



# Friendship Guidelines

Friends are important people! Here at \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Child Care)

we value our friendships. Sometimes we don't get along, and that is ok, but we always treat each other with respect and caring. When we need to work out a problem we use a magic trick. It is called "CLEAR magic". The letters in clear stand for important things we can do to help our friends feel safe and secure. "C" stands for CONTROL; we will always get control of a situation. "L" stands for LISTEN; we will always listen, even when we don't agree because everyone deserves to be heard. "E" stands for EXPLORE; we will figure out some different ways to solve our situation. "A" stands for AGREE; we will all agree on a way to fix the situation. "R" stands for RESUME"; we will all go back to what we were doing, or do what we agreed upon.

## Guidelines to treating our friends with respect:

- We use gentle touch with our friends.
- We talk to our friends with our "inside voices". No name calling, yelling and/or screaming.
- We do not use our hands to hit our friends.
- We do not use our feet to kick our friends
- We do not use our teeth to bite our friends.
- We do not grab things from our friends.
- We do not throw things at our friends.
- We ask nice for a turn if a friend has a toy we would like, we wait our turn or share.
- We will apologize if we hurt our friends.
- We will leave our friends alone at rest time. We lay down to rest our bodies and be quiet.

To reinforce these guidelines, we use the following procedure:

- We will try our best to use "CLEAR magic" and ask our provider for help if we need to.
- Plenty of reminders and positive reinforcement.
- We may miss out on special fun activities our provider has planned.
- We may need to give our friends a break by not playing with them.
- We may have to work out a solution with our parent(s) at home and talk with our provider and our friends about it.

Agreeing on these Friendship Guidelines

To play with our Friends at \_\_\_\_\_ we must  
Name of Child Care  
agree to these guidelines. We will read them over with our provider and our parent(s). We get a copy to keep at home and a copy at Child Care to help us remember.

Sign with a special stamp

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

My Provider has read these guidelines with me: \_\_\_\_\_ (sign)

Provider's signature

My Parent(s) have read these guidelines with me: \_\_\_\_\_ (sign)

Parent's signature

## ~::~ Information for the Child Care Provider ~::~

*Following Article written by Michelle ~Kaleidoscope Child Care~*

### **STOP PLAYING REF!**

**\*CLEAR\*** – *A strategy for engaging children in  
"Their" problem solving!*

Children need to feel loved, secure, respected, important and special...and when it comes to a disagreement, conflict or an all out war, children will doubt your sense of fairness, question your love and care or even deny their part in the issue. This happens if and when we play "ref"...

When we play "ref" we are coming to the children's rescue and solving their differences for them. This makes for a NO WIN situation, as some of the children will feel they have been wrongly accused or compromised no matter how equally you try to help. **STOP PLAYING "REF"!** Instead give the children the message that you are handy to help out, not a solver of their problems, they are!!! Be a coach, let the children know that they can negotiate, compromise, brainstorm and WORK IT OUT TOGETHER!

Using the **CLEAR** model...

**C) Control...** get control of the situation. At first, you as the coach will have to start off here. "Let's stop (put down the toy) and solve our problem."

**L) Listen...** everyone listens to one another, no interruptions. Everyone gets a turn. There are no accusations or denials; we want "just the facts" from each child's point of view! (Yes, they may be wildly different!). Coach using "feeling messages"... "I feel----when."

**E) Explore...** brainstorm about how to solve the problem, or choose what to do next time. At this point, anything goes... as we are trying to find a common ground, and still expressing some feelings too!!! Make sure everyone gets a turn, and ONLY offer your suggestions if the children seem stuck. "What do you think could happen...?"

**A) Agree...** Both/all must agree on the same solution or one that works for both. As a coach you can help the children check with each other. "Is that OK with you?", "So you will\_\_\_\_\_next time?", "So you are both agreeing to\_\_\_\_\_?"

**R) Resume...** it is very important that the children all be left with a sense of trust, respect and acceptance. That you believe they sincerely will try to move ahead with their new plan, and that you will support them with reminders or encouragement. Our role at this time is to convey to the children... "You solved your problem together... good for you!" Children either resume what they are doing, or move ahead with the new plan.

**-Important Note:** a child that feels or seems angry at the end of this model, probably still has feelings that are hurting. All feelings are acceptable, but behaviors aren't. Go back to "listen" and help the child express those feelings, for they can get in the way of problem solving and agreeing.

-Note: it is a good idea to "take five" and agree to come back to listen and brainstorm when very strong feelings are flaring.

This model was first introduced to me as a tool to assist children when they were in disagreement with each other, but I have found that this is also an awesome tool when I need to re-enforce positive behavior etc. By asking questions like: "Do you know why this happened?" "What do you think we could do about this?" "How can we solve this?" "What are you going to do next time this happens?" and at the same time telling the child how it made everyone involved feel. I truly believe that this empowers the child. Instead of a time out (which is sometimes necessary so use your judgment) you are helping the child work through understanding the problem and ways it can be solved or ways we can ensure that it will not happen again. Basically instead of the child being mad at the situation and then at you for sending them off you are making the child realize the cause of the problem and ways it can be fixed.

The children in my child care home call this "CLEAR Magic" , that is how I teach the model to them. I model the model! LOL! It is so cute to hear them say "Michelle, I need some Clear Magic". They feel very special!