

Name: _____

Friends Helping Friends

By Kelly Hashway

Jared put on his coat and backpack and walked out of school to catch his bus home. His backpack weighed him down with all the materials he needed to finish his science fair project this weekend.

"Hey, Jared!" Carlos yelled, running up to him. "My dad's running the park clean-up this weekend. Can you help out?"

"Um..." Jared knew he didn't have time to help, but he didn't want to disappoint Carlos. "I guess I can."

"Great. Thanks!" Carlos said, waving goodbye.

Jared stepped onto the bus and took his seat. He was going to have to stay up late tonight to work on his project so he could help Carlos in the morning.

"Jared," Chianne said, sitting down next to him. "I've been looking for you. I have to walk Mrs. Vanderhoof's dogs this weekend. Do you think you could help me?"

"Um..." Jared knew Mrs. Vanderhoof's dogs had to be walked three times a day. How would he manage to fit that in on top of everything else? "I guess I can."

"Great!" Chianne waved goodbye as the bus pulled up to their stop.

Jared's backpack felt even heavier as he walked into the house and flopped down on the couch.

"Rough day?" his mother asked.

"More like rough weekend. I have to finish my science fair project, help Carlos with the park clean-up, and help Chianne walk Mrs. Vanderhoof's dogs."



"Sounds like you agreed to too many things this weekend," his mother said.

"I know, but Carlos and Chianne are my friends. I couldn't say 'no' to them. I didn't want to let them down." Jared stared at his mom. "What should I do?"

"I'm glad you want to help your friends, but you need to have time for your own things, too."

Jared knew she was right. "Maybe I can tell Carlos I can only help for two hours in the morning. And I can probably help Chianne walk Mrs. Vanderhoof's dogs early in the morning, but not at lunchtime or in the evening." Jared's stomach flopped. "Mom, do you think they'll get mad?"

"They're your friends. Tell them you need time to finish your science fair project. They'll understand."

Jared nodded and got the phone. He told Carlos and Chianne the truth. As soon as he hung up, he turned to his mom. "They're fine with it, and they both offered to help with my project, too."

"I knew it would work out," Mom said.

Jared smiled. "Yeah, because friends help each other out."