

Why do some children have difficulties playing with others and making and maintaining friendships?

- ❖ Difficulties starting a conversation
- ❖ Difficulties maintaining a conversation
- ❖ Difficulties leaving a conversation
- ❖ Difficulties picking up on non verbal messages
- ❖ Taking things literally and not recognising sarcasm
- ❖ Not understanding the conversational content
- ❖ Different interests to others
- ❖ Setting – too noisy
- ❖ Too many people to engage with at once.
- ❖ Lack of experience
- ❖ Low self esteem
- ❖ Pace of the conversation



How can you help?

- ✓ Provide structured opportunities for play e.g. turn taking games such as card games and board games
- ✓ Explain the rules of games and practice this one to one
- ✓ Be explicit and feedback what the your child can do better
- ✓ Practice topics of conversation that other children will have in common that are 'safe' to do so
- ✓ Prepare your child for different and new social settings using photos to map out what will be happening and what it will look like. This allows rehearsal beforehand
- ✓ Discuss the interests with your child as a starting point for a conversation
- ✓ Help to reduce anxiety levels – it is easier to listen and participate when you are not feeling very anxious
- ✓ Encourage your child (only if they can and it is not upsetting for them) to look at the person they are talking to and to listen and focus on what is being said. Use their name as a prompt to help with this
- ✓ Use stories as examples of different social situations to discuss how to respond