

Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

Sharing – An Important Social Skill!

by Rynette R. Kjesbo, M.S., CCC-SLP



What Is Sharing?

When we share with others, we give them part or all of something we have. We might give them something without expecting them to return it, or we might give them something then expect to get it back when they are done with it. For example, if you have two cookies, and you “share” a cookie with a friend, you don’t expect to get it back! However, if you “share” a favorite book with a friend, you most likely expect it back after he/she is done reading it.

Encouraging Children to Share

Sharing plays an important part in bonding with the people around us. Children can develop the social skill of sharing through practice, patience, and the gentle guidance of adults.

Here are some strategies you can use to encourage your children to share:

- **Be a role model.** Model sharing with family members and friends. Explain to your children why you are sharing. For example, “I want to share my book with Daddy because I know he will enjoy reading it.”
- **Teach ways to share.** If your children don’t always want to share, help them come up with a solution, like giving an alternative. For example, “I’m

playing with the blue car right now, but here’s a fire truck you can use and we can play together.”

- **Share for a short time.** When children agree to share something for a little while, use a visual timer, like a sand timer, or play/sing a song to help children understand when it is their turn again based on the amount of time that has passed.
- **Keep special toys separate from other toys.** If your children have special toys that they are less likely to share, put them in a different area when friends come over to play. Leave out a variety of toys that your children would be willing to share.
- **Use toys that encourage sharing.** Toys such as puzzles, balls, and blocks encourage children to share and play together.
- **Praise your children when they share on their own.** When you see your children sharing, let them know they made a good choice! For example, “I like the way you shared with your brother by letting him hold your bear for a while. When he lies down for his nap, it will really help him fall asleep faster!”

For more FREE Handy Handouts®, go to www.handyhandouts.com