

Summary

What are Planned Opportunities anyway?

- Educators intentionally set up, activities, provocations and the environment to give children a chance to learn and practice friendship skills.

What's the Point?

- Provides an opportunity to practice and gain confidence using social skills
- Help children develop foundational skills to support their lifelong learning
- Gives children the opportunity to support each other
- Helps children negotiate time, space and materials

How Do I Do This?

- Observe children to get a sense of children's existing skills and opportunities (to expand these skills) for scaffolding
- Collect input from family to incorporate peer interaction skills parents are focused on developing at home
- Select friendship skill (e.g., sharing, turn-taking) to target and plan activities to teach this friendship skill (e.g., teaching sharing using books, role play turn-taking in group time, cooperative games, art projects or toys/materials).
- Set up the environment and provide practice opportunities for children to use the skills they are learning (e.g., reading buddies, structure quiet peer activities for non-nappers)
- Acknowledge children who use friendship skills and participate in planned activities

How Will the Children Participate in This Practice?

- Children can participate in friendship role-play scenarios in large/small group activities
- Children can offer ideas on how to collaborate during play (e.g., large blocks)
- Children can model friendship skills to other peers as they offer help/collaborate etc.

Checklist

Task	Complete?
Educators observe children's interactions and play to reflect on their interests and play skills	
Educators choose a friendship skill to intentionally teach children based on their observations (e.g., turn-taking, asking for help, giving compliments etc.)	
Educators decide on activities and strategies to teach the skills (e.g., reading a story, games, role-playing, modelling etc.)	
Educators make environmental changes, gather materials and present the activities to children	
Educators design routines to provide opportunities to practice friendship skills. (e.g., using a buddy system when transitioning outside, placing only two glue containers at the art table etc.)	
Educators give positive descriptive feedback when children use friendship skills	
Educators document children's use of friendship skills and share with families	
Educators gather feedback from families, as needed, about their child's friendship skills at home and incorporate their ideas and suggestions into the centre's daily routines.	

As an educator, you provide many opportunities for children to observe, debate, collaborate, negotiate, and express and share their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and questions with one another in many ways—both non-verbal and verbal.

Makovichuk, Hewes, Lirette & Thomas, 2014, p. 126

Flight: Alberta's early learning and care framework.

Retrieved from www.flightframework.ca

