

Making Friends

Ten Tips to Help Your Child Make and Keep Friends

1. Play games with your child. Teach them how to participate and learn the following social skills:
 - ❖ *Negotiate*: Model how to make deals, cooperate, discuss, and bargain.
 - ❖ *Take turns*: You go first this time, then I'll go!
 - ❖ *Follow rules*: Make sure everyone understands the same rules.
 - ❖ *Accept defeat*: It's ok to lose, there will be other opportunities to win.
 - ❖ *Be gracious in victory*: Find ways to give others opportunities to win.
 - ❖ *Share games & materials*: Let others pick the game or game piece.
 - ❖ *Be patient*: Give others time to make their move.
 - ❖ *Strategize*: Think, "out loud", of ways how to solve game problems.
2. Read books about making friends with your child. Visit your local library or bookstore and ask for books on "Making Friends". You will find many resources for all ages!
3. Create craft projects for your child and invite neighborhood children to participate.
4. Talk to your child about how to make appropriate choices for friends. What makes a good friend? What makes a bad friend? Congratulate your child when he or she makes a good choice!
5. Find a family in your community that has children near the **same age** as your child. Schedule social activities together so that children can learn to make friends in a structured and supportive setting.
6. Provide your child with a good role model for friendship. Rather than trying to force friendships with other children, show your child how **you** choose and interact with **your** friends.
7. Keep the lines of communication open. Schedule a specific time and place to initiate discussion about your child's friends and relationships.
8. Avoid trying to solve your child's friendship problems. Help him or her develop problem-solving skills in a supportive and positive way.
9. Help your child identify his or her interests and hobbies. Find opportunities for him or her to pursue interests or hobbies with other children the same age.
10. Help your child use the computer to set up an online "friendship" account to communicate with his or her friends and classmates. Make sure your child understands and follows all "safety tips" included with online programs and monitor their use.