

LESSON 7 - MISSION FRIENDSHIP

Social and Emotional Competency: Social-Awareness

Learning Intent:

- Learn about the concept of positive, healthy friendships
- Understand the importance of having good friends
- Explore the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships
- Explore strategies to deal with difficult situations in their friendships



Lesson Seven

Friendships provide critical support for your child's social and emotional wellbeing. Children who have friends at school feel more connected and are less likely to be bullied.

There are key relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy relationships and just like any other skill, social skills need to be taught and practised. Children's friendship needs and skills change and develop as they grow. They will require your support long after their childhood years. As they get older, their play becomes more complex, but there are key relationship skills required to maintain healthy relationships. These skills include:

- Cooperation (e.g. sharing, taking turns, following rules of play, winning and losing)
- Communication (e.g. starting conversations, listening actively, apologising to others)
- Understanding and managing feelings (e.g. expressing feelings, asking for what one needs/wants)
- Accepting and including others (e.g. helping others, playing fairly)
- Conflict Resolution skills

Children who are good at making and maintaining friendships practise these positive social skills. Children who have difficulties with friendships often display the following behaviours;

- Physical aggression or playing too rough
- Interrupting and/or talking too much
- Bossy behaviour
- Complaining and whining
- Showing off
- Poor sport when winning or losing a game
- Breaking rules of a game

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Lesson seven teaches students the concept of positive, healthy friendships and understanding the important of having healthy relationships. Students will explore the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships as well as explore strategies to deal with difficult situations in their friendships. Students will also learn how to initiate a friendship using 5 simple steps to make a new friend.

Home Activities to Encourage Discussion about the Concepts in Lesson 7

Children who are friendly have more friends. It is important to remind children that to have a friend they need to be a good friend and practise friendly behaviours. You can practise friendly behaviours by trying the following activities at home.

1. Make time to play together. Playing regularly with your child allows them to practise friendship skills such as cooperation and negotiation. Encourage your child to take the lead and take any opportunity to explicitly teach a skill. Avoid criticising, but gently remind them if it is a friendly behaviour or unfriendly behaviour. Remind your child that to have friends you needs to show you are friendly.
2. Encourage a wide range of interests. Children who have a wide range of interests are more likely to have something in common with other children and will find it easier to make friends.
3. Play dates: having your child's friend/s visit will help establish the friendship and will give them the chance to practise their social skills. If necessary, provide guidance without taking over to teach and reinforce a particular skill.
4. Talking about friends. Take the time to talk to your child about their friends and what is happening in their friendship group. Encourage your child to think through any problems that they may be having, guiding the conversation with useful questions.