

PRESCHOOL HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS



CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR SGLs

Every kid needs tribes over time to give them belonging. And your small group is a great place for that kind of connection to take place! As a small group leader, you're a significant member of a child's tribe. So keep in mind that your conversations about friendship matter—even during this early phase of preschool. Your words could serve as the foundation of how a kid views and forms their own friendships.

A marker of the preschool phase is that *everyone* is a friend. The mailman. The neighbor down the street. The cashier at the grocery store. The family dog. To a preschooler, friends come in all shapes, sizes, genders, and species. The key to discussing friendships with a preschooler is to keep it basic, specific, and concrete—keeping your focus on what it looks like to be a good friend. Acting out situations, playing games, and funny stories are the best teachers in this phase.

Here are a few ideas of what to say—and what to avoid saying—when leading discussions about healthy friendships with preschoolers:

WHAT TO SAY:

- What does it mean to be a friend?
- Do you watch any shows or read any books about friends? How do they treat one another? What type of things do friends do together?
- Friends are kind and loving to one another. What does it mean to be kind and loving?
- Good friends ask one another questions. Let's take turns asking each other questions like friends.
- Friends share with one another. Who shares with you? Who do you share with?
- Friends use nice words when they play together. What are some examples of nice words?
- Has a friend ever made you sad or hurt your feelings? What did you do? What did you say?
- Have you ever seen someone sitting or playing by themselves? What did you do? How could you be a friend to them?
- Friends forgive one another. What does it mean to forgive someone?

WHAT **NOT** TO SAY:

- If someone hurts your feelings, they're not a good friend.
- You should choose one friend and that's it.
- If you don't have lots of friends, maybe you aren't very nice.