

# POPARD

Provincial Outreach Program for  
Autism and Related Disorders  
[www.popard.ca](http://www.popard.ca)



## Friendship Space

Welcome to the Friendship Space (FS) App official launch. This easy-to-use POPARD App increases social awareness in young people by encouraging them to build friendships. For some students, the process of meeting and making friends is difficult. This fun and interactive App teaches social communication through guided questions in their “Friendship Space”. The information recorded is useful in building social connections and to jump start future interactions. The App includes a token system. ‘Alien’ tokens and ‘Friend Ships’ are earned.



This App was developed through a collaborative research partnership between The Provincial Outreach Program for Autism in BC, Canada and Emily Carr University, combining the expertise of educational professionals with experience supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in the school setting, and those with expertise in visual and graphic design. In addition, input from students with ASD and their teachers from Notre Dame High School in Vancouver added an authentic perspective from potential users of this App.

## How to Use Friendship Space

This App is intended to be mediated by an educational professional or parent to utilize it to its fullest potential. This App can be used by teachers at school or by parents at home.

Each category and question provides a foundation on which many social initiations, interactions, and conversation skills can be built. Consider targeting specific skills identified in the student’s IEP and determine with whom, how often and where the App will be used.

## At School, Friendship Space can be Used:

- To help students learn more about or connect with classmates and facilitate a positive classroom climate as a class-wide Tier I support
- With a small group of students (Friendship Group, Lunch Bunch, Peer Support Groups, Circle of Friends, etc.) as a Tier II support
- One-on-one with a peer buddy or mentor as a Tier III level intervention

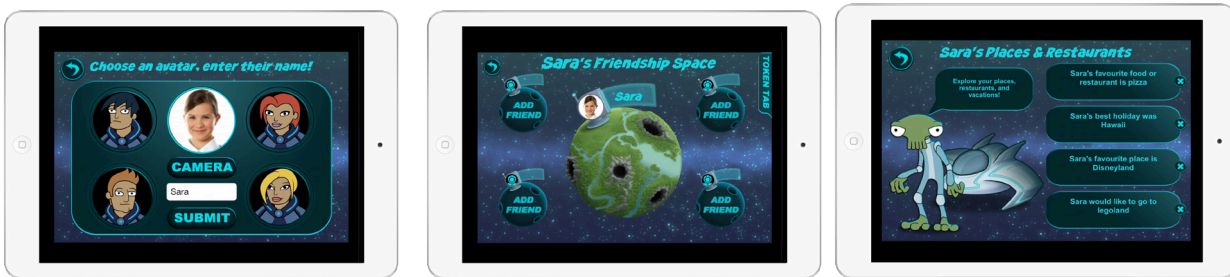
## Getting Started

First, the Teacher or Parent signs up to create an account.



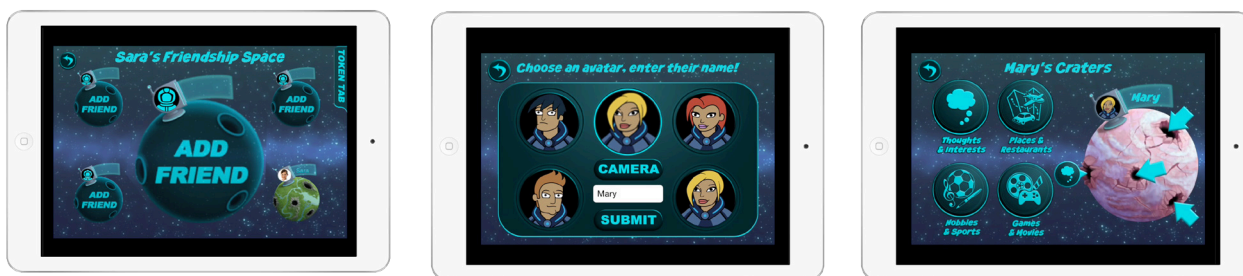
## The Student Creates their Friendship Space

The student will be prompted to choose their name and avatar (either a cartoon or a photo of themselves) and planet. The student can start entering information about themselves by tapping on their planet to access the question categories. The student should go through each category and answer the questions.



## The Student Adds Friends

Next, the student adds friends by tapping on the Add Friend planet. The student interviews/converses with another student to find out their interest/thoughts across the four categories. What sets this App apart from other Apps is that it encourages social interaction (e.g., initiation, joint attention, reciprocity, etc.) as it is facilitated by a teacher or parent.



Once all the questions in a crater have been answered, the student receives a Token Alien. In the illustration below, all the questions in all the categories have been answered, and the student received a 'Friend Ship'.

