

Strategies for Relatedness in the Classroom

The following strategies encourage the development of relatedness in the classroom and at school. These activities can easily be adapted according to the age and level of development of students:

Post on a bulletin board interesting pictures and facts about students. This can help newcomers to feel welcomed and that they are an important part of their class.

Have students take the initiative to sit in different places during meals, recess or group activities. This will help them get to know other students with whom they have interacted with less frequently, and may contribute to a greater sense of community within the classroom.

Once or twice a term, write students' names on individual slips of paper and place them in a basket. Invite students to pick a name out of the basket, and to plan one act of encouragement to be carried out for their selected classmate. Encourage students to be creative in how they will encourage others. Possible examples might include writing a nice note, sharing a treat together, or spending time with them during the lunch hour.



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Set aside a weekly time to develop and reinforce a sense of teamwork in the classroom by doing group work or team activities that require students to get to know each other better. Participate in this team activity with students and be open to sharing interesting facts or points about yourself.

Create a committee of students who take care of welcoming new classmates to the classroom or school. Activities may include: checking-in with students to see how they are adapting to their new classroom routines, taking time to eat lunch with students new to the school, providing students and their family members with a tour of the school, or ensuring that newcomer students are introduced to others in their classroom.

Adopt a classroom commitment to speaking positively of others when they are not in the room (the opposite of gossip). In addition, practice skills to support student efforts to speak directly to others in a gentle manner when conflicts need to be resolved or solutions negotiated.

