

# Friendship Skills Group

Mark Lane, LCSW-R, School Social Worker

GUILDERLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2225 Western Avenue

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## What

- Games, stories, art, music, meditation and role playing are used to help group members improve their relationship and problem solving skills.
- Empathy skills and strategies to deal with anger and stress are included. In addition, students may learn coping skills, dealing with stress, and what to do when you are afraid.
- Group content is tailored to meet the needs of each member.
- Strengths are emphasized as members actively participate in evaluating their progress.
- Each group helps to plan their own activities.
- Services include:
  1. Weekly group,
  2. Teacher and parent collaboration as needed.
  3. Take home materials to assist with generalization of group skills.

## Why

Social and coping skills are a primary predictor of future success and are crucial to a child's development. The effectiveness of group work to help children develop these skills is well documented.

## Who

Mark Lane, LCSW-R has worked for over 19 years in the mental health field including positions as a:

- School social worker at Guiderland Elementary School for the past 8 years facilitating approximately 20 friendship groups a week, teaching social skills to grade K-5 and performing teacher consultation and crisis intervention.
- Outpatient mental health social worker with children and families at Saratoga and Rensselaer Counties from 1992 through 1998. This experience includes facilitating a men's group and a boys social skills group.
- Group therapist for waveriders, a support group for grieving children and adolescents, at the Community Hospice of Albany
- Adjunct Faculty at State University of New York at Albany teaching a graduate level course on Solution Focused Therapy, since 1996.

## Where and When

Friendship groups meet in the social work room and are coordinated to minimize interference with educational programming.