



# Connect Well

Good Friends Are Great  
for You



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## Student Wellness Centre

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[wellness.usask.ca](http://wellness.usask.ca)

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# Good Friends Help Us Live Longer, and Happier Lives

Having positive social support is the number one thing we can do to support our mental health. Connect with a friend when school gives you stress and enjoy the benefits of companionship that can help improve your grades!

Studies have shown that students who have strong relationships with friends, family, peers, and partners tend to adjust better to the demands of university. This translates into students remaining in their programs and reaching their academic goals.

Social contact is strongly related to having a long life. Humans are social beings and our survival depends on each other! Friends and family offer support through the frustrations and challenges everyone faces. When you are well-connected, you become less stressed and more focused, which can make your academic goals achievable.

# Benefits of Friendships and Connections

## **Motivation**

Friends can provide great motivation for you to persevere at your goals. They are a source of encouragement and can help you get your grades to where you want them to be!

## **University Experience**

Friends help create a better university experience, improve your social life, and connect you to other opportunities to get involved on campus.

## **Academic Success**

Friends can be great study partners to help you learn and understand the material better. Having a note-sharing buddy may also help decrease your stress in class.

## **Overall Well-Being**

Research shows that socially engaged people age more successfully, are more physically healthy, have more robust immune systems, and are genuinely happier.

# How to Meet People and Make Friends

## Initiate

Although it may feel uncomfortable, try to initiate interactions with new people on campus. People are more welcoming than you may think and they might also be looking to make friends! 50% of students report that they have experienced loneliness. Start by just saying “hello.”

## Conversation starters suggestions

- Hi. Then continue to say hi each time to see that person in class, lab or hallway
- What is your major? What's your dream career when you're done?
- Are you taking any classes that you'd recommend? ...
- What's your story? ...
- What personal passion project are you working on right now? ...
- How are you finding University so far? How did you choose Usask?
- What was the highlight of your day today? ...
- What's been the highlight of your week

# Get involved on Campus

Out of the classroom campus experiences may not only help you make friends but can make your entire university experience more enjoyable and memorable. Make it a priority to commit to at least one event, or club that isn't an academic requirement each term.

- Go to campus activities you are interested in or try something completely outside your comfort zone,
- During class, ask your seatmates about their programs and why they chose that course,
- If you live in residence, try to get to know your neighbours and the people on your floor,
- Follow university social media to keep up with your campus,
- Join a club or campus group, and
- Start a study group with your classmates.

## **Student Centres to hang out at:**

- Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre,
- Usask Community Centre (Peer Health and Faith Leaders)

- International Student and Study Abroad Centre and the Global Connections Lounge,
- USSU Women's Centre,
- USSU Pride Centre,
- USSU Help Centre, and
- Graduate Student Association Commons.

## **Student Clubs, Groups, Organizations, and Volunteer Opportunities**

Check out groups for your specific college, interests, religious affiliation, cultural group or for skill development!



For a complete list of groups:

Do not feel that your social life is a lost cause if you haven't made friends after the first few weeks of school!

Most people are awesome but it's ok to be wary.

Guidelines when meeting someone new (on-line or from class)

- Don't feel pressured to meet with someone if you're not comfortable.
- Meet in a public place. If you can, make sure someone knows where you are and can check in with you.
- Other than your name, don't share personal information.
- Make sure you bring enough money to pay for yourself and a safe way home

# Helpful Usask Social Supports

## Events

The university regularly hosts a wide variety of events, from concerts to academic talks to Huskies games and more! For a list of events check the events calendar on PAWS and come back to it regularly.



## Improve Your Social Skills

Socialization is a skill like any other, and it takes practice to improve! Don't give up if you feel unsuccessful. For strategies to reduce social anxiety and improve social interactions, visit:



## International Student Guide

Immigration matters and information on working and living in Canada as well as links to English as Second Language classes and U-Bridge courses for those struggling



with English in their classes and their interpersonal connections.

### Forming Healthy Relationships

There are certain hallmarks of a healthy relationship you can remember with the acronym **SHARE**:

- Safety,
- Honesty,
- Acceptance,
- Respect, and
- Enjoyment.

Look for the SWC [Healthy Relationship](#) pamphlet for more tips on relationships.

There are key behaviours to achieving academic success. Learn more about all of these at [wellness.usask.ca](http://wellness.usask.ca)

Breathe Well  
Connect Well  
Eat Well  
Move More  
Sleep Well  
Study Well  
Think Well



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## Additional Resources

[Wellness.usask.ca](http://Wellness.usask.ca)