FRIENDSHIP MATTERS SERIES

Building Friendships

Simple ways to help your child connect

For families · All ages



Kids with friends tend to be happier, less likely to struggle with anxiety or depression, and do better in school. Friendship skills can be taught, and home is where kids practice first.

Six ways to help at home

1 Open lots of doors

Try teams, clubs, arts or volunteering that match your child's interests.

2 Talk it over

Chat about honesty, kindness and loyalty, and what your child looks for in a friend.

3 Notice the good

When your child helps a friend or speaks up about feelings, praise that specific choice.

4 Model it

Kids learn from watching how you treat your partner, coworkers and friends.

5 Practice at home

Board games, chores and taking turns build patience and cooperation.

6 Give them room

Set up playdates, then let kids work things out. Give teens more independence.

Friendship skills at every age

- **Young children:** Coach specific moves, like inviting a child sitting alone to join in.
- **Middle schoolers:** Talk about being well liked versus "popular" for status.
- **Teens:** Remind them peers share the same worries, and encourage their own values.

Sources

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