

Ten Tips to Help Your Child Make and Keep Friends



For Families of Students with Disabilities

1. Play games together. Teach your child 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*: Verbalize several ways to solve game problems or plan a move.

2. Read books or watch videos about making friends with your child.

Visit your local library or bookstore and ask for books or videos about making friends. You will find many resources for all ages!

3. Create craft projects for your child and invite neighborhood children to participate.

Craft activities allow each child to express themselves while working with others in a group and developing their fine motor skills when cutting, drawing, or manipulating objects.

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 on making a good choice!

5. Find a family in your community that has children near the same age as your child.

You may also want to check with your local parks or with your local government to find out about clubs or play groups. 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. Help him or her develop problem-solving skills in a supportive and positive way.

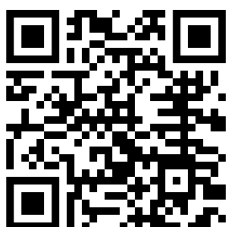
While it might be tempting, you won't always be able to solve your child's friendship problems. Be there to listen to your child and assist in brainstorming possible solutions as your child progresses in their developing friendships.

9. Help your child identify his or her interests and hobbies.

Find opportunities for your child to pursue interests or hobbies with other children the same age.

10. Help your child use the computer to set up an online 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.



Scan the QR code to see FIN's other family resources about the best practices for including students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.

To find out how to contact your FIN Facilitator call 1-888-232-0421 or visit the FIN website at www.floridainclusionnetwork.com.