

10 Tips for Being a Friend to a Classmate with an Autism Spectrum Disorder

1. Take time to say “hi” whenever you see them. Even if you are in a hurry and pass them in the hall, just say “hi”.
2. Say something to them when they do good things. You can cheer, give high 5’s, or just tell them “great work”. They like to be complimented just like you do!
3. Treat them like anyone else, and talk to them like you would talk to another one of your friends. Don’t be too formal and try not to talk to them like they are a little kid.
4. Be considerate of the child with autism’s feelings. They don’t always understand teasing. If other kids tease them, pull the other kid aside and tell him/her to stop.
5. Explain to other kids that certain behaviors are not the child’s fault; it may just be part of having autism.
6. Try not to get mad at them for something they do that bothers you or something they don’t do that they should...kids with autism sometimes can’t help it.
7. Encourage them to try new things because sometimes they might be afraid to try new stuff.
8. Don’t be afraid to ask them to do something. They are great kids and can do a lot of things.
9. Find something to like about the student with autism. Often these kids have special interests or talents that they are willing to share with you or are really good at.
10. It’s OK to get frustrated with them sometimes, or to want to play alone or with somebody else sometimes. We need to do that with our other friends, too.