Friendship trees

Friendship trees is a powerful *self-esteem, confidence and friendship building* activity.

Each child makes their own friendship tree which classmates fill with anonymous positive messages of friendship and affirmation.

Friendship trees can be used at any time of the year but are particularly effective at the end of the year when children know each other well.

I usually use this activity in the weeks leading up to Christmas, but it can be used at any time during the year. If the tree is referred to as a *friendship tree*, it is inclusive of all children in the class.

Other **readilearn** resources which support implementation of the *Friendship trees* activity include:

- [Friendship tree template](#) — a template to print for each child
- [Friendship messages](#) — examples of friendship messages to print and display in the classroom
- [Friendship tree message strips](#) — blank friendship message strips to personalise and print out for your class

The instructions are also available as a printable set of step-by-step instructions on one page: [How to make a friendship tree - printable instructions](#).

When the friendship trees are completed they may be displayed in the classroom for up to three weeks or more.

Each day children write anonymous messages of affirmation to each other and place them into the friendship tree of the message recipient.

When filled, children take their own trees home and read all the positive messages that have been written by their classmates.

To ensure all children receive positive messages, I make a class list with one child's name per line (see [Friendship tree message strips](#)). I print enough copies for the number of days I will run the program.

Each day I cut one class list into strips and distribute one strip to each child. I ensure they write to a different child on each occasion.
I have always been impressed by the very positive and personal messages students write to each other.

It is certainly worthwhile brainstorming a list of suitable messages first, but ensure children understand that they are not limited to these.

Before children "post" their messages, I check each one for readability and to ensure that content is appropriate. However, I have never had to edit the content.

I hope you and your students enjoy this activity as much as I and my students did.