



Teaching Getting Along

Step 1. Have Conversations with Your Child about What it Means to Get Along

1. When your child is about to go off to school at the beginning of the year or a new term or is attending a party or joining a group, say: "There are different things that you can do to make friends and be popular. When you are playing games, make sure everyone has a turn and you play by the rules. When you see someone who seems left out, go over and find out if he or she would like to join in or talk with you. It is important to contribute positively to help everyone feel happy, safe and respected. And when you have a disagreement with another, it is important to solve the conflict without fighting. In this way, we all can get along with each other."
2. If you have a child who seems to be very competitive and mostly interested in him/herself, say: "I know that achieving at a high level and being the best is important to you. However, it is also important to be concerned about others at home and at school and to make sure that what you say and do contributes to everyone's success and well-being. Putting others interests at the same level of importance as your own makes our community a better place for everyone including you."

Step 2. Describe Examples of Getting Along Behaviour to Practice

Select two or three examples of getting along behavior that you want your child to practice to help him/her to get along with peers, family, classmates and/or adults:

Say: "Here are some different things you can do to get along well with others (select two or three from the following list), why not practice doing a few this week: when you have a disagreement, see if you can solve the problem without fighting by talking it through, work cooperatively with others by listening, taking turns, and doing your fair share of work, follow the rules of school and home that help everyone to feel safe and happy, listen and don't interrupt when someone else is speaking, offer to help others who need help, volunteer to make school or the community a better place to live and learn, treat others with respect, include others, be honest

Step 3. Discuss Ways to Think that will Help Your Child to Get Along

1. When your child reports being angry because someone has behaved unfairly or when your child has made fun of someone who is different, say: "While you may not like some of the behaviours or customs of that person, don't judge that person as a totally bad person who deserves to be punished or ridiculed. Be careful not to judge a book by its cover." (**Being Tolerant of Others Thinking**)
2. At a family meeting when family matters are discussed, say: "One of the ways that help all of us to get along with each other is being aware of and following what can be called expectations or home rules. Keeping these in mind help us to get along. For example, I think it is good if everyone at home treats each other with respect and fairly. What do you think?" (other expectations/rules might be: We all do our fair share of work around the house; We help people who have problems to feel better; We listen and respect other people's opinions). (**Playing by the Rules Thinking**)
3. When you catch your child having lashed out with anger by fighting or saying something hurtful, say: "I know you think what happened was unfair. But lashing out has hurt someone. It is better when you have a problem with someone to think before you act about what you can say or do to improve the situation and not hurt someone." (**Thinking First Thinking**)
4. It is important for you to find time to discuss with your children the kind of values you wish him/her to display that helps build his/her positive character. In a family meeting or in a one-to-one discussion say (select as many of the following values to discuss): "One of the things that is very important for me as a parent is for you to treat others with respect, act responsibly, be honest, be caring, be tolerant and inclusive of people who are different and to give everyone a fair go. When we act in these ways, this is a sign that we have good character." (**Social Responsibility Thinking**)

Step 4. Things to Say to Acknowledge Your Child's Getting Along Behaviour

When you catch your child demonstrating Getting Along behavior, you might say to them "You are a good listener" "You think before you act. Great attribute!" "Sharing helps you to be a good friend" "You are a helpful person" "Solving this problem without fighting shows you are really getting along" "You have a real talent for getting along" "You care about your community" "You are taking time to find out more about a person without judging them"