

Making New Friends

A free printable social story for ages 4-10

Approaching new children on the playground takes courage and a plan, and many kids have the courage but not the plan. This story provides simple, rehearsable scripts for saying hi and joining play, plus resilience for when the answer is no. It fits well in social skills groups and summer-camp prep.

Friends are people who like to play and spend time together.

Making a new friend starts with small steps.

I can smile, say, "Hi!" and tell them my name.

I can ask their name, too.

I can ask a question, like "What are you playing?" or "Do you like dinosaurs?"

If kids are already playing, I can watch for a minute and ask, "Can I play too?"

Sometimes kids say yes. Sometimes kids say no or are busy.

If someone says no, it is not the end. I can try another kid or another day.

Friends take turns talking and listening.

When my friend talks, I can listen to their words.

Friends do not have to like all the same things. Different is interesting.

Making friends takes practice, and every try helps.

I have kind things to share, and other kids are lucky to know me.

Tips for Reading This Story Together

- Role-play the scripts with stuffed animals or siblings, including the no response, so rejection is rehearsed and survivable.
- Engineer low-pressure practice: one-on-one playdates around a shared interest beat crowded play-grounds for skill-building.
- Debrief afterward with curiosity, not grades: what went well, what felt tricky, what could we try next time.
- Teach the watch-then-ask join-in move specifically; barging into a game mid-stream is the most common friendship misfire.

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