



Making & Keeping Friends

By Stephanie Garner

Agenda

- + What is friendship?
- + Play skills
- + Assess Social Skills needs
- + Teaching ideas
- + Power of Play Dates
- + References and resources

What is friendship?

- + Friends are important for all seasons of life.
 - + Support each other emotionally
 - + Are willing to see things from the other's point of view
 - + Provide assistance and feedback when needed
 - + Provide companionship for community and school activities
 - + Help each other enjoy new experiences and appreciate life more fully.
 - + Friends choose each other

Opportunity and Support

Opportunity

- + Access to peers of differing abilities/greatest amount of inclusion
- + Opportunities for peers to interact without the role of “helper” or “tutor”
- + School activities, interest groups, play dates, church, challenger sports

Opportunities

- + <http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=3736> (search Challenger)
- + <http://projectsunshinetamu.weebly.com/> (Project Sunshine)
- + <http://www.facetsbcs.org/> (FACETS)
- + <http://arrowmoon.shac.org/units> (Boy Scouts)
- + <https://www.bcsgirlscouts.org/> (Girl Scouts)
- + <http://www.centralbcs.org/ministries/special-needs/special-needs-ministries/> (Central Baptist Church)
- + Friends Congregational Church, Grace Bible Church
- + <http://bvcil.org/> (Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living)

Support

- + Work toward greatest amount of inclusion and physical access
- + Teach the skills needed to both groups (more on that later)
- + Notice who your child is drawn to or enjoys and vice versa
- + Ask teachers and care providers

What are the skills?

Play Skills (checklist)

<https://childdevelopment.com.au/resources/child-development-charts/play-and-social-skills-developmental-checklist/>

- + Imitation: needed at all levels
- + Joint attention
- + Communication
- + Social focus
- + Shifting focus

Social Skills

- + **Entry Skills:** starting play, joining a group, welcoming others, making polite requests
- + **Reciprocity and Sharing:** turns in play, conversation, play ideas and resources
- + **Avoiding and Ending:** The appropriate behavior and comments to “maintain solitude”(I want to play alone) or end the interaction.
- + **Personal Space**
- + **Solving social problems-**compromise, turn taking instead of acting out with aggressive or emotional meltdown, being a good sport

Social Skills

- + **Assistance:** giving and seeking, leaving an uncomfortable situation and/or getting adult help
- + **Compliments:** giving compliments and responding to a friend's compliment
- + **Criticism:** Knowing what is appropriate, when to criticize and how to accept criticism
- + **Accepting Suggestions:** incorporating the ideas of others into the activity.

[http://www.tonyattwood.com.au/books-by-tony-m/archived-papers/75-understanding-and-teaching-friendship-skills,](http://www.tonyattwood.com.au/books-by-tony-m/archived-papers/75-understanding-and-teaching-friendship-skills)

[http://cdn.tonyattwood.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/fos.pdf,](http://cdn.tonyattwood.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/fos.pdf)

[http://cdn.tonyattwood.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/obs.pdf \)](http://cdn.tonyattwood.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/obs.pdf)

Social Skills

+ **Monitoring and Listening:**

- + Regularly observing the other person to monitor interest in the activity by their contribution to the activity and body language.
- + Be aware of how their own body language communicates interest to the other person.
- + Working out what other people are thinking and feeling,
- + Understanding facial expressions and body language, Be able to recognize when a playmate is unfair, bossy or aggressive

+ **Flexibility:** able to adjust to new social situations, shift focus to new activity

+ **Empathy:** responding appropriately to person's circumstances and the positive and negative feelings of others

Teach Skills

- + Understanding friendship
 - + Clear definitions
- + Role plays-adults and safe kids
 - + Scripts
 - + Switch roles
- + Social stories
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjIIYYbVIrl>)
- + Modeling-living out loud
- + Practice! Play dates

Safe friends do this....



touch gently



Work so I
have time
to play



stop when
friend says,
"stop"



Use nice
words & voice



Smile
at others



share toys



Work next
to others



Keep hands
and feet to self



take turns



Clap for others



Not safe friends do
this...



bite



kick toys



take from
others



hit others



Yell at others



kick others



run away
from others



tell others
to go away!



grab others



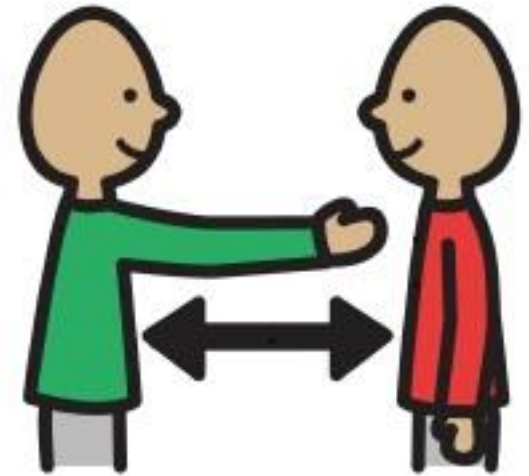
pinch



Close Enough!

Personal Space

Personal Space Story



My Space Bubble



Scripts

Me: "Do want to play?"

Friend: "Yes"

Me: "What do you want to do? I want to play monopoly. Do you like monopoly?"

Friend "Yes."

Me: "Okay. I'll go get it for us."

Me: "Do you want to play?"

Friend: "No"

Me: "Okay. Maybe another time." (walk away)

Me: "Do you want to play?"

Friend: "I can't. My mom's not home."

Me: "Okay. When she comes home, maybe you can come over."

Friend: "Maybe"

Me: "Okay. I hope you can come over. See you later!"

Me: "Do you want to play?"

Friend: "Sure."

Me: "Do you want to play Monopoly?"

Friend: "I don't like Monopoly"

Me: "Okay. Do you like Uno?"

Friend: "It's okay. Do you have Battleship?"

Me: "Yes. I'll get it."

Script-Friend pushes you

Me: "Stop! I don't like it when you push me."

Other kid: "Move. You are in the way."

Me: "I'm moving. Next time you can just ask me to move."

Other kid: "Whatever."

Me: walk away and play something else or go home

Me: "Stop! I don't like it when you push me."

Other kid: "Sorry! I didn't mean to push you."

Me: "Okay." (keep playing)

Play Dates

- + Play dates
 - + Other parents and reciprocation
 - + Play dates at a friend's house
 - + Educating about your child

Play Dates

- + Fun, special activities, special treats (reinforce trying this new thing with your child)
- + Activities that demand cooperation and communication: wooden blocks, creating with Legos, playing with cars on a track or outside in the dirt, making things with play-dough, fun board games.

- + Play dates are electronic free for younger ones (don't break the ice, pop-up pirate, don't spill the beans, monopoly, blokus, clue, checkers)
- + For olders, try half and half
- + Parallel play is okay. They may need a break from intense social interaction. Intervene if not back together after 15 minutes

Other considerations

- + Interest groups
- + Think about long term success-takes time
- + Talk to social skills teacher-what are they learning, tools using
- + Things to remember....
 - + *it takes practice and trial and error over time
 - + *skills aren't mastered overnight, even if they seem easy to us
 - + *allow failure and be there to encourage and reteach
 - + *not everyone is meant to be your child's friend
 - +

References and Resources

- + www.facetsbcs.org
- + <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/5-ways-to-help-your-child-with-autism-make-friends/>
- + <https://wehavekids.com/parenting/How-to-Help-Your-Child-With-Autism-Develop-Meaningful-Friendships>
- + <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/alphabet-kids/201006/autism-can-be-your-childs-ally-not-enemy-in-making-friends-5-tips-turning>
- + <http://www.autism-help.org/communication-autism-making-friends.htm>

References and Resources

- + <https://childdevelopment.com.au/resources/child-development-charts/play-and-social-skills-developmental-checklist/>
- + <http://drlisasulenti.com/2015/11/13/making-and-keeping-friends/>
- + http://m.raisingchildren.net.au/articles/disabilities_play_and_friendship.html
- + <https://www.recreationtherapy.com/articles/lutfiyya.htm>
- + <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/the-development-of-play-skills-from-birth-to-3>
- + <https://childdevelopment.com.au/resources/child-development-charts/play-and-social-skills-developmental-checklist/>
- + <http://tonyattwood.com.au/books-by-tony-m/archived-papers/75-understanding-and-teaching-friendship-skills>

Coming up....

Next Purposeful Life
October 4th

Parenting on the Spectrum
Sept. 18th 6:30-7:30 PM