These are some general guidelines for kids about friends. Easy for parents to endorse and coach. Not every rule will fit your family culture, or your kid, so you may need to amend or edit them.

Think about what you value about your friendships, and how you and your close friends treat one another. If you have had conflicts with friend, how did you resolve it?

**Remember to be a coach to your child.** Your child is learning!! But, just like sports or school, needs plenty of opportunities to practice. Mistakes are a part of learning. And they will make lots of mistakes.

FRIENDSHIP RULES

* 1. Think Before You Speak: Is it nice? Is it necessary? Is it true?
  2. Lying is NEVER OK!
  3. Notice when a friend needs support — good friends don’t only think of themselves!
  4. Kindness makes good friendships. ALWAYS BE KIND!
  5. Treat others as you want to be treated yourself!
  6. ALWAYS INCLUDE EVERYONE — especially at school!
  7. When there is a disagreement about what to play — Take Turns and Cooperate! (Rock, Paper, Scissors)
  8. Friends don’t get mad at little things — be tolerant!
  9. Friends realize that sometimes it’s important to JUST LISTEN! You don’t always have to have the last word.
  10. Friends take turns instead of arguing. You don’t have to always be first!
  11. Friends don’t tease hurtfully about someone’s size, shape, color, clothes or other traits.
  12. Friends are not bossy — they don’t threaten not to be your BFF anymore!
  13. Pull people up — DON’T put people down!
  14. SECRETS ARE DANGEROUS! They can come between friends and it’s really hard to know who you can trust with them.
  15. Don’t Be Selfish!
  16. Don’t Brag!
  17. Always Include Everybody! Save special play time for play dates or time at home.
  18. It’s OK to be sad. It’s OK to be mad. It’s not OK to be BAD! (Mean or Unkind)
  19. If you get into an argument — TALK IT OUT!
  20. Be LOYAL to your friends!

*From “Not So Sugar and Spice”, Seattle Woman, September 2009*

*http://www.seattlewomanmagazine.com/articles/sept09-2.htmBooklist for Childhood and Adolescent Friendship and Elementary and Secondary Social Aggression*

Books for Adults on Kids, Friendships and Conflict

*Best Friends, Worst Enemies: Understanding the Social Lives of Children* by By Michael Thompson, Ph.D., Catherine O'Neill Grace, Lawrence J. Cohen, Ph.D. (Ballantine Books, 2001)

*Girlfighting: Betrayal & Rejection Among Girls* by Lyn Mikel Brown (NYU Press, 2005).

*Making Friends: A Guide to Understanding and Nurturing Your Child's Friendships* by Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer (Da Capo Lifelong Books, 2009)

*Mom, They're Teasing Me: Helping Your Child Solve Social Problems* by By Michael Thompson, Ph.D., (Ballantine Books, 2004)

*Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls* by Rachel Simmons (Harcourt, 2002).

*Please Stop Laughing At Me: One Woman’s Inspirational Story* by Jodee Blanco (Adams Media, 2003).

*Queen Bees & Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and Other Realities of Adolescence* by Rosalind Wiseman (Three Rivers Press, 2002).

FOR YOUNG READERS

*My Secret Bully* by Trudy Ludwig (Tricycle Press, 2005). Geared toward girls ages 4–8.

*Our Friendship Rules* by Peggy Moss and Dee Dee Tardiff (Tilbury House Publishers, 2007). For ages 4–8.

*Friends: Making Them & Keeping Them* by Patti Kelley Criswell and Stacy Peterson (American Girl Publishing Inc., 2006). For ages 9–12.