

Those Nearest and Dearest

Dear Family,

All children want to feel that they "belong". They want to be part of a friendly community, whether a family or a community of peers. Most know that they want a friend ("someone to play with") but not necessarily how to get one, be one or keep one. Each child is part of a family, yet families differ greatly from each other. This theme is designed to help the children develop the social skills to make and maintain friendships and see their roles as members of a family and of a classroom community.

Your child will take part in activities that will support the following ideas:

- We are a classroom of friends.
- Friends are people who like to be with each other and play and work together.
- Friends and family members care for, share with and help one another.
- We can learn how to co-operate and work things out together when we don't agree.
- People who live with others are usually members of our family.
- There are many kinds of families and a child is a special member of a family.

Next week the focus will be on ways to develop and maintain friendships. Some children may have already formed bonds with a few classmates, while others may still need assistance in doing so. We shall use stories to help the children to learn to share with one another.

The following week the focus will be on what a family is and on children's relationships with family members. Several stories will help your child understand ways in which difficult family situations might be resolved. In *A Chair for My Mother*, a mother, daughter and grandmother work hard to save money for a comfortable new chair. In *Peter's Chair*, a young boy copes with feelings of jealousy and rejection when a baby sister joins the family.

This is a rhyme your child will learn this week:

Friends

I like my friends. (point to others)

My friends like me. (point to self)

We are great friends.

It's plain to see. (point to eyes)

We play together.

And always share. (put arms around partner)

We help each other. (shake hands with partner)

And show we care. (put hands on heart)



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Home Link Activities

Day 1: Think of one thing you all share at home.

Day 2: Say the rhyme "Friends" to someone at home.

Work on your Maths Home Link Sheet (1 is fun).

Day 3: Think of a word that rhymes with "friend".

Day 4: Think of something to do for someone in the family that shows that you care.

Day 5: How do you think your friends and family members are alike? How are they different?

Read *In School* or *Look at Me Now!*

Day 6: Tell someone the story of *The Three Bears*.

Read *Families Together* with somebody.

Day 7: Tell someone about the story that you heard today.

Work on your Maths Home Link Sheet (Making 3).

Day 8: Think of a way that you can help, comfort or share with a family member.

Day 9: Work on your Maths Home Link Sheet (Making 4).

Day 10: Read any of the books you have taken home (In School, Look at Me Now! or Families Together).

