

# SHARE Tip

## *Making Friends*

Learning how to form successful friendships is a critical skill for all children, and one they will be using throughout their lives. Friends enrich lives, boost self-esteem, and build self-confidence. Some children may have a harder time fitting in and making friends. Below are some tips that parents can use to help their child develop skills to build successful friendships.

### HELPING SHY CHILDREN

- Plan playdates at your house first, where your child will be most at ease.
- Clubs or other structured activities are a good way to make friends while minimizing anxiety.
- Suggest that your child invite friends to try new activities.

### EVERY CHILD IS DIFFERENT

- Different children in the same family can have different social limits and degrees of comfort.
- A child who prefers quiet time or being in small groups isn't necessarily avoiding other kids.
- Know how much your child can handle and set your expectations accordingly.

### GET ADDITIONAL HELP

- Work with your child's doctor or behavioral therapist to select appropriate social stories.
- Set up a meeting with their teacher(s) to get a better sense of your child's interactions.



For more resources like this,  
visit <https://nvpep.org/familiesshare>

This SHARE Tip was adapted from the Child Mind Institute article:  
<https://childmind.org/article/kids-who-need-a-little-help-to-make-friends/>

*The Child Mind Institute advances children's mental health through compassionate and uncompromising clinical care.*

## What To Do

### BUILDING SOCIAL SKILLS

- Practice taking turns and sharing during family playtime
- Practice strategies for settling peer conflict
- Model good social behavior
- Practice simple conversations with your child
- Develop social stories to role play good social skills

### PRACTICE BEFORE PLAYDATES

- Review social cues with your children before playdates
- Talk about what it means to be a good host and how to make guests feel more comfortable
- Pick out a few games in advance. Talk about when it's a good time to move on to the next game
- Discuss cues that tell us their guests are having a good time (smiling, laughing, etc.)
- Focus on the good behaviors!