



How to Help Your Child Learn to Share

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Learning how to share is a big challenge for all children because it often means putting aside one's own needs in order to make someone else happy. Sharing is not a skill children have when they are born—they need to be taught how to share and how to see that their efforts have helped someone else feel happy or solve a problem. In order to learn this skill, children need adults to provide them with many different opportunities where they can practice how to share with others and see other children in the act of sharing. When a child learns how to share with others she feels more confident and is better able to play with other children independently. Additionally, learning how to share gives a child a very important and solid foundation of successful friendship skills she can continue to build on as she grows.



Backpack Connection Series

About this Series

The *Backpack Connection Series* was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each *Backpack Connection* handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

The Pyramid Model



The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit challengingbehavior.org.

More Information

For more information about this topic, visit TACSEI's website at challengingbehavior.org and type "sharing" in the Search Box in the upper-right corner of the screen.



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Try This at Home

- Read books about sharing with your child. Talk about how the characters might feel as the story unfolds. All feelings are healthy and normal. A character might be feeling a variety of emotions—from frustrated and sad to happy and joyful. A good example is the CSEFEL Book Nook based upon the book *I Can Share* by Karen Katz. This resource has many activities that go along with the book to teach about sharing. <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/booknook/share.pdf>
- Notice and point out when other children are sharing. "I see that those girls are sharing their snack."
- Notice and let your child know that you see the many moments in the day when he is sharing. "Thank you for sharing your crayons with me. I feel happy when you share." Or "When I came to pick you up from school, I noticed that you were sharing the toys with Sophie. What a good friend!"
- Plan ahead if sharing might be a concern. "Avery is coming over to our house today for a play date. I know how special your blankie is to you. We can put your blankie in a special place that is just for you and all the other toys will be shared with Avery."



Practice at School

At school, children are taught how to share and learn about how sharing makes friends feel. Children learn about sharing through stories, role-playing and puppets. One way teachers help children learn how to share with each other is by pointing out how a friend looks and feels when a child does, or does not, share. Teachers also encourage children to begin to solve problems by themselves. "I see you have five cars and Ryan has none. I wonder what we can do?" Or "I wonder which car Ryan can use?" Most importantly, teachers congratulate children when they solve sharing problems and recognize how proud they must feel after they share.



The Bottom Line

Sharing is a skill that your child will use throughout her life to get along with others during activities and build friendships. Children who learn how to share are better able to understand other's feelings, negotiate difficult situations with confidence and feel secure in their ability to solve problems by themselves.



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