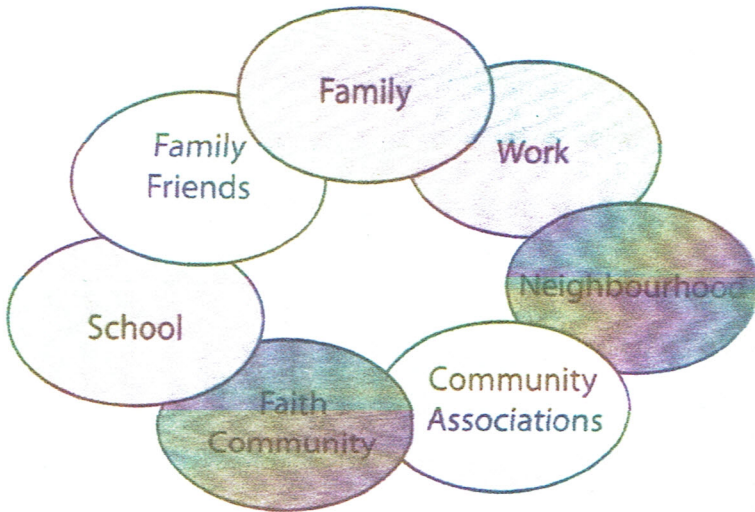


approach creates fertile ground for friendships by utilizing the various networks a person has in his or her life. Networks may be associated with one's neighbourhood, school, work, volunteering, family, faith community, and professional contacts. Social networks are very useful when we are trying to learn about new ways of relationship building.¹



Some Examples of Social Networks

people's (or organization's) networks. Social network analysis provides a framework for making sense of the make-up and strength of a particular social network. Simply put, a social network can be viewed as a map of all of our relevant ties. A visual representation of a social network is useful in demonstrating connections between important things such as social roles and friendship.² For example, when we analyze social networks, we may discover how certain networks are more supportive than others or how certain individuals have the potential to become friends.

The social network approach has been used both implicitly and explicitly as a mechanism for building friendships in specific settings. For example, neighbourhoods provide opportunities for individuals and families to build connections with others in a variety of mutually supportive ways.³ Good schools may serve as a platform for building social networks and inclusion.⁴ Inclusionary practices emphasize the importance of strengthening relationships.⁵ Employment may also provide opportunities for social networks and friendship development.