

Getting From Me to We: How to Help Young Children Fit In and Make Friends

Shonna Tuck

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Written in a relaxed and friendly style, this book offers practical advice for helping young children interact with their peers.

Shonna Tuck writes with empathy about the difficulties some small children face as they attempt to interact with their peers. *Getting from Me to We: How to Help Young Children Fit In and Make Friends* offers practical advice to parents, teachers, and caregivers who know and love these children.

A speech and language pathologist who has worked extensively with at-risk children, Tuck uses metaphorical rungs of a ladder to represent the first seven years of a child's life and the phases of early childhood social skills development, the discussion of which comprises the first seven chapters of the book. Topics include learning emotional control, becoming aware of different perspectives, encouraging narrative ability, and resolving social conflicts. Later chapters examine tools that encourage socialization. The book concludes with extensive recommendations for further reading, a list of online resources, and a list of organizations appropriate for different ages and stages of development.

Tuck writes in a relaxed and friendly style that inspires trust. Disagreeing with the school of thought that children should be left to work out problems on their own, she explains that at-risk children lack the social skills to do this. "These kids stand out because they tend to freak out more, cry more, fight more, and linger when uninvited more."

Case studies reveal specific behavioral challenges and how children have improved through personalized interventions. For example, Abdul, a bilingual child, talked constantly in a garbled, indecipherable monologue. His mother, unsure of her knowledge of English, had encouraged him to watch television as a learning tool. With guidance, she recognized that her language skills were adequate to teach her son. Tuck writes, "Abdul and his mom strengthened their connection, which is about so much more than just learning words."

Tuck delivers a clear message that "childhood isn't the easiest time for all children." Her book successfully explores a subject of crucial importance in early childhood education. The informed and empathetic narrative contains humorous asides that reflect her kind approach to helping young children overcome their social difficulties.

Those interested in helping young children reach their full potential could benefit greatly from reading *Getting from Me to We*.

MARGARET CULLISON (Winter 2016)

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