Kimochis®

building a school-to-home connection

# HOMELINKS WEEK 15

# Friendly

This week, your child learned about **friendliness** and the Kimochis® *kotowaza*—or Japanese proverb—that accompanies this feeling: **"Friendly faces create friendly places."** This *kotowaza* inspires and encourages children to be friendly to people beyond those we are comfortable with or know well. When children are friendly, it helps to create a positive climate and culture in our schools, homes, and communities. Children who have friendly facial expressions and body language are invited to play more frequently because other children are attracted to their openness. Your child learned how to acknowledge people when they enter a room or meet for the first time. They also were encouraged to think of other ways to be friendly, such as making room for a peer to sit next to them or giving what we call **"Friendly Signals"** to classmates on the playground. As children practice friendliness, they will see how friendly acts can create positive ripples in the world.

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

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## Common Language

**Friendly places:** Places where people are friendly, inclusive, and kind to one another
**Friendly Signals:** Gestures and words that convey friendliness such as eye contact, head nods, smiles, waves, pat on the back

## Coach Friendly Signals During Daily Activities

- Acknowledge your child when he/she is friendly. Explicitly name what you observed: *"I admire how you smile at everyone and say hi when we walk to school."*
- Review with your child how he/she can greet people who come to your home. Say, *"Mrs. Rodriguez is coming for lunch. Remember to make eye contact and say, 'Hello, Mrs. Rodriguez.' "*
- Share how you are working hard to be friendly to teachers and parents at your child's school whom you do not know well. *"Today, I am going to practice making eye contact, smiling, and being friendly to some new parents at your school."*

## Family Fun: Playful Ways to Practice

- **SWEET AND SOUR.** This is a fun and playful game that families can enjoy in the car. Explain that while you are driving, you will send Friendly Signals to people in other cars or to those on the sidewalk. If the person sends a Friendly Signal back, you say, *"Sweet."* If you do not get a Friendly Signal, you say, *"Sour."* Hopefully, you will get more people who send a Friendly Signal back! This is at the heart of the game and can help young children begin to understand that we often get what we give. When we are friendly, most people are friendly back! Remind children that if people do not send Friendly Signals, it does not mean they are unkind. Rather, cultures can make people express friendliness differently. Also, some people are more shy or have not been taught how to send Friendly Signals. We want to practice patience, understanding, and compassion.
- **FRIENDLY FIVE.** This is a fun, interactive way to acknowledge friendliness you observe in others. When you see someone with a friendly face (perhaps in the grocery store), give your child a high five and say, "Friendly five!" Gradually, your child will start to recognize friendliness and start to give you high fives or "friendly fives." Once you teach your family this game, it might get started when you least expect it!
- **FRIENDLY COLLAGE.** Use old photos that show friendly faces of people you love. With your child's help, cut out the faces and glue them on poster board. Put this poster in an area where all family members can see it as a reminder of all the friendly faces you have in your life.

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