

Preschool Pyramid Model

Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

SEFEL/PPM Family Newsletter

Friendship Skills: Asking Children to Play



Social Emotional Development

Play is the foundation of learning for young children. The act of play provides children with a variety of valuable learning opportunities. Play builds brain pathways for thinking, creativity, flexibility, empathy, and many other lifelong skills (Shumaker, 2012, p.10).

Play provides endless opportunities for children to be creative and use their imagination. It also creates opportunities for problem solving.

When playing with other children, vocabulary and language skills are developed. These interactions offer an opportunity for your child to learn new words and fosters communication skills.

As your child engages in play, this increases the likelihood of positive social interactions with peers as well as adults. Most importantly, play offers wonderful childhood experiences many great educational benefits as well!

Shumaker, Heather. *It's Ok Not to Share: and Other Renegade Rules for Raising Competent and Compassionate Kids*. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2012.

How to Teach Your Child to Ask Children to Play

One of the greatest joys in life is watching your child develop friendships. There are several ways you can support your child's development in this area.

Model or demonstrate desired behavior

When children observe an adult's positive interaction, they are more likely to imitate that behavior. Model by asking, "Can I play with you?" when joining your child.

Use visuals

Introducing posters or photographs of children playing, sharing, etc. will help promote peer interactions. Talk about them with your child.

Prompting

Engage in playful activities with your child to promote prosocial behaviors. When your child joins a group of children, remind them of what they can say if they want to play.

Provide positive feedback

Positive feedback is an excellent way to support peer interactions. For example, you may comment on your child initiating play by saying, "You tapped your friend on the shoulder to ask them to play catch with you."

Resource Highlights

For Families

[Sharing \(English\)](#)

[Sharing \(Spanish\)](#)

For Children

[Sesame Street: Elmo's World: Sharing](#)

SEFEL/PPM Book Nook

Can I Play Too? by Mo Willems

The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle

Fox Makes Friends by Adam Relf

One Lonely Seahorse by Saxton Freymann

Classroom Connections

Examples may include various ways that describe how you teach Friendship skills to children.

Community Connections

Find local free or cheap community events for young children at:

<https://triangleonthecheap.com/free-cheap-events-kids/>

Upcoming events included:

- Story walks in local outdoor spaces (Pullen Park, Oakview & Moore Square)
- Craft Corner in Moore Square

Tips & Ideas

Create opportunities to play with your child to help them understand how to play with others.

Pair words/sounds with what your child is doing during play. For example, if your child is playing with a toy car, you could make the sound of an engine revving (i.e., varoom, varoom).



"Play gives children the chance to practice what they are learning."

-Mr. Rogers