

## Social skills – Friendship skills

### School and Home information sheet

Dear Parent,

Your child is attending/has attended a social skills group. They would benefit from further activities at home to target these skills in their everyday environment (see activities sheet attached). The aim of this programme is to; *have an understanding of a what a friend is, identify the qualities of a friend, how to choose and start new friendships, how to keep them going and being able to problem-solve when difficulties arise.*

The following goals are the targets for their current intervention.

For your child to:

1. To have an understanding of what a friendship looks like and the qualities of a friend.
2. To look at how to choose a friend and understand how to develop new friendships.
3. To understand what is involved in being a good friend and how to keep friendships going.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of coping strategies when difficulties in friendships arise.



### Top tips for encouraging social skills at home

- ☺ Demonstrate good social skills when your child speaks to you e.g. use gesture where appropriate, turn to face your child, provide good eye contact.
- ☺ Praise your child when they demonstrate good social skills.
- ☺ Provide specific feedback to your child if they make a mistake e.g. 'You did not use your face to show me how you are feeling, I want you to show me that talking about your friends makes you happy, so you should smile!'
- ☺ Allow some 1:1 time with your child to engage in conversation about what they did that day/their topic of interest.

If you have any questions about this programme, please contact your School Speech and Language Therapist via your child's school/Schools Speech and Language Therapy telephone on 0208 221 9300.

# Carryover Activity Sheet

## Social skills- Friendship skills

### Activities

- To have an understanding of what a friend looks like and the qualities of a friend.



Who do you see? Ask your child about the people/children they see regularly. Now group them into: 'friend', 'family' and 'other'. Draw three circles to help visualise the social circles. Who could 'other' include? Maybe the local shop-keeper or your school teacher? Sometimes people can go into more than one category e.g. your sister can be your friend.



Draw your friend! Ask your child to choose a friend and draw them. What do you like about them? Look at using friendly words to describe them (e.g. kind, honest, funny, clever, popular, beautiful, helpful, good listener).

- To look at how to choose a friend and how to develop new friendships



Pairs: Talk about how friends often like similar things or have "things in common". Freddie has started a new school. He has met a few new class-mates, Katy, Kevin, Shane, Chester and Harry. Using pages 74-80, cut out the cards and lay them face down in the middle. Take turns with your child/siblings to find a pair. Who does Freddie have things most in common with? Choose three new friends for Freddie.

Pass the greeting: How will Freddie make friends with the chosen three? You can use a puppet, toy or picture. Sit in a circle/take turns to pass Freddie round and practise the 5 ways you can start a conversation:



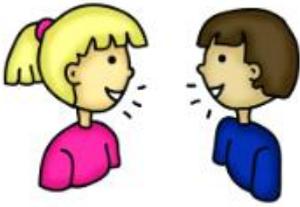
1. Ask a question e.g. 'do you like swimming?'
2. Say hello
3. Ask something e.g. 'can I play too?'
4. Comment on the weather e.g. 'it's a sunny day today!'
5. Say something nice

- To understand what is involved in being a good friend and how to keep friendships going.



Top 5: Look at pages 45-46. Talk about the different qualities, what are the top 5 things your child would choose in a friend. Ask your child what are they good at?

## What makes a good friend?



1. *Good speaking and good turn-taking:* Choose a topic your child likes (e.g. a super hero). Discuss this person, demonstrate appropriate and inappropriate conversation skills (i.e. talking too much, speaking too loudly and interrupting). What did you notice? How did it make you feel?

2. *Good questions- Guess who:* Think of a famous character, take turns to ask questions to guess who the character is.

*Discussion: You may want to talk about asking too many questions. How do you know if you are asking too many questions? (the person looks away, the person looks unhappy, the person doesn't answer).*

3. *Good listening:* hide an object in a room, one person is blind folded and has to listen to the instructions to find it.

4. *Sharing-* bake a cake, make a sandwich or even share different coloured sweets. How will you share the ingredients? What will make it fair? Does everyone get an equal share?

5. *Complimenting-* share compliments throughout the day, model this, how did it make you feel?



## ➤ Demonstrate an understanding of coping strategies when difficulties in friendships arise.

Look at page 167, discuss the five things that can go wrong in a friendship. Can your child think of a time something went wrong?



**Act it out:** Using pages 164-166, act out the different scenarios. Think of solutions to the problem. You can also use problems that may have occurred in the past. There are useful solutions on page 176, as well as actions to avoid.

*If there are not enough people, you can discuss the problems or make comic strip drawings.*

## Social skills games



*These are games that can be played at home with your child/the whole family, to help encourage the use of positive social skills.*

- **Chinese whispers:** Best played with 3+ players. Everyone should sit in a circle/line. Take it in turns to think of a phrase to say e.g. 'I like chocolate cake'. The person who goes first whispers it into the next person's ear, and so on. The last person has to say the phrase out loud, to see if the phrase was repeated correctly to everyone.
- **I went to the market and...:** Can be played with 2+ players. This is a memory game. The first person says: 'I went to the market and I got X' e.g. 'eggs', the next person has to say what the other person said plus a new item e.g. 'I went to the market and I got eggs and milk'. The game continues until someone forgets an item on the list.
- **Mystery objects:** An object is placed in the bag without the other players seeing it. The bag is passed to each person who then tries to either identify the object with one guess/or describe it without saying the name of the object. Whoever guesses correctly can choose the next object! **Alternative version:** Adult picks something and hides it behind their back. They describe the object to the child, who has to guess what it might be based on the clues.
- **Change one thing:** The child/adult leaves the room. Other people in the room decide to change one thing e.g. someone takes off a shoe, a book is upside-down etc. The person then re-enters the room and has to guess what is different.
- **The alphabet game:** Choose a topic e.g. sport/food items. Take it in turns and go through the alphabet and name items beginning with the letters of the alphabet e.g. apple, banana, cherry and so on.

Other easy examples of games you can play at home that encourage social skills development: Hangman, charades, headbandz/21 questions, pictionary.

**Space for notes/comments**