

NAVIGATING OUR KIDS' FRIENDSHIPS:

Discussions we need to have:

OBSERVE interactions that your kids have with their friends.

Take a mental note of the things that need to be discussed.

Here are some ideas:

- **"Friends are individuals we CHOOSE to be friends with. What about (our child's friend) makes you want to be friends with them?"** This shows our child that friends are individuals we get to CHOOSE.
- **"Do you feel you always have to agree with your friends?"** Discuss how okay it is to disagree with friends & how each person is unique, and it makes sense that we don't agree on everything with our friends.
- **"Why do you think your friends enjoy your company?"** This can help our child to notice the wonderful traits they have & how wonderful it is for others to have them as a friend.
- **"What are the tricky parts about having a friendship for you?"** We want to check in from time to time.

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- **"When a friend doesn't want to play with you, what does this show you?... Do you ALWAYS want to play with your friends?"**

Children easily take things personally & sometimes a friend doesn't want to play with them because they are tired or unwell & we want our child to understand that it's nothing personal.

On the other hand, sometimes a friend won't want to play with them because they've crossed a boundary & we want our child to realize this as well. Therefore, it's best to teach our kids to ask their friends if something bothers them during these moments instead of creating ideas in their minds.

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Discussions we need to have:

- **"Do you think this is true: the way your friend talks to you about others is probably the way they talk about you to others?"** We want to create awareness around observing how our friends treat others because this says a lot about them.
- **"If your friend yells at you about something in your friendship, does that mean you did something wrong?"** Perhaps they did do something wrong, AND there's always a kind way to communicate that.
- **"Can you tell your friend "no" to something & still be friends?... What if your friend tells you "no", is that okay?"** It's important to normalize boundary setting & still be friends.
- **"Does the number of friends we have mean anything?"** We want to discuss quality or quantity.