

BELIEVE

There is strength in everyone, never doubt who you are. If you need something to believe in, believe in yourself. Believe that you are stronger than any challenge that comes your way. Because you are worth it and there is only one unique you".

-Rockin Happy Rocks

Kids who have autism, just like all kids, benefit from having friends in their peer groups.

Their most import thing is to have friends just like everyone else.

This may seem basic, but a child needs to know what a friend is. They can't be a friend unless they can explain what one is. ... Ask questions like -

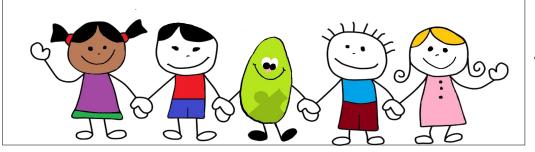
"Do you like being around people who call you names?" and "Do you like being around people who say nice things to you?" Understanding abstract concepts can be challenging for young kids, especially those with autism. Be literal when you can. Use clear, plain language like, "friends are nice to you and say things that make you feel better when you have a bad day."

FOCUS ON LONG TERM SUCCESS

Developing new skills takes time. Nothing happens overnight. Social skills continue to develop as your child gets older. Making friends looks very different for a 4-year-old than it does for a 14-year-old. Keep practicing this skill with your child to help them continue to develop age-appropriate social skills.

HAVE FUN!

If making friends feels like work, your children will likely avoid the interaction. Watching your child learn and grow is amazing, but it can also be stressful. If they see you're stressed, they may become stressed, too. Support your child and make the process as fun and playful as possible.





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