



Box Out Bullying  
Comprehensive Materials  
Sustaining Your Positive  
School Culture  
Summer 2015



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Friendship and peer acceptance has been identified as an integral part to the successful maturation of all children. According to Ledger (2000) in her study of friendships over transition, friendships were an important aspect of children's experience that contributed to their feelings of well-being. Communication and social skills have been considered as a predictor of adult success. Research has indicated that early social withdrawal is a strong predictor of peer rejection, social anxiety, loneliness, depression and negative self-esteem in later childhood and adolescence. Berge (2001) also stated that non-social behaviors appeared to have a negative impact on academic success. Based on these facts, children who were successful with peer interactions participated in play activities that enhanced friendship skills.

Play activities that promote opportunities for social and emotional growth assist the maturing child with social skills and peer interactions. Strickland (2003) in his article discussed the importance of outdoor play to enhance the child's physical skills, which in turn develops self and social confidence. Bergen (2001) stated that there was a strong correlation between enhanced play skills and enhanced cognitive, social, and language development. All of these have assisted children in developing friendships.

Elias and Berk (2002) in their study regarding the correlations between sociodramatic play and self-regulation in young children found there is a positive correlation. Sociodramatic play assisted the young child with the development of self-regulation skills, which was another factor identified to develop friendships among peers. A stronger correlation was found between sociodramatic play and self-regulation with highly impulsive children. Sociodramatic play has impacted the maintenance of peer relationships among children. Studies have shown that sociable children who were cooperative in pre-school were liked more by their peers, and exhibited a positive attitude towards Kindergarten. Students who entered school with friends



were found to make better gains in academic performance (Ladd and Price, 1987; Ladd 1990). Faulkner and Miell (1993) discovered that children who had well-established friendships upon entering school had better social and communication skills. They concluded that the ability to make friends influenced children's performance in a range of learning activities, particularly those involving collaboration and cooperation. According to Bredekamp and Copple (1997), children's play affords adults the ability to have insight into children's development, which supports the development of new strategies for learning. Play also enhances development with written language. Play provides a context for children to practice newly acquired skills, and to practice generalizing the skills in all aspects of their lives that promotes the ability to problem solve. This leads to greater self-confidence and encourages children to take risks. Through play children can express imagination and creativity. Therefore, according to Fein (1986), teacher supported play is an essential component of developmentally appropriate practice.

In conclusion, according to Schweinhart and Weikert (1996), academic gains from non-play activities are not lasting. Optimal development of young children is made possible through play, and gives children a chance to learn, consolidate, and practice the skills necessary for further growth and learning.

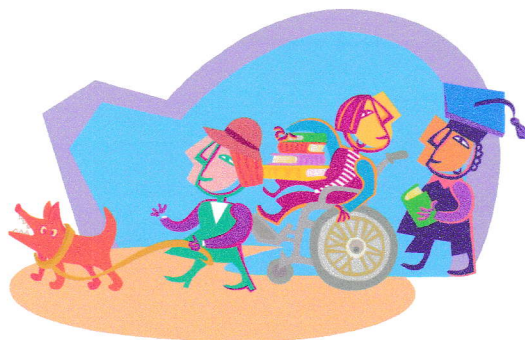
# GOALS



1. Students will develop a community of mutual respect and admiration through friendship building activities.
2. Classroom peers will demonstrate a community of mutual respect and admiration through friendship building activities.
3. Students will discover similarities and differences among their peers that help to foster friendships.

# **Building Classroom**

# Community Activities



## KINDNESS IN A JAR

This is an activity that encourages friendship within the classroom community. It also puts a focus not only on the positive things occurring in the environment, but on literacy development as well.

### Materials/Preparation:

- A large, clear plastic jar
- Small index cards
- Pencils

### Activity:

1. While children are playing, make observations of children who are being kind to their friends. Draw a simple drawing on the small index cards of the kind things you observe (i.e. children waiting and taking turns). Place the drawings in the clear, plastic jar.
2. During the next large group time, introduce the “Kindness Jar” to the children. Read the kind acts out loud and inform the children that they will be responsible for adding additional acts of kindness to the jar.
3. Show the children where the index cards and pencils will be. Let them know that they can ask a teacher for help if needed.
4. Establish a time of day for reading the kind acts on a daily basis.

### Additional Comments:

Be on the look out for children who might have a particularly hard time with behavior. Make sure that they are represented in the kindness jar.



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

This is a get to know one another activity for the beginning of the year. It teaches them how to introduce themselves to another person.

### Materials/Preparation:

- 3 x 5 cards with matching statements, symbols or pictures on each pair.

### Activity:

1. Discuss with students the importance of introducing yourself when meeting a new person. Also discuss tips on how to remember names of new friends.
2. Pass out a card to each student.
3. Students are to mingle to try and find the other person with their matching card.
4. Before they can see if their cards match, they would have to say, "Hello, My name is Paula." The other person would say, "Hello Paula, my name is Barry. It's nice to meet you."
5. Then they can see if their cards match. The first group to find their partner wins a small prize.
6. Once students find their partner, have them ask their partner a few simple questions. Name, age, favorite color, etc.
7. Have students take their seats and then have them introduce their new friend.

### Additional Comments:

Other pro-social concepts can be introduced in the same fashion.

