

The buddy bench

The girl felt alone that day. The friend she usually played with during recess was absent. She walked slowly to the “buddy bench” near the playground to wait. Two girls came running over.

“Do you want to play with us?” they asked. “Sure!” she replied. Off they went to play!

This is a true story that was shared as my children and I visited about how to be a friend at school. The buddy bench at their elementary school in Buffalo, Minnesota is a place someone can go if they want a friend to play with. The children are taught and encouraged to be kind to those who are feeling alone and need an invitation to play.

Everyone wants to have a friend. It’s good to remember that in order to have a friend, we need to be a friend! Be friendly and reach out to someone, no matter how God has made them. Include and be kind to all people no matter their color or race, if they are big or small, if they have special needs or if they’re not as good at something as you are. Remember Jesus’ instruction to treat others the way you would like to be treated.

Most of all we want to thank our heavenly Father for the friends we have. If one of you feels that you need a friend, pray to God. He promises to hear our prayers!

The Laho kids share thoughts on how to be a friend:

Invite them to be part of the group. Don’t act like they’re not there. – Lexi, age 12

Approach someone and ask them if they want to play. – Belle, age 8

Forgiveness can be included at school too!

If you be naughty to unbelievers, you can still say you’re sorry. – Luther, age 6

We can use the gospel of the forgiveness of sins with our friends.

It's important to include others too, not just our believing friends.

Maybe our unbelieving friends would repent. – Martin, age 14

How can we be kind to others?

Help them up if they are hurt or crying. – Harvey, age 7

Help them if they are struggling with something. – Preston, age 10

Smile at everyone! – Luther, age 6

Laura Laho

Things to visit about:

1. What would you do if someone who isn't in your grade wants to be your friend?
2. What does this mean to you? In order to have a friend you need to be a friend.