



 **THE BRIDGE**  
FAMILY CENTER *A program of the Bridge Family Center*

### **Great by 8's Goals**

***Every young child in West Hartford, in every school, is healthy, engaged, and supported.***

- Every West Hartford family has the information it needs to raise healthy children.
- Children are ready for school / schools are ready for children.
- Children have access to high quality early care and learning opportunities.
- Families and schools recognize the importance of developmentally appropriate practice.

### **Great by 8's Work**

***Great by 8 engages and connects West Hartford families to resources and services, creating a community where young children thrive.***

- Quality Care for Infants and Toddlers
- Developmentally Appropriate Learning Experiences for Pre-K Children
- Social / Emotional Health of Elementary School Children
- Co-Creating Equity
- Expanding Family Support

***If you are interested in receiving updates and information from Great by 8 or getting involved, please e-mail us at [whgreatby8@gmail.com](mailto:whgreatby8@gmail.com).***

***We welcome your involvement.***

## **PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS**

For young children, prosocial behaviors include helping someone who is hurt, sick, or upset; offering to assist with a task without being asked to do so; and inviting another child to participate in activity. Modeling helping behaviors, and encouraging your child to practice helping behaviors through play are important ways to foster prosocial behavior.

### **SHARING**

Play games with your children. Go fish, memory games, matching games, any type of game that involves back and forth turn taking. This type of activity allows your child to learn positive interaction skills, such as dividing items, taking turns, patience, and give and take.

### **HELPING AND COOPERATING**

Do chores together starting at an early age. Let your child grow up experiencing the benefits of cooperation. Together you can set the table, clean-up toys, or wash the car. Point out the advantages of cooperating. "Look how fast we set the table. Now we have time to read a book before dinner." "Boy was it fun to wash the car with you. You are a great scrubber! Look how bright and shiny you made our car!" Children can learn general helping behaviors by helping out at home.

### **EMPATHIZING**

Have stuffed animals in "hospital" with a doctor's kit, band aids, etc.- model play and talk about how the animals feel/are. Model how to care for the animals. Help children put names with feelings and give them a space to explore how each emotion makes them feel. If your child is having some sort of difficulty relating to feelings, show empathy. That means putting yourself in the child's place. Remember how you felt when you were little, and tell your child about a similar feeling you had. This will help your child learn to empathize with others. Read books about empathy. But most importantly, model empathy for your children. Praise empathetic behavior. When your child performs an act of kindness, tell her what she did right, and be as specific as possible: "You were very generous to share your special stickers with Tommy. I saw him smiling, and I know he was happy."

### **TEACH NONVERBAL CUES**

At the playground or park, find a quiet place where you and your child can sit and observe others without being rude. Play a game of guessing what other people are feeling, and explain the specific reasons for your own guesses: "See that man? He's walking really quickly and his shoulders are hunched, and he's making a mean face. I think he's angry about something."