DREW CDC
Every Child's Success Strengthens Community

Helping Children Connect with Peers



Young children develop relationships with their peers gradually. As they grow, they begin to notice, play alongside, and eventually interact more with other children. These early experiences help lay the foundation for friendship, communication, and cooperation.



Children build relationships at different rates and in different ways. By creating opportunities to play, communicate, and work together, educators can help children develop the skills and confidence to build positive relationships with their peers.

1

Create Shared Experiences

Plan activities that bring children together, such as making music, creating art, building with blocks, or completing a simple task with a partner.

2

Practice Taking Turns

Use simple games and activities that give children opportunities to take turns, wait for one another, and respond to what their peers are doing.

3

Help Children Join the Play

Model simple words children can use to enter play and connect with peers, such as "Can I play?" "My turn?" or "Let's play together!"

4

Praise Positive Peer Moments

Point out when children help, include, comfort, or encourage one another to reinforce these behaviors: "You helped your friend. That was kind!"

5

Support Different Ways to Communicate

Use pictures, gestures, and visual supports to help children with different communication abilities express themselves, participate in play, and interact with their peers.

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