

Letting Connection Happen



Friendship grows...
one conversation
at a time.

Supporting friendships without judgement

Friendships rarely grow in a straight line.

Some children talk constantly.

Others spend weeks quietly sitting beside one another before they become friends.

Connection can look different for every child.

Not every awkward moment needs fixing.

Sometimes children simply need space to keep getting to know one another.

Connection is still growing if...

- ☐ They choose to spend time together.
- ☐ They seem comfortable together.
- ☐ They keep trying to reconnect.
- ☐ They laugh or enjoy shared moments.
- ☐ They are learning about each other.
- ☐ The friendship doesn't look perfect—but it feels genuine.



Remember

Friendships do not need to look identical to be meaningful.

Some grow quickly.

Some grow slowly.

Both are real.

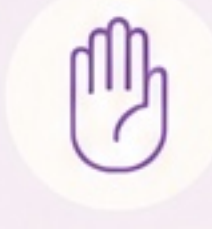
Belonging grows when connection has room to breathe.

Step Back, Gently Support, or Step In?

Knowing when to step back, when to gently support, and when to step in makes all the difference.



Friendships grow best when adults know when to pause and observe.

 STEP BACK	 GENTLY SUPPORT	 STEP IN
Support is not needed.	A little guidance may help.	Safety or wellbeing is affected.
 They're choosing each other.	 Someone is unsure.	 Ongoing exclusion.
 They look comfortable together.	 One child wants to join.	 Distress.
 Conversation is developing.	 Misunderstandings happen.	 Pressure.
 The friendship is still forming.	 Encouragement could help.	 Harm.
Connection needs space to grow.	Small support can help connection feel possible.	Safety and wellbeing always come first.



Ask yourself...

Am I seeing harm...
or simply a friendship that is still developing?

Support connection. Don't rush it.

What Healthy Connection Can Look Like



Small moments today can become lasting friendships tomorrow.

Healthy friendships don't always look busy or loud. Sometimes the smallest moments show the strongest connection.



Choosing to sit nearby.



A shared joke.



Comfortable silence.



Trying again tomorrow.



Inviting someone back.



Feeling accepted.



Ask yourself...

- ♥ What strengths are already growing in this friendship?
- ♥ What could happen if I gave it a little more time?



Connection isn't something adults can create for children.

But we can create the conditions where it has the best chance to grow.

Belonging grows when connection feels safe—not managed.