

MAKING FRIENDS CAN BE HARD FOR KIDS WITH ADHD



Actor portrayals.

Maybe your child stands alone, watching other kids play, but isn't sure how to join in...

Or maybe your child acts younger than his or her peers. Your child may have trouble keeping friends due to invading personal spaces, blurting out comments, or playing too rough. Or maybe your child just seems more interested in other things, like computers, rather than friendships. Although children with ADHD often have trouble making friends, you can help your child form friendships through coaching, supervision, and creating new opportunities for positive experiences.

CONNECTING YOUR CHILD WITH OTHERS



Role play: Children with ADHD often have little awareness of how they're perceived by friends. They can commit social blunders without realizing it. Help them by role playing and discussing what went right and what went wrong. Remember to give feedback with sensitivity and positivity.



Team sports: Lessons learned in sports can carry over into social life. Team sports require listening, taking turns, team play, and transitions. Before practice starts, remember to contact the coach to determine if any special accommodations for your child's ADHD would be helpful. Meet the coach and/or some teammates before the first get-together.

Continued on next page.



Continued from previous page.

CONNECTING YOUR CHILD WITH OTHERS



Organized activities: Find a group that matches your child's interests. For example, if your child is a comic book fan, look for an organized club that will attract other fans. A shared interest will help your child feel confident and engaged, and will help cultivate like-minded friendships.



Playdates: One-on-one playdates usually work best for children with ADHD, so no child feels left out. Keep playdates short. (For kids 10 and younger, 3 hours or less may be best.) Be ready to intervene if your child gets into conflicts with other children, or is behaving in a risky or daring manner.



Quality, not quantity: Having one or just a few close friends is often all it takes for a child to develop social self-confidence. Remind children that they don't need to be in the "in" group or get invited to lots of parties to be happy.



Mentors: Find a mentor. While you are your child's main source of support, children (especially teens) may sometimes find it easier to seek advice from a "big brother/sister." Many schools understand the importance of mentors and have programs to connect kids.

Remember, you can show your child how to act in social situations by forming friendships with the parents of your child's peers. It is helpful to stay connected to the community through clubs or organizations as well.

Social skills may not come naturally to children with ADHD.

Children with ADHD need your help learning how to make friends (and keep them). Here are a few more resources to help you guide them.

GET FRIENDSHIP
COACHING STRATEGIES

14 WAYS TO HELP YOUR
CHILD MAKE FRIENDS