

## Real Friends vs. the Other Kind BOOK 2

MIDDLE SCHOOL  
CONFIDENTIAL™

"THERE'S NOTHING LIKE BEING WITH FRIENDS. BUT IF YOU'RE LIKE US, YOU'VE PROBABLY WONDERED ABOUT SOME FRIENDSHIPS. MAYBE YOU'RE NOT SURE IF SOMEONE IS A REAL FRIEND OR THE 'OTHER' KIND. SPEAKING OF WHICH, A FEW WEEKS AGO A KID FROM CHRIS'S OLD SCHOOL SHOWED UP AT THE PARK. . . ."

Michelle, Mateo, Abby, Chris, Jen, and Jack are all trying to navigate the social scene at Milldale Middle School. But that might prove a lot easier said than done. Problems come up that threaten friendships. So-called friends are there one minute and gone the next. Not to mention gossip, rumors, cyberbullying, and other challenges that can make middle school feel like a minefield.

Read about six teens working to survive the social scene while remaining true to themselves. Along the way, you'll get tips for making friends, dealing with peer pressure, and handling friendship dilemmas. There are also ideas for helping friends who are in trouble and advice for what to do when it seems like someone could be more than a friend.

Annie Fox, M.Ed., is a writer, educator, workshop presenter, and online advisor for teens. Her Web site

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"This book lays out a guide for finding out who your real friends are with added tips on how to be a great friend."

—Joe Bruzese, author of  
*A Parents' Guide to the  
Middle School Years*

## Real Friends vs. the Other Kind

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ANNIE FOX, M.Ed.

REAL FRIENDS VS. THE OTHER KIND

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# Introduction

**Hi.** I'm an online advisor at a Web site for teens ([www.theinsite.org](http://www.theinsite.org)). I get a lot of email from visitors of the site about things going on in their lives. Friendships come up more than any other topic. "He acts like he doesn't want to be my friend anymore." "She's spreading rumors." "He always ditches me."

It usually boils down to, "My friend isn't being a friend. What do I do?"

One thing's for sure: You can't change the way someone is acting. No one has that power over anybody else. But the key to your friendships is *you* and the choices you make. If you don't like what's going on, you can change the way you handle a situation, or the way you deal with your feelings. If it becomes necessary, you can even change friends.

The fact is we all want, need, and deserve friends who accept and respect us for who we are. But where do you find them? How do you hang on to them? And what do you do if it feels like someone could be more than a friend?

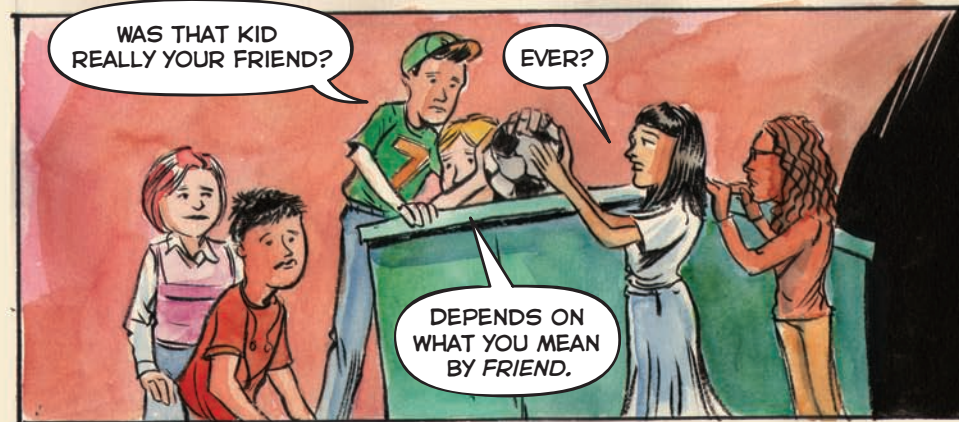
The short answer: Keep reading. You can find out a lot about relationships right here in the stories of six teens with their own friendship dilemmas. You'll also find quotes and advice from real teens, quizzes, tips, and insider tools for making friendships stronger. If you have any questions that aren't addressed in this book, feel free to email me at [help4kids@frespirit.com](mailto:help4kids@frespirit.com). I'd also enjoy hearing any stories or suggestions of your own.

In friendship,  
**Annie**



**There's nothing like being with friends.**

But if you're like us, you've probably wondered about some friendships. Maybe you're not sure if someone is a real friend or the "other" kind. Speaking of which, a few weeks ago a kid from Chris's old school showed up at the park...



Michelle, who's really smart, just couldn't pass that one up. So she asked one of her famous probing questions:

WHAT EXACTLY DO WE MEAN WHEN WE CALL SOMEONE A FRIEND?



Someone you trust. Someone who likes you. Someone who's fun to be with. We all had different answers. But after a while it seemed like we weren't completely sure. Maybe it's because sometimes friendships can be really confusing. Especially when the people you think are friends start acting like something else.

Why do friends have problems with one another? We didn't have a clue. But like Michelle says, "Just because you don't know the answers doesn't mean there aren't any!" That made sense, so we decided to ask other teens how they handle friendship issues. Some even had advice for when people want to be more than friends—something we're even more clueless about.

Turns out we received a lot of insider information for surviving the social scene in middle school. That's why this series is called "Middle School Confidential"—because not everyone knows what we've found out. Like how to keep relationships really strong.



**Not that tough situations no longer come up between friends—they do.** But, as we've learned, there are a lot of helpful things you can do to get through the rough spots.

PEACE.



Jack



Abby



Mateo



Jen



Chris



Michelle