



Iarbhunscoil Oiliféir Naofa,  
St. Oliver Post Primary School

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20<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**FAO 1<sup>st</sup> Year Parents**

Dear Parent / Guardian

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018, from 6.00pm to 7.00pm, our NEPs psychologist will lead an information session for 1<sup>st</sup> year parents on the Friends for Youth programme.

We will be delivering this programme to all 1<sup>st</sup> years over the coming months. It comes highly recommended in terms of dealing with anxiety among school children, through building resilience. Further information is available on the next page.

It would be important that you attend, as you can complement our efforts in school by encouraging certain behaviours at home.

Please do your utmost to attend.

Yours sincerely

Brendan Corcoran

Principal

**ST. OLIVER POST PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
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## The Friends Programmes

'Fun Friends', 'Friends for Life' and 'My Friends Youth' are school-based anxiety prevention and resilience building programmes developed by Dr. Paula Barrett in Australia. The World Health Organisation cites 'Friends for Life' as the only evidence-based programme for anxiety in children that is effective at all levels of intervention (WHO, 2004). Friends programmes help students to develop resilience by teaching them effective strategies to cope with, problem solve and manage all kinds of emotional distress, including worry, stress, change and anxiety. Skills learned throughout the programme help students both now and in later life. The programme can be run by teachers as a whole class programme, or as a small group intervention.

FRIENDS is an acronym for the skills taught throughout the programme:

- Feelings.
- Remember to Relax. Have quiet time.
- I can do it! I can try (Inner helpful thoughts)
- Explore Solutions and Coping Step Plans.
- Now reward yourself! You've done your best!
- Don't forget to practice.
- Smile! Stay calm, Stay Strong and talk to your support networks!

More information on the programmes can be found by following the links below.

Presentation on NEPS' research on the implementation of Friends by Irish Primary teachers:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHYNhUlyyPA>

<http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/NEPS-Presentation-on-FRIENDSfor-Life-for-NCSE-Conference.ppt>

Irish Primary and Post Primary teachers/principals' reflections of the Friends programmes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDj1ny98hp0>

Further information on the program can be found on the author's website;

<http://www.friendsresilience.org/>