

A collection of colorful wooden human figures in various colors (orange, dark brown, light wood, teal, red) scattered on a dark surface. The figures are made of wood and have a simple, stylized design. They are scattered across the frame, with some in the foreground and others in the background. The colors are vibrant and varied, creating a diverse and inclusive visual. The text "Friendship 411" is centered over the image in a white, sans-serif font.

Friendship 411

# The Benefits of Friendship

Important for emotional and moral development

Helps in learning and developing social skills: Communication, Cooperation, Perspective Taking, and Problem-Solving.

Helps build self-esteem.

Gives opportunities to regulate emotions and respond to the emotions of others.

Develops negotiation skills when different problems arise in social situations.

Results in improved school performance due to better attitudes about learning and school.

# Friendship Algorithm

- YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/k0xgjUhEG3U>

# Why Does my Child Struggle with Friendship?

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Shyness, anxiety

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Difficulty with social skills

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Poor communication skills

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Difficulty understanding body language, facial expression, gestures

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Aggressive, impulsive behavior

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Low self-esteem, lacks confidence

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Previous negative experience

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Diagnoses that may make friendship difficult: ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder.

# How Can I Help My Child Make Friends?

- **Build Conversation Skills.** This includes the ability to initiate and maintain a conversation, conversational turn-taking, asking appropriate questions, making comments. Recognizing volume, tone, and body language.
- **Use Role Play Activities, Video Modeling, and Formulating a Friend File** to help with conversation and social skills.


# What is a FRIEND FILE?



- Information about friends and acquaintances that we keep in our brains and bring up when we see them. Friend files are important because they allow us to make comments or ask questions that are specific to that person. Asking questions or making comments about information we remember tells a person we are thinking about them and listening.



# Focus on Social Skills

- Take time to observe and understand how your child socializes
  - Model positive social behavior
  - Role play at home before and after an interaction with peers
  - Anticipate problems that could arise with friends and discuss possible solutions
  - Emphasize kindness and empathy
  - Practice perspective taking
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# Finding Opportunities for Friendship

Youth sports

Martial Arts,  
running clubs,  
swimming

Music, Art  
lessons, Chess  
Club

Scouts, 4-H,  
church youth  
groups

Library  
activities,  
story time

Volunteer  
opportunities

Social skills  
groups



# PLAY DATES ETC.

Play Dates are a good way to encourage social interaction. Doing some pre play date prep with your child may help things go smoothly.

1. Talk with your child about what it means to be a good host.
2. Plan a few games or activities in advance. Discuss how to know when its time to move on to something else
3. Have your child look for clues that the friend is having fun. Is she/he smiling? Etc.
4. Discuss and plan a time frame. Shorter time frames may be better initially.

# Helping your Shy or Anxious Child



Start small and take it slow.  
Waving and smiling at a friend could be a good start.



Have play dates at your house first to ease tension



Join clubs or activities with built in structure.



Rehearse ahead of time for situations that make your child nervous.

# RESOURCES

Everyday Speech YouTube

Pinterest

Teachers Pay Teachers

Boom Cards