



Read to Me News

From Your Public Library & Idaho's Read to Me Program

Let's Be Friends!

Friendships are important in helping children develop emotionally and socially. Through friendships and belonging to a group, children improve their sense of self-esteem and have a training ground for trying out different ways of relating to others.

Research shows that children with friends have a greater sense of well-being, better self-esteem and fewer social problems as adults than individuals without friends.

Between the ages of four and seven, play is the glue of friendship. Children become better at generating complex fantasy games, take on roles, give each other directions, and share leadership.

What Parents Can Do:

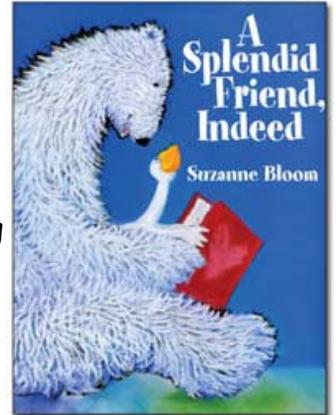
Provide subtle encouragement. Find practical ways you can help your child make room in his/her life for being with other children. Take your child to a library storytime or visit a playground. Model positive interactions by introducing yourself to other parents. Help resolve occasional conflicts. Suggest playdates with friends or offer to take other children to the library during a family outing.

Model appropriate social behavior. Children learn a great deal from their parents. Teach empathy. Talk to your child about your friends.

Worry less. Most kids figure out friendship and group life pretty well. Most will get over the inevitable upsets, rejections, and betrayals without terrible scars. It's all part of the learning process.

Book of the Month

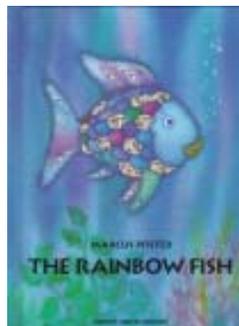
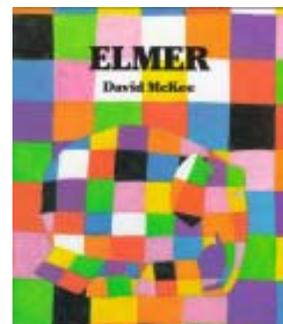
A Splendid Friend, Indeed, by Suzanne Bloom



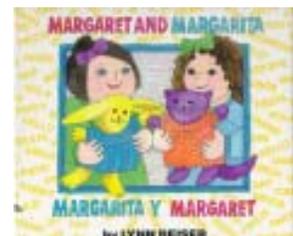
Polar Bear is reading when Goose comes rushing in, pulls the book from the bear's hand, and begins reading himself. The same thing happens after Polar Bear starts writing. Even more frustrating are Goose's questions about what the bear is thinking. But after hearing a note Goose has written about his "splendid friend," Polar Bear realizes that Goose is a splendid friend, too. Fun to read aloud, the book will also lead to talking about friendly (and annoying) behavior.

Your library has many books on friendship. Here are a few additional titles:

- *Elmer*, by David McKee
- *Frog and Toad are Friends*, by Arnold Lobel
- *The Rainbow Fish*, by Marcus Pfister
- *Best Friends*, by Steven Kellogg



- *Yo! Yes?*, by Chris Raschka
- *What are Friends For?*, by Sally Grindley
- *Margaret and Margarita: Margarita y Margaret*, by Lynn Reiser



Fun with Friendship

Make a Friendship Book. Using real photographs or pictures your child has drawn, you and your child can create a friendship book. As you fill in the pages, ask your child what they like best about their friend (or relative) and write their words on the pictures. This book will be filled with long lasting memories for your child.

Friends are like Peanut Butter & Jelly. Help your child stir peanut butter and jelly together for a sandwich. Talk about how the peanut butter is good all by itself and so is jelly, but together they make a great sandwich. Compare this to playing alone and playing with a friend.

Make it Easier. Encourage playthings that are less likely to create conflicts, like making a long paper chain or playing with playdough, blocks or crayons.



Things to Talk About

Talk about ways your child could be a special friend. Talk about things that hurt friendships -- teasing, bullying, gossiping, and excluding children from play.

Discuss with your child the different ways he or she is alike or different from their friends or other family members. Help them discover things they have in common. Suggest things that cannot be seen such as skills, favorite foods, number of people in their family, and so on.

Children who feel loved and accepted in their families and whose ideas and talents are valued feel good about themselves. They are better able to develop skills that attract friends and maintain successful friendships.

Songs to Share

Silver and Gold

Make new friends, but keep the old
One is silver and the other gold.

The More We Get Together

The more we get together,
Together, together.
The more we get together,
The happier we'll be.
'Cause your friends are my friends
And my friends are your friends.
The more we get together,
The happier we'll be!

Fingerplay of the Month

Friends

I have two friends,
(hold up two fingers on left hand)
And they have me;
(hold up one finger on right hand)
Two friends and me,
(bend each from left to right)
That's one, two, three
(hold up while saying 1, 2, 3)



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