Session 8 – Learning how to be a good friend

Concepts, skills & techniques

- How to be friendly and make new friends
- Being a good friend: smile, share, help, listen

Tips for parents

- Create a friends chart to use with your child. Reward your child with a sticker each time you catch them being friendly (e.g. sharing, smiling, helping, listening to others, etc).
- Encourage and praise your child as often as possible for being a good friend.
- Discuss with your child different things they can do to be a good friend. Encourage your child to do these things with their friends, family and new people as well.
- Talk to your child about the people who have been good friends to you (both now and in your childhood), and what makes them good friends (e.g. they listen to you when you are talking to them, they help you to use the computer at work, they smile at you when they see you, etc). Also share how you are a good friend to them (e.g. share your recipes, laugh together, do nice things together like go to lunch, etc).
- When you hear your child talk about different situations at school (e.g. “Jessica was sitting by herself at lunchtime today” or “I saw Jeremy fall over in the playground”), ask them how they could be a good friend to that person.
Session 9 – Learning about rewarding ourselves

A huge self-esteem and confidence boost for your child is to give them lots of praise for their attempts at difficult activities. In the short term, this will help them to think in helpful ways, which will assist them to feel confident about continuing to make attempts at a challenging task. However, over time, this kind of praise will help your child to become increasingly competent at providing their own praise and acceptance, and will help them to develop the belief that they do not have to be perfect or the best at things to be a worthwhile person. Having this belief will assist them to cope, and to continue to feel confident and optimistic, despite the disappointments that can occur in life.

Concepts, skills & techniques

• How reward ourselves when we’ve tried our best!
• How to plan a party, step by step

Tips for parents

• It is important to reward your child when they are brave and try their best. This could be if they try something they have never tried before, or if they do something that they usually find a bit scary. For example, learning to swim, or riding their bike without training wheels. Tell your child that you are very pleased and happy with them for being brave or trying their best and that they should feel proud of themselves!
• It is important to encourage your child to reward themselves for partial successes (not necessarily for reaching their final goal). This is particularly important for children who experience anxiety, as it helps them to learn to persist and not give up when things get difficult (rather – they learn to focus on small, achievable steps and reward themselves for each small step).
• Help your child to focus on what they can do well. This is likely to increase their willingness to give new things a go or to continue facing things they find difficult.
• Discuss with your child ways that they can feel good about themselves when they have done their best, despite things not going the way they planned. For example, if your child does something new or faces a fear, they could say to themselves “I am a winner because I tried my best and I know what to do next time”. They could also work towards tangible rewards for their efforts such as quality time with the family, or bike riding, a trip to the park for an ice cream or an extra story at bedtime.
• Come up with a list of rewards with your child. This might include things such as playing a favourite game, going to a favourite park with the family, a picnic or beach outing, inviting a friend over to play, or getting mum or dad to cook their favourite meal. Even something as simple as giving yourself a pat on the back.
• Your child will be having a party or celebration at the end of the Fun Friends program. Explain that this is a reward for being brave and reaching their goals. It is nice to celebrate with their family and friends.
• Model to your child that you reward yourself when you try new things, are brave in difficult situations, or try your best at something!