

Newsletter Item 15

Aim: To provide families with strategies to help their children develop and maintain friendships to reduce the likelihood of being bullied at school

Friendship and social support

A child with more than one good friend is less likely to be bullied than a child who is often alone or who has only one friend. Children who bully others are careful to avoid those children who have assertive and supportive friends.

How can families help their children to make friends?

• Make sure that your children play with other children at school, at home and in your neighbourhood.

• At home, encourage your children to talk and maintain contact with their extended family – uncles, aunts, cousins and grandparents and to talk with adult family friends.

• Invite other children to your home for visits, and show your children how to make their guests feel welcome.

• Help your children to make new friends by encouraging them to develop other interests and hobbies, such as sport, Scouts, dance, drama or music.

• Take your children on holidays to places where there are other children of a similar age.