

# A Hand To Hold On To

**W**hen a terminal case of the blues hits, a best friend helps. He shares the ups and downs, highs and lows, holidays and school daze. What would high school be without friends?

They greet you in the hall and gossip at your locker, exchanging notes and warning you about a pop test next period. They give you rides to school and help you eat your lunch. You share clothes, opinions, expectations, dreams, secrets, and advice. Friends are irreplaceable and one of the best aspects of high school.

Friends appear later in life: you meet them on the job, next door, and in adult social circles. But they are never as dear as those allies who insure you're not alone in a big world — high school

"We've been together since kindergarten" — Jennifer Mixon and Carmen Valentine



buddies are a united front, together facing every challenge that growing up presents.

From the first child who sits next to you in kindergarten and admires how you stay in

the lines, to the last person you hug at graduation, saving the rest of your tears for the one who means the most, friends will play a part in growing up. But what makes these bonds so strong that they live through arguments, harsh words, math class, summer? Something deep inside that craves companionship, a little like the aggregation of cows. Special times friends give us, and so much more. John Cougar Mellencamp expressed it this way — *Everyone needs a hand to hold on to, don't need to be no strong hand, don't need to be no rich hand, everyone just needs a hand to hold on to ...*



A boyfriend or girlfriend helps take some of the load off when high school pressure gets to be too much. Elizabeth Biggers and Josh Siegel share quiet time during lunch.

"During break I like to sit outside and catch up on the day's gossip. It's relaxing after classes all morning," says Allison Nettles, who shares her time with Christy Steele and Michael Smith.

