

When Words Hurt



When Words Hurt

Dear Girl Scout Brownie Leader,

As a Girl Scout leader and role model, you are in a great position to help Girl Scouts learn how to have healthy relationships. This is a good time for Girl Scout Brownies to practice being respectful and kind. This skill will impact a Girl Scout for the rest of her life. As a values-based organization, Girl Scouts finds its foundation in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. You can always rely on the principles found in the Girl Scout Promise and Law to help Girl Scouts make decisions or relate to one another.

According to the National Education Association, every day in the United States, more than 160,000 children miss school for fear of being tormented by their peers. The American Medical Association has identified bullying as a “public health issue.” Your understanding of how to identify and respond to bullying and potential bullying situations is important in helping Girl Scouts in your troop understand how to create healthy friendships. We are not expecting you to be an expert on bullying, but what we are expecting you to do is to gain awareness and an understanding of what bullying is and respond in a positive way when you are aware of a bullying situation. The activities provided will help you teach Girl Scouts the importance of interacting with each other in a respectful and kind way. Girl Scouts need to know that it is okay to not like everyone, although we still need to treat others with respect.

See the Resources section at the end of this guide to find materials and resources on bullying and creating healthy friendships.

To begin, you will want to read over the following definitions and examples of bullying and relational aggression behaviors to familiarize yourself with the terms.

Bullying is harmful or hurtful behaviors, actions, or words that are intentional, have an imbalance of power, and are often repeated. Targets of bullying often have a difficult time standing up for themselves. Bullying is different than conflict in that conflicts involve two people of equal power, each with a different point of view. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or relational.

Relational aggression/bullying (also called covert aggression, social aggression, and emotional bullying) is a form of bullying that includes such behaviors as exclusion, social isolation, rumor spreading, malicious gossiping, ignoring, creating “clubs” to leave others out, cyber-bullying, etc. Relational aggression is behavior that is intended to harm someone by damaging or manipulating their relationships with others. Children as young as preschool age use relational aggression as a means of power or control over their peers. Examples of bullying and relational aggressive behaviors may include:

Exclusion

- Not inviting someone to a party/event and letting everyone else know
- Forming groups (cliques) with strict “membership” requirement
- Saving seats so others have to leave
- Saying “You can’t play”

Alliance building

- Saying “You can’t be my friend if you spend time with them”
- Spreading gossip to be accepted in a group
- Choosing sides in a fight
- Getting others to agree with you and be “against” another person

Rumors and gossip

- Telling someone’s secrets
- Talking about others’ problems
- Making fun of how another person is dressed, what they like, etc.

Physical aggression

- Pushing someone
- Knocking someone’s supplies onto the floor
- Kicking something someone has dropped on the floor

Verbal aggression

- Calling someone hurtful names
- Making fun of someone (hurtful teasing or taunting)
- Laughing at someone

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Level: Brownies

Time: 2.5 hours

Materials not included:

- Trash can or bucket
- Coloring supplies
- Mixing bowl
- Glue
- Scissors

Activity 1: Trash vs kind words

- Trash can or bucket
- Trash vs. kind word note cards (located at the end of packet)

Activity 2: What would you do?

- None

Activity 3: Mending a hurt heart

- Large heart coloring page (located at the end of packet)

Activity 4: Big bowl of friendship

- Shape coloring page (located at the end of the packet)
- Coloring supplies
- Mixing bowl
- Scissors

Activity 5: Kindness flowers

- Flower petal coloring page (located at the end of packet)
- Stem and flower centers coloring page (located at the end of packet)
- Glue
- Coloring supplies
- Scissors
- Kindness words handout (located at the end of the packet)

Activity 1: Trash vs kind words

Time: 15 minutes

Say: Words can hurt others, and it is important that we use kind words towards each other. We are going to go over words and phrases and determine if they are “trash words” and we can throw them out in the trash can or if they are kind and can be kept.

Directions:

1. Cut apart the trash vs. kind word note cards located at the end of this packet.
2. Say the phrases/words out loud and let the Girl Scouts determine if they belong in the trash or can be kept.

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Activity 2: What would you do?

Time: 30 minutes

Say: We are going to go over some scenarios that talk about a situation where someone is being bullied. We are going to talk about what happened, what was good and bad, and what we could do in these situations.

Remember, if you are ever getting bullied always tell the bully to stop and tell an adult right away. If you ever witness someone getting bullied, you can tell an adult, check in on the person who was getting bullied, and help stand up for them.

Directions:

1. Read through the scenarios and have the Girl Scouts answer the follow up questions.

Scenario 1:

Erika is new to your school and is struggling to find new friends. Some of your friends are making fun of her behind her back. What would you do in this situation?

Possible answers: Talk to Erika and get to know her, ask your friends to stop, tell a teacher.

Scenario 2:

You find out your friend Eliza has been saying mean things behind your back. What would you do in this situation?

Possible answers: Talk to Eliza and see why she is saying these mean things, tell an adult.

Scenario 3:

You were invited to a birthday party, but your friend was not. While at the party you overhear a group of girls talking meanly about your friend. What would you do in this situation?

Possible answers: Talk to the group of girls who are saying mean things and ask them to stop. Tell your friend about the situation, you could also mention it to the adult that is at the party.

Scenario 4:

You and a group of friends are playing on the playground together. Polly comes over and asks to join in the game. Your friends say no because they think Polly is weird. What would you do?

Possible answers: Invite Polly to play even though your friends do not want her to and say everyone is welcome. Ask Polly if she wants to go play a different game elsewhere. Talk to your friends and say they should really get to know Polly, and this would be a great way to get to know her.

Scenario 5:

You are in gym class and are team captain for the kickball game. You pick your friend as one of your teammates. Your friend tells you not to pick Alex because she is not great at kicking the ball and will make your team lose. What would you do?

Possible answers: You can tell your friend that is not nice to say and that we all have weaknesses and strengths. You can pick Alex and give her encouraging words while playing.

Say: These scenarios show us that what we say and do to others can be mean and hurtful but when we show kindness, it can make someone's day. Remember you are never alone in a bullying situation, even if you feel alone. You can always go to a friend, a parent/guardian, a teacher, school counselor, or anyone you can trust.



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Activity 3: Mending a hurt heart

Time: 30 minutes

Directions:

1. Have each Girl Scout color their heart.
2. Ask Girl Scouts, “What kinds of things do others say and do that hurt your feelings?” Each time something is said that is hurtful or mean, make a fold on their paper heart.

List of hurtful words and actions to get the discussion started:

- Saying – You can’t sit here.
 - Doing – Pushing someone out of line.
 - Saying – You’re not my friend.
 - Doing – Knocking books out of someone’s hands.
 - Saying – I don’t want to play with you.
 - Saying – You can’t be on our team.
 - Doing – Tripping someone as they walk out the door.
 - Saying – You can’t play the game with us.
 - Saying – Your clothes aren’t cool.
3. Ask the Girl Scouts, “What kinds of things do others say and do to help you feel better?” Tell them that each time something is said that is kind, they are to unfold one of the folds in their hearts. List kind words and actions until everyone has unfolded their whole heart.
- Saying – Would you like to sit by me during lunch?
 - Doing – Take someone by the hand and invite them to stand next to you in line.
 - Saying – I would really like it if you were my friend.
 - Doing – Helping someone pick up their books that have been knocked onto the floor.
 - Saying – Will you play with me at recess?
 - Saying – Would you like to join our team?
 - Doing – Helping someone up off the ground that has just been tripped.
 - Saying – Please play the game with us.
 - Saying – You look nice today.

4. Have the Girl Scouts smooth out their hearts as much as possible. Ask them what they still see. They should observe that even though the heart isn’t all folded up, the marks from the folds are still there.
5. Explain that even though the hurtful things that happened didn’t last forever, and some nice things happened to help them feel better, whenever something hurtful is done or said to someone, that bad feeling sticks around for a longer time and is still remembered inside. We can never completely undo a hurtful action or word, so the best thing is to keep it from happening in the first place.



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Activity 4: Big bowl of friendship

Time: 30-45 minutes

Say: We are going to learn about being a great friend and what it takes to be a great friend. We are going to make a bowl of friendship.

Directions:

1. Give each Girl Scout a shape coloring page and coloring supplies.
2. Have them color in each of the shapes in any color they want to and then have them cut them out.
3. Bring out the mixing bowl and say the following to the Girl Scouts:
 - We are going to make our bowl of friendship with our cut out shapes. Each shape represents a part of friendship. After we have said the shape and what it represents, we are going to add that shape into our bowl.
 - The heart represents kindness in friendship. We always want to be kind to our friends but also to others.
 - The moon represents respect. We need to show respect to our friends and others.

- The star represents loyalty. Being loyal to a friend is important because it shows them you care.
 - The square represents caring. We want to always show our friends we care and that we are there for them.
 - The circle represents accepting. It is important that we accept everyone.
 - The triangle represents laughter, happiness, and joy. These are keys to making a friendship fun.
4. Mix all the papers together and let them see it all mixed.

Say: All these things make up a friendship and are things we want to keep in mind when we are with our friends and making new friends.

For more fun: You can turn this activity into a fun snack activity! Replace the shapes with food items and then the Girl Scouts have a fun snack to eat!



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Activity 5: Kindness flowers

Time: 45 minutes

Say: Being kind to someone can be done by simple things like saying nice things to them or bigger gestures like giving a gift. We are going to combine these things and make a friend a kindness flower.

Directions:

1. Set out the coloring supplies, glue, and kindness words handouts on the table. For prep work before the meeting, precut the stems, flower centers, and petals out.
2. Give each Girl Scout a flower center, stem, and enough petals to match the amount of people in the troop.
3. Have the Girl Scouts write their name in the flower center and glue that onto the top of the stem.
4. Say a Girl Scouts name in the group. Everyone except the person whose name you said should take one of the petals they have and write a kindness word on it that they feel describes that person. They can use the kindness word sheets to help with ideas and spelling.
5. Once everyone has written something, have a volunteer go around and collect the petals and place them by the person the kindness words were written about.
6. Repeat these steps until everyone in the group has had kind things written about them.
7. Once everyone has received their petals, have them start to glue them around the flower center.

Say: When you are feeling down or someone says something that is not nice about you, you can look at your kindness flower and see all the amazing words that your friends think describe you. Remember a simple act of kindness can make someone's day.

Congratulations, you have completed the When Words Hurt fun patch!

Remember that what we say to others can hurt them and we always want to treat others with kindness and respect.

Resources:

Children's books:

Cosby, Bill. *The Meanest Thing to Say*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1997.
DePino, Catherine. *Blue Cheese Breath and Stinky Feet*. Washington D.C.: Magination Press, 2004
Estes, Eleanor. *The Hundred Dresses*. New York: Scholastic, 1973.
Ludwig, Trudy. *My Secret Bully*. California: Tricycle Press, 2005
McCain, Becky. *Nobody Knew What To Do: A Story About Bullying*. Florida: Magnetix Corporation, 2002.
Moss, Peggy. *Say Something*. Maine: Tilbury House, 2004.

Resources:

Adult books:

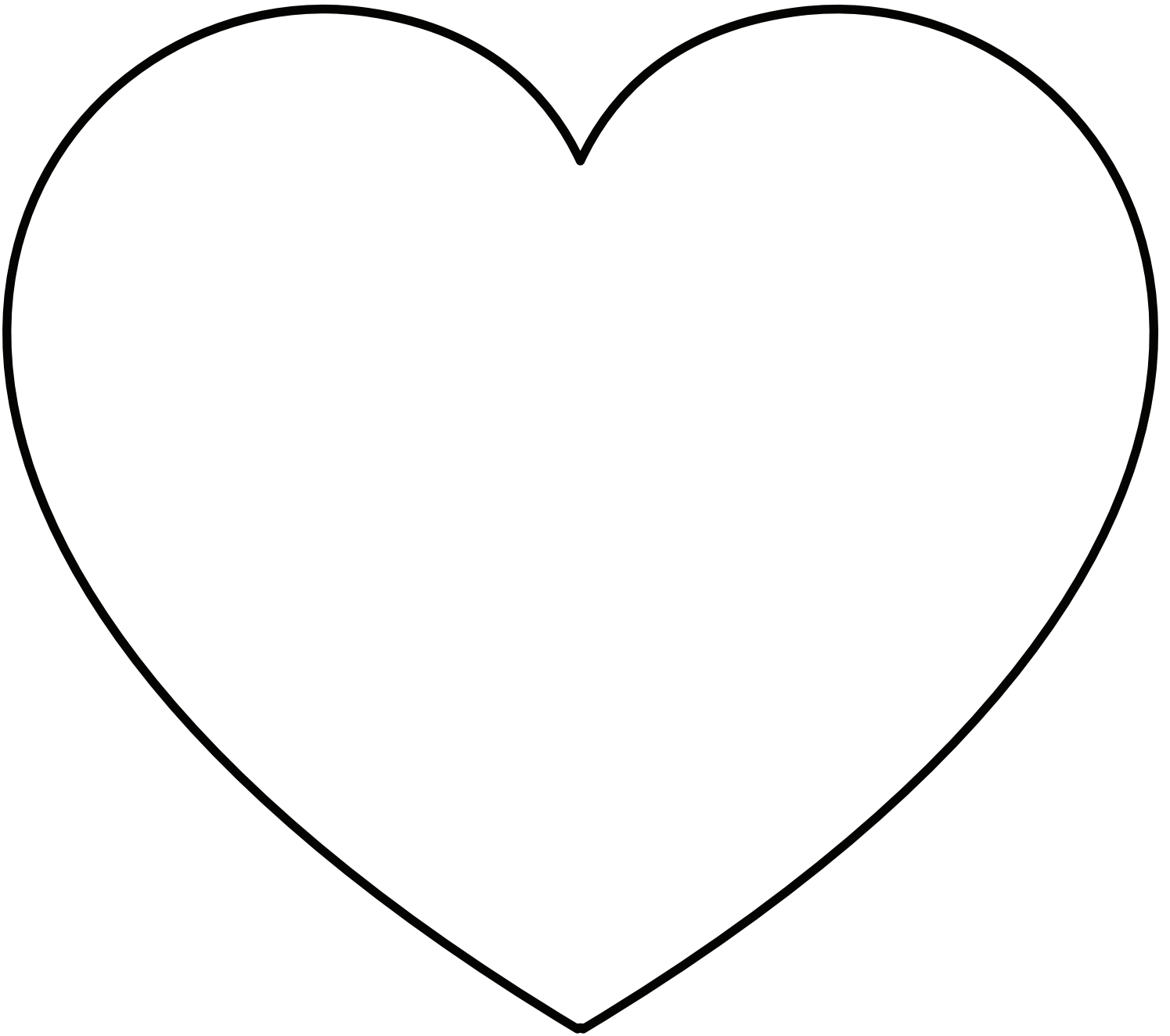
Deak, JoAnn and Teresa Barker. *Girls Will Be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters*. New York: Hyperion, 2002.
Coloroso, Barbara. *The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander: From Preschool to High School, Parents and Teachers Can Help Break the Cycle of Violence*. New York: Harpercollins, 2004.
Dellasega, Cheryl and Charisse Nixon. *Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying*. New York: Fireside, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2003.
Freedman, Judy S. *Easing the Teasing: Helping Your Child Cope with Name Calling, Ridicule, and Verbal Bullying*. New York: Contemporary Books, McGraw-Hill, 2002.
Simmons, Rachel. *Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls*. San Diego: Harcourt Books, 2002.
Simmons, Rachel. *Odd Girl Speaks Out: Girls Write About Bullies, Cliques, Popularity, and Jealousy*. San Diego: Harcourt Books, 2004

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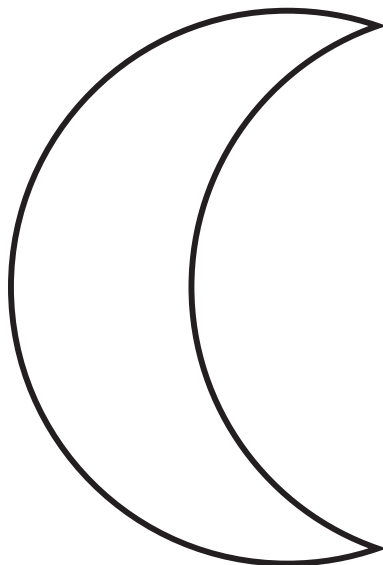
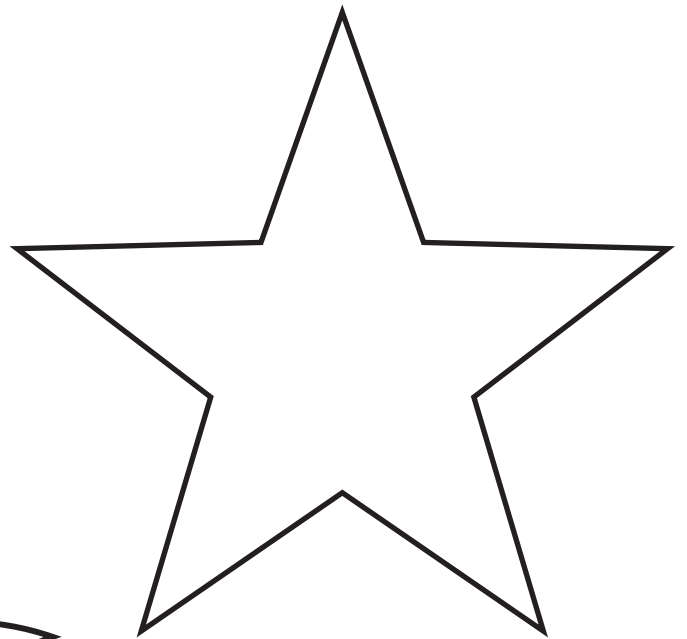
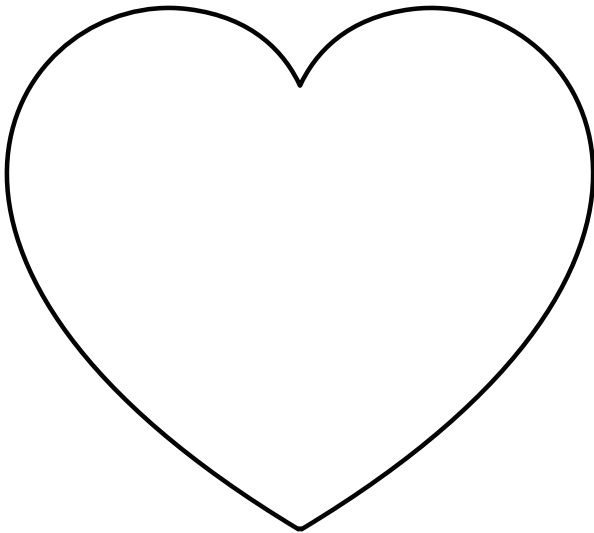
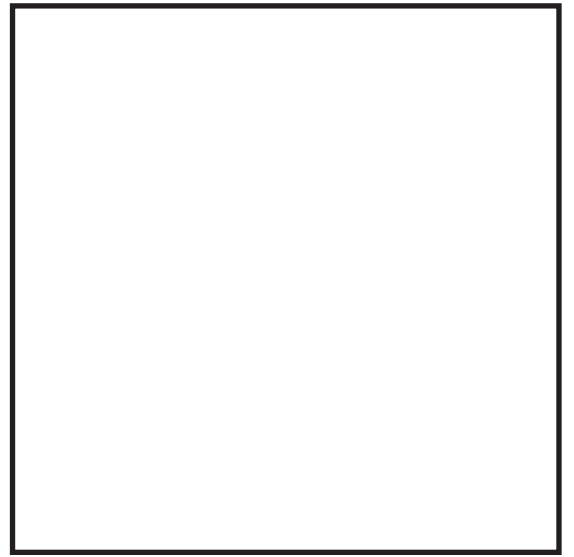
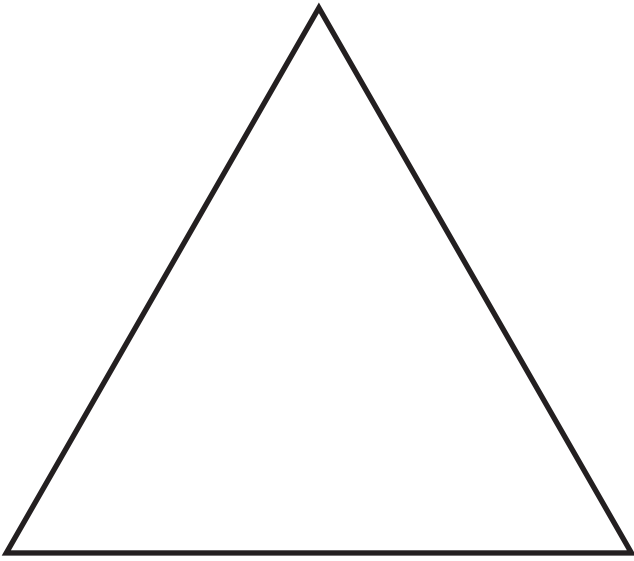
Trash vs Kindness Words

We are having a playdate, but you are not invited.	Would you like to come and play tag with us?
Telling rumors or secrets about your friend	Telling others not to play with someone.
Sharing your school supplies with a classmate	Complimenting a classmate
Offering to help a classmate	Laughing at a classmate when they trip
Making fun of a classmate's clothes	Inviting the new student to your birthday party
Doing a random act of kindness	Saying everyone is welcome to play

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List of Compliments

Adventurous	Helpful ideas
Amazing	Insightful
Athletic	Kind
Awesome	Leader
Beautiful	Lovely
Brave	Love to laugh
Caring	Nice
Compassionate	Nice Smile
Considerate	Organized
Creative	Patient
Determined	Positive
Entertaining	Respectful
Great friend	Responsible
Fashionable	Strong
Friendly	Supportive
Funny	Talented
Generous	Thoughtful
Good listener	Understanding
Hardworking	Well mannered

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Flower Stems and Centers

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Flower Petals

