

For Parents of Little Ones



Here are some ways to nurture good friendship skills at any age:

- *Encourage sharing.* When your child shares a snack with a friend, point out the friend's happy reaction. "Look, sharing your snack made your friend Eva smile!"
- *Teach empathy.* If a child is being left out, you could ask, "I wonder why Joel looks sad? What could you do to help him feel happy?"



"It is fun to have a friend who will play with you. . . . But to have a friend, you must be a friend, too" (*Children's Songbook*, 262). Children develop different friendship skills at different ages. At three, they often like to play in pairs but have trouble sharing. By four, they can cooperate more easily and like playing either in groups or with a special friend. But five-year-olds often prefer being with a parent to playing with friends.



- *Encourage problem solving.* When friends disagree, you can explain, "Friends don't always agree, but friends don't hurt each other. Use kind words to solve the problem."
- *Use the scriptures.* The stories of Jesus and other teachings from the scriptures can help young children learn about loving, forgiving, and helping others—laying the foundation for a lifetime of being a good friend.
- *Tell stories.* When reading stories, point out how the characters are good friends to each other and how we can be like them.

You can read past letters at FriendFPLOlds.org.