

FRIENDSHIP ROX

What do you get when you combine a rock found on a nature walk with a heartfelt message for your bestie? **Friendship ROX**, of course!

Objective

During this uneasy time, our primary goal is: **Keeping Kids Connected**. Research shows us that social connection is the most powerful antidote to stress and anxiety.

This activity is designed to get your child out in nature, while mindfully reflecting on a feel-good friend. In addition to harnessing their creativity, research shows that gift-giving enhances wellbeing and feelings of happiness.

According to the late Dr Anthony Grant, a pioneer in Coaching Psychology from the University of Sydney, *“Knowing we’ve done something to improve the life of others not only boosts our self-esteem and gives us a sense of purpose, it also shifts our attention away from our own stresses and worries.”*



Key Outcome

Your child will activate their connection with a special friend utilising creativity, nature, and gift-giving.

Materials

- Flat rocks – easy to paint on
- Paint pens or paint
- Paint brushes
- PVA glue for any embellishments (eyes, sequins, beads)
- Plastic lid to rest you rock upon
- Spray varnish (optional) or PVA glue to coat.

Instructions

1. Say to your child, “I know you’ve been missing your friends! Do you have a particular friend you’re missing the most?” Have a conversation with them and really listen to how they’re feeling.
2. Explain to your child that you have a challenge for them. Say, “You know that friend you’re missing? Well, I have a challenge: I want you to create some Friendship Rox for them!”
3. Show them the examples above and ask them, “What words come to mind when you think of your friend? Are they kind, loving, joyful?” Quickly help your child brainstorm some ideas for what they could write on the rock. Maybe they want to write an uplifting message for their friend like:
 - Shine!
 - U Matter!
 - Smile!
 - Best Friends!
 - U Rock!
 - We’re in this Together!
4. Head out for a nature walk with your child (or send them out on their own if they’re old enough). Encourage them to search for some perfect rocks that they can decorate for their friend.

5. When they return home, ensure your child cleans the rocks so they are free of any soil or dust. Then, let their creative minds soar as they bring their Friendship Rox to life! Encourage them to add embellishments like eyes, glitter, sequins or beads.

Optional: When paint is dry, spray the rock with some varnish or paint a thin PVA glue layer over it – it will dry clear.

Next Steps

Special delivery! Pop the Friendship Rox in their bestie's letterbox or maybe even hide them in their garden SOCIAL DISTANCING PRECATUIONS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED.

If their friend lives far away, send them a video message with the rock describing why they designed it the way you did.