



The Making Friends Program: Supporting Acceptance in Your K-2 Classroom

Paddy C. Favazza Ed.D., Michaelene M. Ostrosky Ph.D., Chryso Mouzourou Ph.D.

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Bullying prevention starts with **helping young children understand and accept diversity**—the earlier the better. That's why your school team needs this ready-to-use resource, a simple, fun, and effective way to promote social acceptance in the critical early years of attitude development.

Perfect for K–2 classrooms, this book presents the field-tested, research-based Making Friends program, a toolbox of **adaptable, practical strategies that fit right into your regular school day**. You'll help students respect and accept each other's differences through three methods: 1) reading diversity-themed stories and conducting brief **whole-class discussions**; 2) forming **small learning groups** that encourage children from diverse backgrounds to play and interact; and 3) **sharing the storybooks you read with families** so they can continue discussions at home. Aligned with DEC/NAEYC recommended practices and the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards, this proven program will boost students' social and academic skills as you create a welcoming, inclusive, and culturally responsive classroom.

USE THIS PROGRAM TO

- enrich your **existing classroom activities**—circle time, class discussion, cooperative play—with important lessons on social acceptance
- strengthen students' **literacy skills** while they learn to accept and celebrate differences
- support **friendships** among children of diverse abilities, backgrounds, and family structures
- lay the groundwork for **bully-free school environments**
- **choose books, toys, and other materials** that reflect our diverse world and give young children a sense of belonging
- implement a **universal design for learning (UDL)** approach to address the needs of diverse learners
- **"think on your feet"** to work lessons on acceptance into small teachable moments and everyday conversations
- increase the **home-school connection** with strategies parents can use with their children
- strengthen understanding of how acceptance is developed through **reflective activities for teachers and school-wide teams**

PRACTICAL MATERIALS: The book includes a complete package of reproducible, adaptable materials for implementing the Making Friends program, including a sample activity schedule, discussion guides, and forms to send home with families. You'll also get step-by-step directions on working the activities into your school day, extensive lists of diversity resources, vignettes that model positive interactions, and more.

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