

**i** **WHAT IS IT?**

Supporting Friendship Skills is facilitating student's ability to make and maintain friendships through teaching social skills and peer pairing. This includes teaching students through the use of books, puppets, and other materials to use basic social skills in the classroom such as initiating conversations and sharing.



**EXAMPLE**

During Circle Time, the teacher reads a book that illustrates students successfully sharing. She provides each student a laminated picture of an item shared in the book (e.g. shovel, doll, crayons). When their corresponding page is read, students role-play sharing the items with a friend (i.e., hand picture to a friend).

**★ WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?**

Students learn friendship skills through repeated practice and observation of other students. Intentional teaching of social skills helps students understand what is expected of them in social interactions and provides a safe place for them to practice these new skills.

**HOW TO SUPPORT FRIENDSHIP SKILLS**

**1. Strategies for developing friendships** (Adapted from CSEFEL "You've got to have friends")

- ✓ Use books and social stories that focus on social skills to introduce this topic in general as well as specific social skills (See Additional Resources)
- ✓ Model friendship skills with puppets or videos
  - Present and discuss different scenarios
- ✓ Prime children to use friendship skills before play begins
  - Prior to play, ask, "Who are you going to play with? What toy will you share?"
  - Practice before play. For example, role-play asking to join in play or share a toy.
- ✓ Suggest play ideas
  - Suggest new ways to use materials or expand the play to include others or role-reversals
- ✓ Direct modeling
  - Join in the play! Directly model desired play partner behaviors
- ✓ Reinforcement
  - Provide specific, labeled praise (e.g., "I like the way you were taking turns with Joe") shortly after play has ended. Do not interrupt play to provide reinforcement as they may disrupt the play interactions and so inadvertently cause an abrupt end to the positive peer interactions.

# SOCIAL SKILLS

## GUIDE TO SUPPORTING FRIENDSHIP SKILLS



### RESOURCES THAT SUPPORT FRIENDSHIP SKILLS

#### Book Nook:

[The Rainbow Fish](#)

Available as PDF

CSEFEL©

#### I Can Be a Super Friend

[Available as PDF](#)

CSEFEL©

#### Super Friend Activity

[Available as PDF](#)

CASTL©

#### You've Got to Have Friends

[Available as PDF](#)

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