

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS

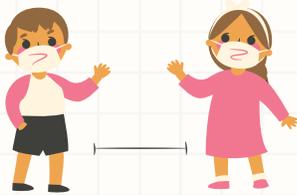
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AN RCS PREK FAMILY NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST AND SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

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PEER RELATIONSHIPS



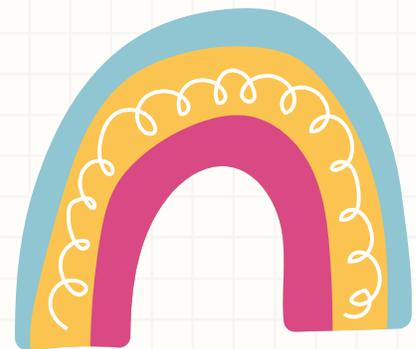
When children play or interact with their peers, they are learning more about social behavior, including how to express themselves, how to share, how to take turns, and how to care for other people. For the past year all of our social relationships have changed in some way. As we return to in-person interactions, here are some ideas to support successful interactions with others.

READ AT HOME

- Ask the public librarian for help finding books about friendship.
- Find your favorite picture book read aloud on YouTube, watch it, then talk about it together.
- Ask your child questions while reading, such as
 - *what makes this character a good friend?
 - *what would you do if this happened?
 - *what else could this character do instead?

READ A SOCIAL STORY ABOUT FRIENDSHIP

A social story can be a useful tool for social-emotional development. Drawing attention and talking about children's prosocial behavior helps children learn what good friendship skills are, and they can begin to use them naturally as they play and interact with others. Read a social story about what it means to be a friend, for example, such as I Can Be A Super Friend, found here:
<https://cainclusion.org/teachingpyramid/materials/family/>



I Can Be a SUPER FRIEND!



Created for Tab by Lisa Grant & Rochelle Lentini • 2002
Adapted by Linda Brault, WestEd • 2012 (Updated: 2017)
Artwork by Alejandro Castillon, WestEd • 2012



MAKING THE MOST OF PLAYTIME WITH PEERS

So how can you improve the quality of your child's playtime with peers? Take a look at the tips below:

Practice turn-taking

Try intentionally modeling and practicing turn-taking during daily interactions at home and also during playtime with peers:

- Building turn-taking into every day activities. During play at home you can practice rolling a ball back and forth or stacking blocks. With peers outside play can also provide many opportunities to practice turn-taking by sliding down the slide or using a swing.
- By pointing out that your child is taking turns, you are reinforcing the skill. Encourage your child with positive feedback when you see them waiting for their turn and celebrate success. "Now it's your turn! You are having fun together!"
- Waiting for a turn can be hard. Children want to know when to expect their turn. Using a timer or singing a song can help measure a turn for a child in a way they can understand. You can say "I see you want a turn on the swing too. Let's sing a song and when we are done, it will be your turn. Do you want to sing Itsy-Bitsy Spider or Twinkle Twinkle Little Star?" (1)

Improve Your Child's Emotional Literacy

- Talk about emotions and practice looking at each other's faces and identifying emotions.
- Validate emotions by labeling them in yourself and for your child, then with another child during play.
- Give your child words for emotions to build vocabulary.
- Teach your child to look at your face and body movements, and then others during play. While we are wearing masks, teach your child to pay close attention to eyebrows, eyes, and gestures while our mouths are covered by a mask. (2)



Resources and For More Information:

(1) [How to Teach Your Child To Take Turns](#)
[How to Help Your Child Learn to Share](#)

[How to Help Your Child Understand & Label Emotions](#)

(2) [Helping Children Understand Emotions While Wearing Masks](#)

