Kimochis®

building a school-to-home connection

HOMELINKS WEEK 12

Happy: Sharing

This week, your child learned about happiness and the Kimochis® *kotowaza*—or Japanese proverb—that accompanies this feeling: **"Have a happy heart!"** This means we can say and do kind things that fill hearts with happy feelings. Sharing makes everyone feel happy, but young children are just learning how to share. Children who are 3 to 4 years old are developing the skills of sharing. However, because they are still figuring how to get their own needs met, they will struggle to share with others and will need adult guidance. Children who are 4 to 5 years old are able to share more easily. There may be some minor arguments that occur over possessions, especially favorites. It is best to guide children through these conflicts. Sharing is an important pro-social skill. In one study, the ability to share appropriately predicted positive social behavior later in adolescence.[1]

Your child was given the tool to say, "Remember, we share" when someone does not share. We also like to use the phrase, "He/she forgot to share." This helps remind everyone that young children are practicing skills in sharing and have not quite mastered them yet!

See reverse for ways your entire family can learn from this week's lesson!

1 Eisenberg, N., J. K. Guthrie, B. C. Murphy, S. A. Shepard, A. Cumberland, and G. Carlo. 1999. "Consistency and Development of Prosocial Dispositions: A Longitudinal Study." Child Development 70: 1360–1372.

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Common Language

"Remember, we share": A saying that gently helps children remember to share with each other

Coach Sharing During Daily Activities

- Make an effort to talk about how you share every day. When your child asks you for something of yours and you can say yes, respond in a cheerful way: *"I am happy to share."*
- Acknowledge when your child shares in an especially difficult situation. *"That was the last piece of your cookie. That was generous and kind of you to share with your sister."*
- Using a friendly face and voice, remind your child when he/she forgets to share by saying, *"Remember, we share." Give these same words to your child when other children forget to share with them. You can say, "Tell Franklin, 'Remember, we share.' "*

Family Fun: Playful Ways to Practice

- SHARE BEAR. Designate a stuffed bear or other plush animal as the "Family Share Bear." Before a playdate or sibling play, give your child the "Share Bear" and ask why sharing is necessary. Practice what he/she will say and do if the friend or sibling forgets to share. Remind your child to say, *"Remember, we share."* Put the Share Bear near the play area. After play, ask your child to tell you and Share Bear how the sharing went.
- HAPPY HEART. Make a heart out of red or pink construction paper or use a heart-shaped object if you have one. Pass the heart to family members at dinnertime:
  - Ask, *"What made your heart feel happy today?"*
  - Then, *"How did you make someone else's heart happy?"*
  - Have each family member say something kind and loving to someone else at the table while holding the heart.
- FAMILY DANCE. Music creates positive feelings and may help family members get out of upset moods. With your family, choose a "Family Song" that makes everyone feel happy. Play the song and drop everything to sing and dance. Turn it up and feel happy doing the Family Dance! Again, you may well be creating another family tradition.

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