



Social and Emotional Development

Activity for 42 to 48 Months

Puppet Pals

Children need the opportunity to work out conflicts that come up in everyday play situations — around the yard, to the end of the block, in the park — sharing a truck, waiting for the red marker to be available, or including a new child in their group of friends. Learning to make friends is an extremely important skill for successful development, positive self-image, and success in school.

Materials:

- Yarn
- Paper plates
- Chart paper
- Glue
- Crayons and markers
- Tongue depressors or Popsicle sticks
- Marker

What to do:

1. Provide the child and her playmates with paper plates, crayons, markers, yarn, a Popsicle stick, and glue to create a puppet pal. Children can make a puppet that closely reflects what they look like — brown eyes, red hair, glasses.
2. Think of scenarios that happen frequently in the play group and list them on small pieces of paper. Examples: Two children fighting over a truck, a child saying a hurtful word to another child, a child being left out of play, or a child who doesn't tell the truth.
3. Divide the children into small groups and let them pull one of the play situations out of a hat. Read the scenario to them. Encourage that group to use their puppets to role-play how they would resolve that issue.

