



Making and Keeping Friends

Autism & ABA Therapy Social Skills

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Activity Title:

Friendship Garden: Growing and Nurturing Friendships

Objective:

To help the child with autism understand the concept of friendship and practice the skills necessary for making and maintaining friendships.

Materials Needed:

- Friendship Flower Template: Paper cutouts of flower parts (petals, stems, leaves) with friendship qualities written on them (e.g., "listening," "sharing," "kindness").
- A large poster board to create a "Friendship Garden."
- Crayons, markers, glue.

Activity Setup:

Prepare Friendship Flowers:

- Create or print out flower part cutouts. Write or print different friendship qualities on each petal.
- Each complete flower will represent a friendship, with each petal symbolizing a quality that helps friendships grow.

Set Up a Comfortable Activity Area:

- Arrange a space where the child can comfortably sit and work on the activity.

Activity Steps with Example:

Discussing Friendship:

- Start by talking about what friendship is: “Friends are people who care about each other. We do nice things for our friends and enjoy spending time with them.”

Building a Friendship Flower:

- Choose a flower part and discuss the quality on it.
- Example: Pick a petal that says “listening” and talk about how listening to friends is important.

Creating the Friendship Garden:

- Invite the child to glue the flower part onto the poster board to start creating a garden.
- As you add each part, discuss how that quality helps friendships (e.g., “When we listen to our friends, they feel important and cared for”).

Role-Playing Friendship Scenarios:

- Act out simple scenarios demonstrating friendship qualities.
- Example Scenario: Role-play a situation where one child shares their toys with another.

Reflecting on Friendships:

- After completing the garden, reflect on the qualities discussed.
- Ask, “Which friendship quality do you like the most? How can we show this quality to our friends?”

Skills Targeted:

- Understanding Friendship: Recognizing what makes a good friend.
- Social Skills Practice: Role-playing scenarios to practice friendship qualities.
- Empathy and Sharing: Learning to consider others’ feelings and share.
- Communication: Discussing and expressing thoughts about friendship.