

## Handout 5.9: Examples of Activities to Support the Development of Friendship Skills

**Friendship Can:** During large group time, have children generate a list of different things they can do to be a friend. Introduce the “friendship can” – which is a decorated can with names of all of the children in the can. Have each child draw out a name. Children can then use their friendship skills to do something with or for their “friend” throughout the day. They can make something special for their “friend,” play with their friend, share with their friend, compliment their friend, help their friend, etc. During the day (as well as summarizing at the end of the day), children and teachers can talk about how they are using their friendship skills with their friend.

**Planting Seeds of Friendship:** Have children plant seeds (“seeds” of friendship) in small cups throughout the year. As new children join the classroom, children can give them one of their “friendship cups” to welcome them to the classroom. Each “friendship cup” has a welcome note that was made by the children (along with their teacher!). To introduce this activity, tell the children that you are all going to work together to make “seeds of friendship” so that new children will feel welcome and be able to make new friends! Talk about how hard it can be to be the “new” child! Ask children what friendship skills they can use to help new children feel welcome (play with new child, share toys, help new child learn the rules, schedule, names of other children, etc.).

**Friendship Tree/Compliment Tree:** Make a big tree without leaves that can be displayed on a wall. Have leaves made from construction paper stacked by the tree. As adults and children notice others using friendship skills, write the skill that was used on a leaf and add it to the tree. At the end of the day, “celebrate” the new leaves that were added to the tree. Describe the specific friendship skills that were used each day. You can also use the same idea to make a compliment tree.

**Friendship Quilt:** Children make a quilt out of construction paper squares that hang together on the wall. Each square has pictures of children in the classroom (labeled with their names) as well as pictures of children using friendship skills like sharing, playing together, or helping each other (which are also labeled). This is a good activity to use at the beginning of the year to help children learn everyone’s name as well as friendship skills. Squares are added to the quilt as children use their new friendship skills. This is a great idea for home providers if they have children of different ages. They can make pictures that show what children can do to be a good friend based on their age and skills.

**Friendship Journal:** Create a friendship journal that has friendship skills and pictures of the children in the classroom using these skills. This journal can be added to the book area for children to look at throughout the year.

**Music/Songs:** Teachers and children can make up songs about being friends. There are also commercial CDs that have songs about being friends.