
Friendship Skills: Teaching Your Child How to Make and Maintain Healthy Friendships

MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



Friendship

Friendship skills are key to your child's social and emotional well-being. Positive friendships offer support, companionship, and opportunities for growth. Research shows that kids with strong social ties enjoy better mental health, higher self-esteem, and improved academic success. Parents play a vital role in guiding and encouraging healthy connections.



Teaching and Encouraging Friendship Skills

1 - Model healthy friendships:

Show your child how to be a good friend by practicing empathy, respect, and communication in your own relationships.

2 - Encourage social interactions:

Give your child opportunities to interact with peers through playdates, clubs, or community events to build social skills.

3 - Teach empathy and understanding:

Help your child understand others' feelings and perspectives to form deeper, more caring friendships.

4 - Promote active listening:

Teach your child to listen carefully, make eye contact, and show interest to better understand and support their friends.

5 - Resolve conflicts peacefully:

Show your child how to express feelings, listen to others, and find fair solutions when disagreements arise.

6 - Develop social skills: Help your child learn how to start conversations, join groups activities, and respect boundaries through practice and role-play.



Featured articles

The Importance of Healthy Friendships:

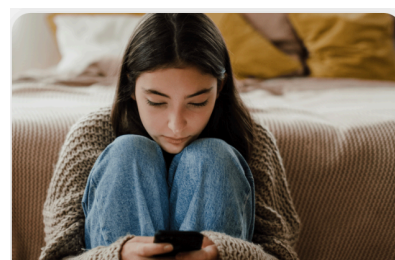
Research shows healthy friendships benefit children's well-being. Here are some key findings:

- 1 A Journal of School Psychology study found that children with strong friendships have a higher sense of belonging and life satisfaction.
- 2 Research from the University of Illinois shows children with healthy friendships have better emotional intelligence and do better in school.
- 3 The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that strong friendships help improve mental health and lower the risk of anxiety and depression.
- 4 A University of Virginia study found that kids with close friends tend to have better physical and mental health later in life.
- 5 The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development found that positive peer relationships boost self-esteem and reduce risky behaviors.
- 6 The University of Cambridge found that strong friendships help children build resilience and cope better with stress and adversity.



Encouraging your child to develop healthy friendships not only enhances their current happiness and well-being but also equips them with important skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.

Remember, building and maintaining friendships is a lifelong process, and your guidance and support play a crucial role in your child's social development. By nurturing their social skills and fostering a positive and inclusive environment, you provide them with the tools they need to navigate and cherish meaningful relationships.



R.E.A.L. Relationships

[Begin Course](#)

Take a no-cost course at [ParentGuidance.org](https://www.ParentGuidance.org)

Learn how to build happy, healthy relationships through empathy, positivity, and science.

For helpful parenting resources visit:
[ParentGuidance.org](https://www.ParentGuidance.org)



For works cited, view the newsletter online

Works Cited

American Academy of Pediatrics. (2016). The impact of social media on children, adolescents, and families. *Pediatrics*, 127(4), 800-804.

Bukowski, W. M., Hoza, B., & Boivin, M. (1994). Popularity, friendship, and emotional adjustment during early adolescence. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 1994(65), 23-37.

Glick, G. C., & Rose, A. J. (2011). Prospective associations between friendship adjustment and social strategies: Friendship as a context for building social skills. *Developmental Psychology*, 47(4), 1117-1132.

Hartup, W. W. (1996). The company they keep: Friendships and their developmental significance. *Child Development*, 67(1), 1-13.

Rubin, K. H., Bukowski, W. M., & Parker, J. G. (2006). Peer interactions, relationships, and groups. In N. Eisenberg (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Social, emotional, and personality development* (6th ed., Vol. 3, pp. 571-645). John Wiley & Sons.

Tremblay, R. E., & Vitaro, F. (2002). The prevention of antisocial behavior through friendship interventions. In P. K. Smith & C. H. Hart (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of childhood social development* (pp. 548-567). Blackwell Publishing.

[.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2016/NSDUH-DetTabs-2016.htm](https://www.fda.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2016/NSDUH-DetTabs-2016.htm)