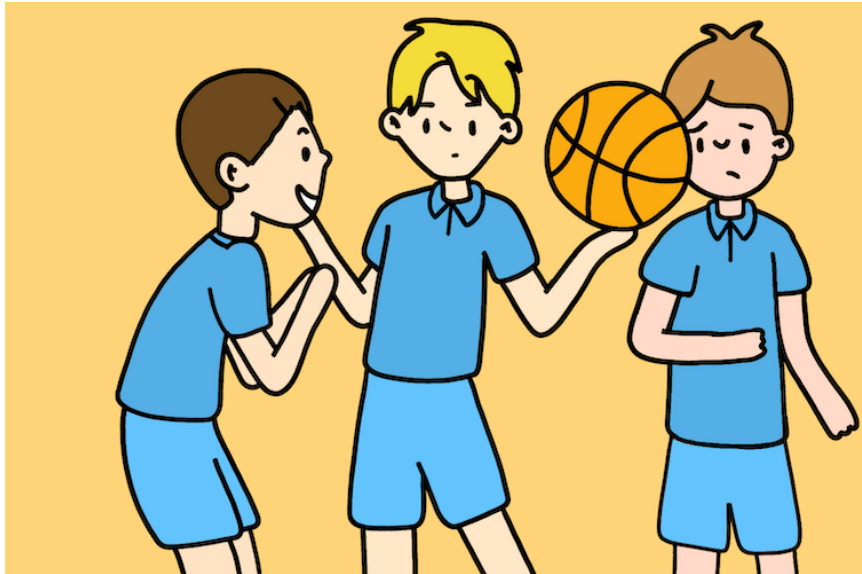


Do family and friends come first?

Today we have two stories to share with you. We'll be doing lots of thinking in question time, and we'll be hearing from other children too.

The first story is about a boy called Toby.

Toby's parents have bought him a new basketball. It's not his birthday or anything – they just got it for him because he likes playing basketball so much and his old ball is pretty worn out.



Today Toby has taken the ball to school to show it to Jake, his good friend. Jake thinks the ball is great. But then he says, 'That's mean! It's not fair! Your parents know I like basketball just as much as you do - and that my basketball is just as old as yours. Why didn't they get me a new one too?'



Is Jake right? Was it mean or unfair of Toby's parents to buy a basketball for Toby but not for Jake?

And can you explain why you say that?

Let's hear what some other children said.



Charlie: That's ridiculous! Toby's parents love him, so of course they'll buy him more stuff.

Yusuf: And Jake's parents probably buy things for Jake but not for Toby, so it isn't unfair.

Mac: It's kind of unfair that Toby gets more than Jake, but Toby's parents aren't being mean – it's not their fault if they're richer.

Sragvee: I agree it's not mean. If they had to buy a basketball for Jake too, maybe they wouldn't have enough money to buy other things for their son – like shoes. Then that wouldn't be fair to Toby.

Toby's parents didn't buy a ball for Jake, but Toby was happy to share his new ball with his friend. Toby usually took his ball to school and the two boys practiced shooting hoops at lunchtime.

Toby is also in the debating team and this lunchtime they're getting together to run through their speeches. At recess, Toby is talking to his friend Jake when Charlie, a kid he doesn't know very well, calls out: 'Hey Toby, can I borrow your ball at lunchtime?'

Quickly Jake says, 'Can I have it, Toby? I want to practice.'

Try to put yourself in Toby's place.



Who would you lend the ball to?

Let's hear what some other children said.



Sragvee: Charlie asked first, so he should get it.

Mac: I would lend the ball to um Jake, because he is my friend and Charlie I don't really know.

Yusuf: I'd lend it to Charlie, because then we might get to be better friends.

Charlie: No, I'd lend it to Jake. Because otherwise Jake might think that I didn't want to be friends with him anymore – he might think I wanted to be friends with Charlie instead.

Imagine you are Toby. You know that Jake has a basketball of his own, even though it's an old one. He also has a hoop at home and can shoot goals whenever he likes. Charlie doesn't have either because his parents can't afford it.



Again, try to put yourself in Toby's place. In this situation, who would you lend the ball to - and why?



Yusuf: Well, it would probably mean a lot to Charlie to be able to practice at school. So now I think I'd lend it to Charlie.

Sragvee: Yes, I agree. And I think that Jake would understand.

Edward: I don't think Jake would understand. I think he'd be hurt. He might not even want to my friend anymore.

Mac: I still think you should be kinder to your friends than to other random people.

Imagine you are Toby, and that Jake is in your basketball team. You know that the more he practises, the better he'll get ... and the better he gets, the better chance your team will have to win the competition!



Would that make a difference to who you would lend the ball to?



Mac: Probably not, because Jake's my friend and I would always pick him.

Charlie: Yes, if he was on my team, I'd definitely lend the ball to Jake - cos I want to win!

Mac: Well, I don't think that's a good reason. It's sort of selfish. You're not lending it to Jake to be kind to him.

Edward: It's not really selfish – I'd lend the ball to Jake for the good of my whole team, not just for me. That's showing team spirit.

Sragvee: I disagree – just because they are in your team doesn't mean they should get more from you – what about helping people who are less fortunate- even if you don't really know them?

Here's another story to help us think about how we should treat our family and friends.

Charlie is watching TV with his family when an ad from World Vision flashes on to the screen. There's a man standing in front of what looks like a desert, but as the camera zooms in, Charlie can see that it is a withered crop. Then as the camera pans around, he can see hectare after hectare of dead and dying plants.

Then the man says, 'The drought in Ethiopia is now so severe that a national disaster has been declared. Unless the rich nations donate food, many thousands of people - including thousands of children - will starve. Please do what you can to help.'

Charlie looks first at his sister and then at his parents. They all seem uncomfortable - upset even.

And then their TV program resumes.

Next day, over dinner, his mum says, 'Charlie, Alice - do you remember the World Vision ad we heard yesterday?'

The kids nod. It's something that is going to be very hard to forget.

'Well', their dad says, 'we decided that we should give some money to the relief effort in Ethiopia.'

The kids nod again. But they're a bit surprised, because their parents don't have a lot of money to spare.

'We sent the \$500.00 we'd set aside to take you to the Easter Show to the kids in Ethiopia.'

So that was it. Charlie didn't know what to say. Now it was his turn to feel uncomfortable - and more than a little upset.



Did Charlie's parents do the right thing? Or should they have spent the \$500 taking their own children to the Show?

Let's hear what some other children are thinking.



Charlie: No, they should look after their own children before giving all that money to children they don't know.

Sragvee: Yes, Charlie's parents did the right thing. The children in Ethiopia are starving and they need all the help they can get. Charlie and his sister would probably waste the money at the Show anyway.

Edward: But their parents made the decision without even asking them. If the parents want to help the kids in Ethiopia, then they should go without something they want.

Mac: Um, I think they should have spent the \$500 taking their own children to the show, because their kids would probably be really disappointed, and some other people are probably donating.



So... should you do more for your family and friends than for others?

Let's listen to what some other children have said.



Charlie: Yes, absolutely, family should come first, and then friends, and then everyone else.

Edward: I think it depends. I mean if your family was starving, and other people were starving, then sure, feed your family first. But if your family just wants extra stuff, and other people have nothing, then ... you should give the money to the other people.

Yusuf: I think that it's sort of natural to look after your own family first. Otherwise, what's the point of being in a family?

Mac: Um, in my opinion yes, because they're your friends and they're your family and you love them.

We've been thinking about whether we should do more for our family and friends than for others.

- Should Toby's parents buy his best friend the same gift they buy their son?
- Should Toby lend his basketball to his friend, or to someone he doesn't know well, but who may need it more?
- And should Charlie's parents spend the money they saved on their own children, or on starving children in Ethiopia?

We heard some really interesting ideas today! Thank you for joining us. You might like to keep thinking about this, and perhaps talk to your family and friends about what they think, too.

Image credit: Kayla Reay

Thank you to our wonderful actors Charlie, Edward, Mac, Sragvee and Yusuf who helped us to hear different points of view. While sometimes these points of view might have reflected their own opinions, at other times they were asked to express an opposing view in order to help us think more deeply about the topic.