looks and feels like and how they can create this through daily actions - like noticing who's alone, inviting others in, or simply using someone's name.
- **Friendships:** We unpack how friendships shift during transition and what makes a good friend. Ambassadors discuss how to support Year 7s in forming healthy peer relationships and avoiding common pitfalls like exclusion or gossip.
- **Listening Skills:** Active listening is a core Ambassador skill. Through role play and reflection, participants learn how to listen without interrupting, ask open questions, and show they care - skills that build trust and confidence in younger students.
- **Safeguarding & Confidentiality:** Ambassadors learn the boundaries of their role - they are there to notice, not fix. We clarify what to do if someone shares something worrying, and when confidentiality must be broken to keep someone safe.
- **Trusted Adults:** Everyone needs someone to turn to. Ambassadors identify the trusted adults in their school so they can guide Year 7s - and each other - towards safe, supportive people when needed.
- **Reflection & Feedback:** We end by reflecting on what was learned and how each Ambassador can use their strengths. Feedback is collected to improve future sessions, and young people leave with a sense of pride in the role they're stepping into.

'It was so nice to see everyone so engage in the workshop. It was good having someone come in from outside and deliver the training as it certainly made the training, and the students feel more special'

Transition Manager

'The Ambassador's were amazing during our taster days. There were one or two children who were really struggling with the thought of moving to secondary school, but all the Ambassadors were incredibly patient and thoughtful, and made such a difference'

Pastoral Lead

4. TRAINING CONTENT

The transition ambassador training drew on an evidence-based peer support programme developed by the Anna Freud Centre (see: [Anna Freud Peer Support](#)) and work undertaken by Priority 1-54 in multiple schools across the South East England.

Prior to undertaking training handout the Transition Ambassador Handbooks.

Introductions & Housekeeping

Slide(s): Introductions / Agenda / Housekeeping

Purpose: To introduce the day, build rapport, and explain expectations.

- Welcome young people participants and share a little about yourself and your role.
- Introduce the Transition Ambassador role as peer supporters for Year 7s.
- Share aims: building confidence, practising skills, and planning how to help new Year 7s.
- Go over timings, breaks, lunch arrangements, and where to go for help during the day.

Group Agreement

Slide: Group Agreement

Purpose: To co-create a safe, respectful learning environment.

- Ask: "What helps people feel comfortable and listened to in a group like this?"
- Introduce or co-create four key agreements:
 - Respectful Spaces – We help everyone feel welcome and included.
 - Respectful Listening – We give people time and attention.
 - Respectful Speaking – We speak kindly and honestly.

Facilitator Tip: Keep this agreement visible and return to it if needed. Invite young people to refer back to it themselves.

Icebreaker: Transition Bingo

Slide: Transition Bingo

Purpose: To break the ice and explore shared transition experiences.

- Hand out Bingo cards with prompts like "Was nervous on the first day" or "Gets the bus to school."
- Participants move around the room to find people who match each box.
- Debrief questions:
 - "Who got Bingo?"
 - "What did you notice?"
 - "Did anyone find a match they didn't expect?"

Facilitator Tip: This activity helps build trust by showing how common many Year 7 feelings are around transition.

'What I liked was how we all got to talk about our own experiences of what it was like moving up to secondary school and it was good hearing other people.'

Year 7 Ambassador

Discussion: Advice to Your Year 6 Self

Slide Prompt: Advice to Your Year 6 Self

Purpose: To help Ambassadors reflect on their own transition experience and build empathy for Year 7s.

- Start by asking: "If you could go back and give your Year 6 self some advice, what would you say?"
- Prompt questions (if needed):
 - What were you most nervous about before starting Year 7?
 - What turned out better than expected?
 - What helped you settle in?
- Highlight that their personal experiences are powerful tools. Let them know they'll be able to use this kind of insight to support new Year 7s in a kind and relatable way.

'The thing that I liked most about today was how we all got to talk and how difficult some of us found moving to secondary school. I lost some of my old friends, but I haven't talked about it much and it still makes me feel upset.'

Year 7 Ambassador

Dealing with Change and Worries

Slide Prompt: Dealing with Change and Worries

Purpose: To explore the kinds of changes young people experience and how support helps.

- Start by showing the film Dealing With Change: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sl7-4cSgLZo>
- Use the slides to explore changes in school, home life, friendships, and body.
- Ask: "Which of these felt like a big deal to you?"
- Discuss: "What were you worried about before secondary school? What actually happened?"
- Link back to empathy: Ambassadors can remember how it felt and notice who needs reassurance.
- Now, hand out copies of the Worry Card.
- The aim is to identify what they think the top 3 things children worry about the most before moving to secondary. These are: bullying, getting lost, and fitting in.
- Show ABA film defining bullying behaviour: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMRDI79vgTQ>
- Now have the group identify the top three things children worry about once they've moved to secondary school? These included: losing existing friends, fitting-in and bullying behaviour.
- You can also use the cards to identify and explore what parents/carers worries were.

'After today, my advice to the new Year 7's would be to just be yourself - it will be easier to make friends that way.'

Year 7 Ambassador

What's Going On for Year 7s?

Slide Prompt: What Might Year 7s Need Help With?

Purpose: To help Ambassadors spot practical needs and emotional states.

- Direct young people to the figure outline in their booklet.
- **Outside the body:** write what support Year 7s might need (e.g. directions, reminders, who to sit with).
- **Inside the body:** how they might feel (e.g. anxious, excited, lonely).

Debrief: "What feelings were common?" "What could you say or do to help?"

The Role of a Transition Ambassador

Slide: Role definition, skills card discussion, and listening habits.

Purpose: To help Ambassadors define their role in their own words, reflect on how they can support others, and recognise the key personal qualities they bring to the role.

Slide Prompt: "What do you think is the most important part of being a Transition Ambassador?"

- Ask this as an open starter.
- Give young people time to think quietly, then share ideas in pairs or small groups.
- Invite 2–3 volunteers to share their thoughts.

Slide Prompt: "Transition Ambassadors help new students feel supported, cared for, and connected."

- Read this aloud or ask a young person to.
- Ask: "Does this match what you said? Would you add anything?"

Slide Prompt: Qualities of an Ambassador

- Use the skills cards (if printed) or display on screen.
- Ask: "Which of these are most important — and why?"
- In pairs, ask them to pick their top 3 and explain their choices.
- Discuss: "Can we learn any of these skills, or are they just part of who we are?"

Slide Prompt: My Listening Habits

- Use the My Listening Habits questionnaire to explore how young people usually listen when someone is talking to them.
- Have them read each statement and tick which describes them i.e. Rarely – Sometimes – Mostly
- Ask: "Is there a habit you're good at?" or "Which habit would you like to practise more?"
- Reinforce the idea that active listening builds trust, helps people feel safe, and is one of the most important tools an Ambassador has.

'I learnt how important empathy is when talking to other people, and how Year 7s might be feeling when they first move to secondary school so we can help them'

Year 8 Ambassador

'The main role we'll play is to help settle the new Year 7s' into our school as quickly as possible and support them with any problems they might have'

Year 8 Ambassador

Creating A Sense of Belonging

Slide Prompt: This or That / Finding Your Twin / What is Belonging? / Elements of Belonging / Small Things / Belonging Wall / Reflection / Q&A

Purpose: These next activities will help Ambassadors understand what belonging means, why it matters for Year 7s (and themselves), and how they can actively create it.

Slide Prompt: *This or That* activity to help young people notice commonality and difference.

- Have the group stand in two lines facing each other.
- When a statement is read out have them stand on the side which best describes them.
- For example: **Morning person or night time person.**
- Work your way through the list then ask the group: "Did anyone find someone who made the same choice as they did when you didn't expect it?"

Slide Prompt: *Finding Your Twin*

- When a statement is read out, young people have to find someone in the room who shares the same thing as you.
- For example: **Same Eye Colour**
- Work your way through the list.
- Ask the group "Why do you think activities like this help people feel more included?", or 'How might it feel if you didn't find your twin?'

Slide Prompt: Defining Belonging

- In pairs or small groups ask **'What they think belonging means?'**
- Share the definition: Belonging = feeling accepted, included, respected, and supported.
- Now have the group discuss **'How does it feel to belong at school?'**
- Ask, in school or at home **'What small things make a big difference'** to make people feel like they belong?

Slide Prompt: Belonging Wall

- Hand out copies of the speech bubbles to each young people i.e. What belonging means to me, what does belonging look like, and what belonging feels like?
- Have them complete each bubble.
- Reflect: "What surprised you?" "What helps you feel like you belong?"
- Ask: "How can Ambassadors/adults in school create belonging through small everyday actions?"

Slide Prompt: Reflection

- Are there any themes?
- Is there anything that surprised you?
- How can we use this to help Year 7s feel like they belong?

'When we talked about belonging it made me think just how lucky I am to have so many good friends.'

Year 7 Ambassador

Friendships

Slide Prompt: What Can Make Friendships Tricky?

Purpose: To help Ambassadors reflect on the importance of friendships, what makes a healthy, supportive friend - and what behaviours can build or break trust.

- Discuss: “Why are friends important when you start a new school?” and “What made friendships tricky in Year 7?” (e.g. losing existing friends and/or friendship fallouts)
- Explore “What makes a good friend.”
- Link back to belonging: “Feeling connected helps young people feel safe and like they belong.”

'It was good talking about friendships and doing the activities because friends are important and they have caused a lot of problems in our class.'

Young person, Year 7

Slide Prompt: Qualities of a Friend

- Start by asking: “What qualities do you think matter most in a friend, especially when starting secondary school?”
- Activity Instructions:
 - Give pairs or small groups a set of friendship quality cards (e.g. honesty, kindness, loyalty, humour, listens, includes others, stands up for you, etc.).
 - Ask them to rank the cards from most to least important.
 - Let them know there are no right answers — the aim is to get them thinking and talking.
- Discussion Prompts:
 - “Which ones were at the top? Why?”
 - “Were there any differences in your group?”
 - “Do you think the top qualities change over time or in different situations?”
 - “How can Transition Ambassadors role-model these qualities?”
- Extension or Wrap-Up:
 - Optionally create a “Top 5 Qualities” poster for the group.
 - Invite reflection: “Which of these qualities do you think you already show?” and “Which one would you like to practise more?”

Facilitator Tip: Use this activity to make a link to how friendships can be repaired too. Ask: “What happens when friends fall out — how can we bring these qualities back into the conversation?”

'I really liked the training and how interactive and fun it was - even the serious bits'

Year 8 Ambassador

'I liked the discussions about confidentiality because we got to talk about important stuff like bullying and mental health, and when you need to report things to a adult.'

Year 8 Ambassador

Safeguarding

Slides: What does confidentiality mean? / Safeguarding Scenario / Quiz

Purpose: To clarify what safeguarding means, how Ambassadors should respond to worries and concerns, and ensure Ambassadors know trusted adults to talk to in school.

Slide Prompt: What does confidentiality mean?

- Ask the group what they think safeguarding means?
- Define safeguarding in plain language: "Making sure everyone is safe, cared for and treated with respect."

Slide Prompt: Safeguarding Scenario One

- Read out the scenario. Allow 1–2 minutes for silent reflection, then small group discussion using prompts:
 - What are the concerns?
 - Why might they want it kept private?
 - What would you say in that moment?
 - Who could you talk to?
- ***Emphasise that Ambassadors aren't expected to fix things, but they are expected to speak up if something feels wrong.***

Slide Prompt: Safeguarding Quiz

- Use the safeguarding quiz to check the groups understanding in a more interactive way.
- Allow for small group discussion before revealing answers.
- Focus on what Ambassadors can do: listen, offer support, and when and how to speak up.
- ***Key Message: If someone could be unsafe - they must tell a trusted adult.***

'It was good learning about confidentiality and how to deal with hard things, and what we need to do if we are worried'

Year 7 Ambassador

My Three Trusted Adults

Slide Prompt: My Three Trusted Adults

Purpose: To help participants identify who they can turn to.

- Ask each member of the group to list 3 trusted adults at school.
- Use examples if they're unsure (e.g. from tutor, Head of Year year leader or members of the Safeguarding Team).
- Discuss: "Why is it important to know who you can talk to?"
- End with the activity – get everyone to fill it out quietly, then invite volunteers to share if comfortable.

'The main role we'll play is to help settle the new Year 7s' into our school as quickly as possible and support them with problems they might have.'

Year 7 Ambassador

Final Feedback and Reflection

Slide Prompt: Reflection / Q&A / Feedback

Purpose: To consolidate learning and celebrate progress.

Facilitator Notes:

- Invite Ambassadors to reflect on one thing they've learned or a skill they'll use.
- Optional prompts:
 - "What's one thing you feel more confident about?"
- Allow time for questions about the Ambassador role.
- Encourage honest feedback using the feedback form or post-it reflections.
- Thank them for their time and effort – this is a big step toward becoming a positive role model.

'I enjoyed everything about the training, because now I know how to be a good Ambassador and how important this role is'

Year 8 Ambassador

Worry Cards

Getting Lost

and finding your way around school.

Making New Friends

and worrying about whether you will find people to talk to.

Being Bullied

by older students or peers.

Homework and Schoolwork

and the fear that lessons will be harder or they'll struggle to keep up with homework.

Not Knowing Anyone

and going to a different school than all your friends.

Getting Into Trouble

and worries about stricter rules and new teachers.

Dealing With Change

e.g. adjusting to new routines, uniforms, teachers, and expectations.

Fitting In

and worries about being accepted.

Losing Existing Friends

e.g. the fear of primary school friends moving on or finding new friends.

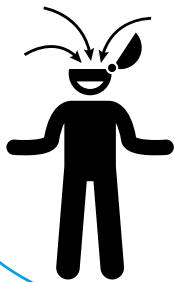
Ambassador Skills

What makes a good Transition Ambassador



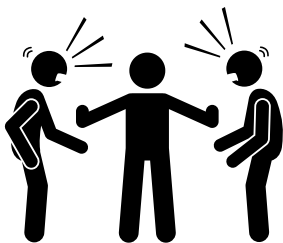
Is confident

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



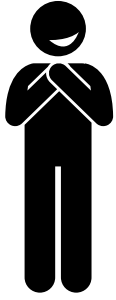
Open minded

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



Does not take sides

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



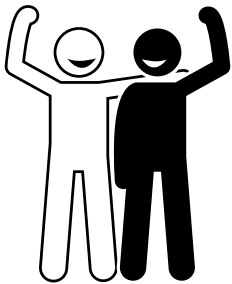
Trustworthy

What makes a good Transition Ambassador



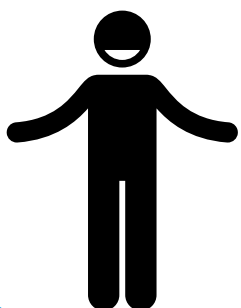
Speaks clearly

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



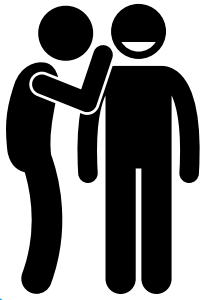
Reliable

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



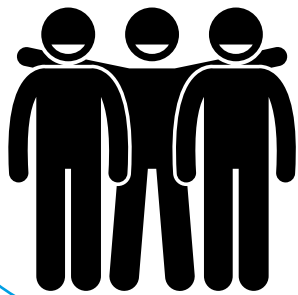
Approachable

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



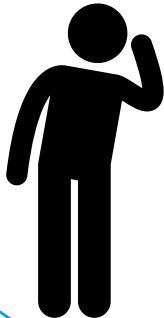
Doesn't gossip

What makes a good Transition Ambassador



Friendly

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



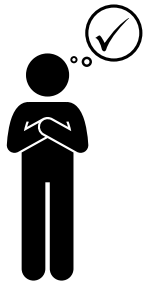
Good listener

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?



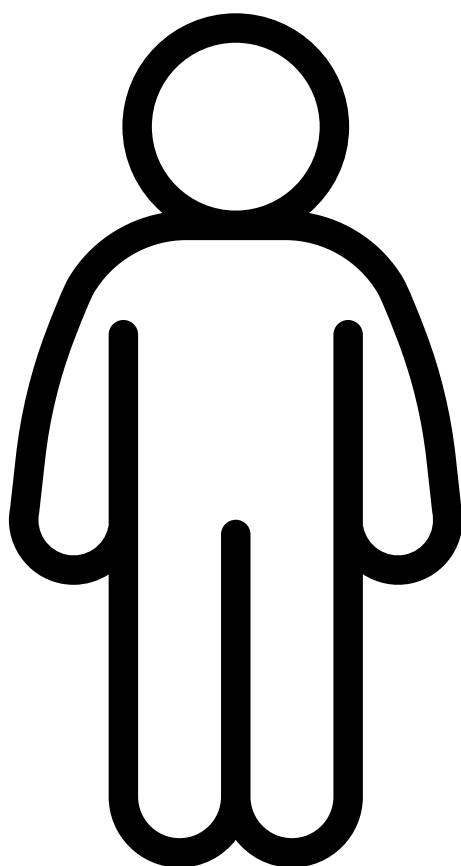
Shows empathy

What makes a good Transition Ambassador?

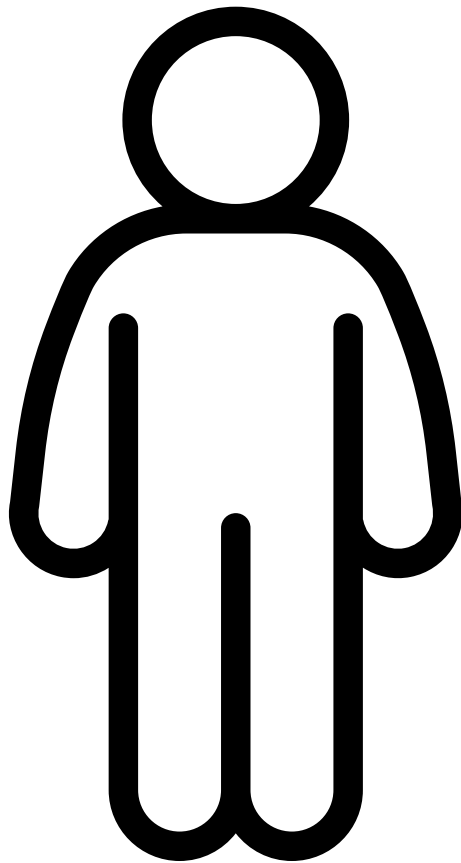


Doesn't judge

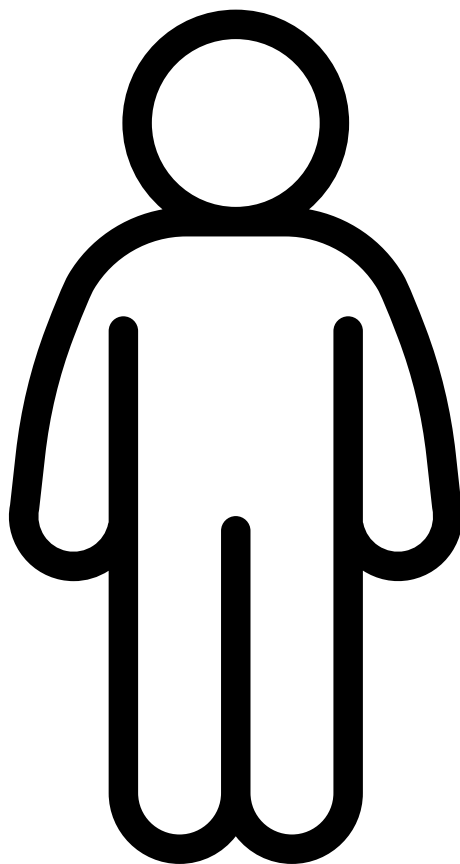
WHAT
BELONGING
MEANS TO ME.



WHAT DOES
BELONGING
FEEL LIKE?

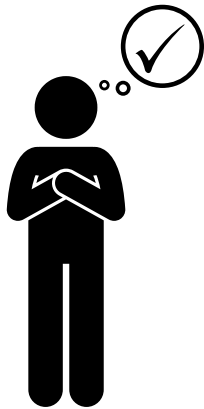


WHAT DOES
BELONGING
LOOK LIKE?

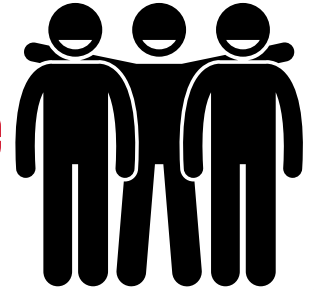


Friendship Qualities

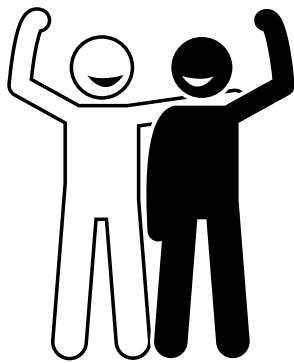
**Cares
about what
I think**



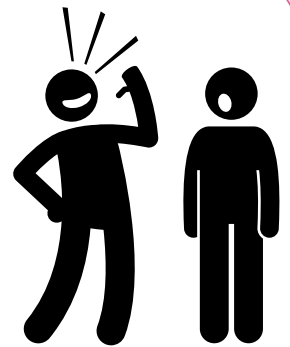
**Wants to
spend time
with me**



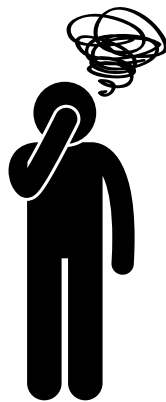
**Accepts
me for
who I am**



**Does not
show off to
friends**



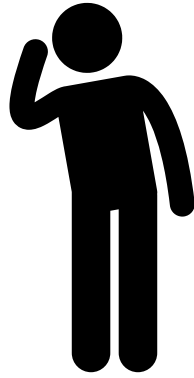
**Is not afraid
to show me
how they
feel**



**Has the
same
interests
as me**



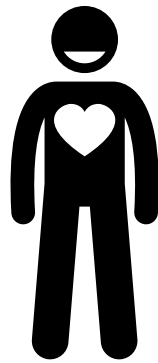
**Is a good
listener**



**Respects my
boundaries**



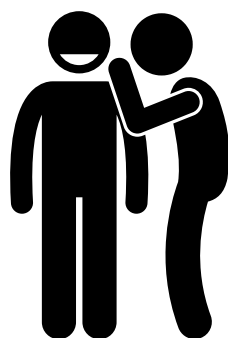
**Someone
I can trust**



**Someone
who is
popular**



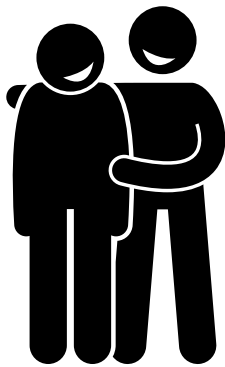
**Does not
gossip**



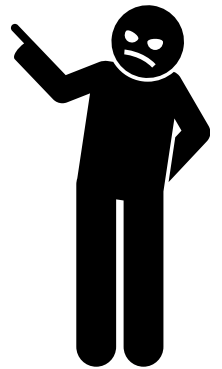
**Does not
talk
behind my
back**



**They are
kind**



**They don't
judge other
people**



**They are
loyal**

