

Children's Connection Curriculum

Session Topic: Social Skills / Interactions – Peer/Peer, Friendships (I Can Do My Part to Get Along)

Developmental Level: Elementary School

Purpose: To introduce the concepts of negotiation and compromise as problem-solving techniques; to help children identify the things they do that help to build relationships and resolve conflicts.

Materials Needed: Large sheets of paper, Crayons, colored pencils, and /or markers, Paints, (Optional) Home Handout "25 Things That Friends Do" from A Leader's Guide to We Can Get Along by Lauren Payne, M.S.W., and Claudia Rohling, M.S.W., p. 10., (Optional) Book – We Can Get Along by Lauren Murphy Payne, M.S.W.; illustrations by Claudia Rohling, M.S.W.

Description of Session: Read all or part of the book We Can Get Along (optional). Group the children in pairs. Tell them that they are going to work together to draw and color pictures. Ask them to start by thinking about the picture they want to make. Ask questions like:

- What do you want to draw?
- What do you think your partner wants to draw? How can you find out? (Ask and then listen to what the other person says.)
- How can you make sure that your picture is something you both want to draw?
- How can you make sure that your final picture is something you both like and feel proud of?

Invite the children to brainstorm ideas. If they have difficulty getting started, offer a few examples like the following, using the names of the children in your group:

- "If Tiffany has an idea for a picture, she can tell Mandy, and Mandy can listen to Tiffany's idea.
- "Michael and Kate can think together about what colors they want to use."
- Maybe Shannon can draw the outlines and Roy can color them in."
- "If Montel likes to draw trees, maybe he can do that part. If Ellie likes to draw houses, maybe she can do that part."

Give the children time to make their drawings. If a pair is stuck or seems headed toward disagreement or conflict, tell them to *stop* and *think* before proceeding. Remind them that friends:

- work together
- help each other
- encourage each other
- listen to each other
- solve problems together
- compromise when they don't agree

To reinforce these concepts, you can use the "24 Things That Friends Do" Home Handout. Have the children show their drawings to the group. Invite the children to tell about how they worked together. After discussing their pictures and experiences creating them, using the discussion questions below, you can state something like:

"There's something special about all of the drawings. If only one person had drawn each one, they just wouldn't be the same! You all did your part to get along and make your drawings, and I'm very proud of you."

Discussion Questions:

1. How did you decide what to draw?
2. How did you choose the colors?
3. Was it easy or hard to work together? What made it easy? What made it hard?
4. Did you have disagreements along the way? How did you solve them?
5. Were there any disagreements you couldn't solve? What did you do?

Reference: A Leader's Guide to We Can Get Along by Lauren Payne, M.S.W., and Claudia Rohling, M.S.W., p. 21-22, 10