

# Ten Tips to Help Your Child Make and Keep Friends

For Families of Students with Disabilities

## 1. Play games together. Teach your child how to participate and learn the following social skills:

- *Negotiate:* Model how to make deals, cooperate, discuss, and bargain.
- *Take turns:* You go first this time, then I'll go!
- *Follow rules:* Make sure everyone understands the same rules.
- *Accept defeat:* It's ok to lose, there will be other opportunities to win.
- *Be gracious in victory:* Find ways to give others opportunities to win.
- *Share games & materials:* Let others pick the game or game piece.
- *Be patient:* Give others time to make their move.
- *Strategize:* Verbalize several ways to solve game problems or plan a move.

## 2. Read books or watch videos about making friends with your child.

Visit your local library or bookstore and ask for books or videos about making friends. You will find many resources for all ages!

## 3. Create craft projects for your child and invite neighborhood children to participate.

Craft activities allow each child to express themselves while working with others in a group and developing their fine motor skills when cutting, drawing, or manipulating objects.

## 4. Talk to your child about how to make appropriate choices for friends.

What makes a good friend? What makes a bad friend? Congratulate your child on making a good choice!

## 5. Find a family in your community that has children near the same age as your child.

You may also want to check with your local parks or with your local government to find out about clubs or play groups. Schedule social activities together so that children can learn to make friends in a structured and supportive setting.