



Sooper Puppy: A Friend in Need

Theme

Helping friends who are in trouble

Background

We all value our friends and don't want to lose them. Sometimes it can be hard to tell friends that you think they're doing something wrong or dangerous. That can be particularly difficult for children, though they are often the ones who know first when their friends are involved in questionable activities. In this videotape, Baxter (also known as Sooper Puppy) learns that it is important to let friends know when you think they're doing something that can get them into trouble or hurt them.

Outcomes

Viewers will

- use good communication strategies to handle conflicts with friends
- understand that even though it may be scary to tell the truth to a friend, it's not as scary as seeing that friend get into trouble or get hurt
- recognize that it's better to spoil someone's fun now, if it will prevent a dangerous situation later
- realize that friends do what they need to do to keep their friends safe and happy
- know what it really means to be a friend
- learn how to get help in dangerous situations

Before Viewing

Encourage children to talk about friends. Guide the conversation to friends who do things that are wrong or dangerous. Use questions such as the following to get started:

1. Have you ever had a friend who did something you knew was wrong or dangerous? What did you do about it?
2. Has a friend ever told you that you were doing something that might hurt you? How did you react? Why?
3. Who can you talk to if you think a friend is doing something dangerous or wrong? Think of some grown-ups like someone in your family or someone at school.

4. Why is it dangerous to play with guns? What should you do if you find a gun?
5. What could happen to a boy or girl who helps someone sell drugs? Why would anyone want to do that?

After Viewing

Encourage discussion of the videotape, perhaps by using questions like these:

1. What was wrong about Big John playing with the gun? Why was he angry at Baxter?
2. What was Pickles doing for Grizzle and Stoops to earn all the dog biscuits? Why do you suppose she didn't understand what she was doing?
3. Why was Baxter afraid to tell Pickles that he thought she was doing something wrong?
4. In Grandpaw's story of "The Wolf Who Cried, 'Boy!'" why did the wolf warn the boy about jumping off the cliff? Why did he tell him not to smoke a cigarette with his friends? How did the man thank the wolf in the end?
5. Was Pickles angry at Baxter for telling her about Grizzle and Stoops? Why or why not?
6. How did Big John thank Baxter for saving him from an accident with the gun?

School Activities

- Have children use puppets to role-play situations about people who are doing something wrong and the friends who help them realize it.
- Invite discussion of students' own experiences with similar situations. Have them suggest other examples of activities, like Big John playing with the gun, that children should tell an adult about right away.

Home Activities

Give each child a copy of Home Activities 7 and 8 to take home. Encourage families to carry out the activities with their children. It is not necessary to have children return the worksheets; they should not feel pressured if their families choose not to participate.

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Home Activity

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To the Family from Your Child's Teacher:

We have seen a videotape called "Sooper Puppy: A Friend in Need." It has helped us realize what we can do when we know a friend is doing something wrong or dangerous. Below is part of the story that your child will probably remember. In the story, Sooper Puppy (whose real name is Baxter) discovers his friend Big John playing with a gun he has found. Disturbed, Baxter talks to Grandpaw, who helps him decide what to do. Read the story aloud with your child. Encourage your child to tell you more details about the videotape. Then go on to the activity on the following page.

"Grandpaw!" Baxter exclaimed. "It's Big John. He has a big gun!"

"A real one?" Grandpaw asked. "Does he still have it?"

"I told him to put it down and wait until I got back," Baxter answered. Grandpaw told Baxter they would have to tell their owner, Mr. Man, right away because it was a very dangerous situation. They went to the garden, where Big John was with the gun. But Big John had disappeared, leaving the gun behind. Grandpaw and Baxter howled and barked until Mr. Man came out. He was very proud of the dogs. He called the police. But Big John was mad at Baxter and told him to mind his own business next time. Baxter felt terrible for wrecking his fun.

Grandpaw said, "You may have wrecked his fun, but you also probably saved his life. He just doesn't realize it yet. After all, Big John may not understand how really dangerous guns are. If all he knows about guns is what he watches on TV—which is make-believe—if you know better, and you do, stand your ground and share your truth. That's what friends are for."

Baxter thought about it. "I sure learned a lot about what it really means to be a friend," he told Grandpaw. "Sometimes telling the truth the way you see it can be scary. But it's not as scary as not doing it and watching someone you care about get into trouble or get hurt. Sooper Puppies help their friends to stay safe and happy."

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Discuss the story with your child. You may want to emphasize especially how your child might handle problems you think he or she might discover with friends or acquaintances. Then help your child carry out the activity on this page. Make sure your child knows at least four adults to go to with a problem. Possibilities are you, a dependable neighbor, the child's teacher or principal at school, and a police officer.

Sooper Puppy and Grandpaw made sure Mr. Man knew about the gun that Big John had found. Do you know who you should go to if you know a friend of yours is doing something dangerous or wrong? You can tell someone in your family or your teacher or a police officer. Draw pictures of four people you can go to. On the lines below each picture, write who each person is.








