



## Developing Peer Interaction

- Remember the process needs to be gradual – children need to be able to tolerate peers alongside them (and be aware of them) before they can be expected to join in with them. Remember the child's developmental level.
- Make sure that children know each other's names. Play a posting game with children's photos e.g. "post Jessica", matching photos to children, the child saying the name of the child as they post.
- Start with a small number of peers and a high level of adult support, and gradually reduce the adult prompting and increase the number of children. Encourage the child to pick children to play with but encourage a variety of peers.
- Introduce simple circle games to start with which have a clear structure and expectation of involving others e.g. passing a feely bag, rolling a ball, throwing beanbags in a hoop, passing musical instruments.
- Ensure that the child has opportunities to share a toy or activity with a peer. Provide the child with an appropriate script for this e.g. "come play with me?" This will depend on the child's language level. If this appears to be going well consider giving each child a 'my turn' card so that they can each have a turn with the activity or toy.
- Sometimes using a less preferred activity to introduce another child into is better than a highly motivating activity as the child may be too distracted or reluctant to share.
- Use specific praise so the child is aware of what they are doing well e.g. good sharing, good looking etc.

