

# MEET UP BUDDY UP

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Everyday Practices

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# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	Sanford Harmony .....	1
<b>Meet Up</b>	Overview .....	3
	Goals & Learning Objectives .....	4
	Role of Teachers and Staff .....	7
	Tool Kit .....	9
	Get Started: Setting Goals .....	10
	Steps .....	16
	Frequently Asked Questions .....	18
<b>Buddy Up</b>	Overview .....	21
	Goals & Learning Objectives .....	22
	Role of Teachers and Staff .....	25
	Tool Kit .....	27
	Get Started .....	28
	Tips for Early Success .....	31
	Steps .....	32
	Frequently Asked Questions .....	34
<b>Connections</b>	Connections .....	40



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“Sanford Harmony is transforming the lives of children in classrooms each and every day, creating the foundations of a healthier, more collaborative society.”

**T. Denny Sanford**

# INTRODUCTION

Sanford Harmony provides teachers with the tools to foster and support social connections among all students, and to promote the social, emotional, and cognitive skills students need to successfully negotiate peer interactions, develop positive peer relationships, and thrive in school. Sanford Harmony incorporates multiple methods to teach positive relationships and create an inclusive classroom environment. A multi-layered approach is necessary to build a mutually respectful learning community. These goals are accomplished through:

- 1) Relationship-building activities that allow students to learn and practice key social-emotional and social-cognitive skills**
- 2) Everyday practices that provide students with ongoing, supported opportunities to interact with peers and participate in dialogue and decision-making about issues related to the classroom community**

By combining these approaches, students not only gain interpersonal competencies, but they also have continual experiences that promote the development of positive attitudes and relationships, as well as a supportive classroom climate. This manual outlines everything you need to implement the Sanford Harmony Everyday Practices of Meet Up and Buddy Up in your classroom. Please visit [sanfordharmony.org](http://sanfordharmony.org) for more information.



# MEET UP

# OVERVIEW

## What?

Meet Up is a forum where students gather as a whole classroom or in small groups to establish and monitor expectations for how to treat one another, exchange ideas, share experiences, and solve problems.

## Why?

In order to create and maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment, students must have opportunities to connect with all peers, take ownership of classroom expectations, and solve problems when conflicts arise in the classroom community. Students will be more likely to meet classroom expectations when they are involved in establishing them, and when they have a forum to discuss, monitor, and revise the goals. The objective of Meet Up is to provide students with ongoing opportunities to exchange ideas, solve problems, and establish meaningful and inclusive expectations, so that all students feel connected and valued in their classroom.

## When?

Meet Up ideally occurs at the same time every day. However, Meet Up can be held at a time that best accommodates your busy classroom schedule.

## How?

Arrange a Meet Up time when all students are able to sit together in a circle for 10-20 minutes to share, ask questions, and discuss ideas, events, and expectations for their community.

# GOALS & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

## Goals

Meet Up is a special time in the school day when students share and collaborate within a larger group context. The goals of Meet Up are to:

- Foster a classroom environment where all students feel connected, comfortable, and part of an inclusive community
- Effectively communicate ideas, have discussions, and make decisions as a class
- Provide opportunities for students to share information with each other and get to know each other better
- Establish a student-centered forum where they develop expectations for how to interact with and treat each other
- Guide students in resolving problems and continually revisit expectations for how to treat each other

# Learning Objectives

Through repeated experiences during Meet Up, students get in the habit of practicing critical social and cognitive skills. Meet Up provides an optimal environment for students to learn how to:

- Create for themselves a classroom community that is respectful and inclusive of everyone
- Collaborate with other students through respectful discussions and active decision-making
- Ask respectful and relevant questions of their peers
- Respond appropriately to peers when asked questions
- Pay compliments to their peers
- Effectively express their own ideas to others
- Become comfortable sharing their ideas and information about themselves with peers
- Consider other students' perspectives and feelings
- Listen and respond respectfully to other ideas and perspectives
- Identify both positive and negative consequences for others' and their own behaviors
- Utilize social problem-solving skills in a group format



# ROLE OF TEACHERS & STAFF

Teachers wear many hats in the classroom, and this is particularly true during Meet Up. At Meet Up, the teacher acts as a translator, mediator, model of respect and fairness, keen observer, and a facilitator of peer relationships.

One of the biggest challenges during Meet Up is to guide students to transition from telling the teacher their stories, ideas, and likes and dislikes, to sharing that information with their peers. In the beginning, a teacher may operate more as a communication “middle-person”—asking questions, listening to answers, and trying to bring students together. Over time, the role of the teacher evolves. As students learn to communicate more effectively with each other, the teacher is able to step back and watch, as students communicate and share with each other, and when needed, intervene with a thoughtful suggestion or redirection.

In addition to modeling and facilitating positive interactions, the teacher’s role involves following up on conversations and ideas that were raised during previous Meet Ups to provide consistency to the group process as much as possible. Each Meet Up is connected by the consistent structure and discussions that occur during this time.

Consistency is also achieved when students follow-up on conversations and ideas that came up during Meet Up throughout the school day.

For example, if Karen reported during Meet Up that she was excited to sleep at her aunt’s house that night, the teacher might encourage students, at the end of the day, to wish Karen a fun evening at her aunt’s house. It is important for students to feel noticed and remembered by the adults and peers in their lives. By helping students pay attention to and remember the things that are important to each other, the teacher models and facilitates skills that are essential for building positive and supportive peer relationships.



# TOOL KIT

## Quick Connection (QC) Cards:

These are brief discussions and activities that provide peers with opportunities to share, think, collaborate, and have fun together. There are three types of QC cards, including: Quick Conversations, Quick Collaborations, and Quick Community Builders (used in Meet Up).

## Meet Up Board:

This is where you will list the steps for Meet Up, and write who will be sharing each day. Post this board near your regular Meet Up space so that you can refer to it during Meet Up.

## Harmony Goals Board:

Use this board to write the Harmony Goals for the year that are decided upon as a community (see Meet Up Get Started, pg. 10). Post this board near your regular Meet Up space so that you can refer back to it during Meet Up.

# GET STARTED: SETTING GOALS

An essential part of Meet Up is consistently referring back to the goals and expectations that you set up as a class at the beginning of the year. Thus, the first step to implementing Meet Up throughout the year is establishing these goals as a group. You might introduce the concept in this way:

- ▶ Today, we are going to begin Meet Up! As a class, we will share ideas with each other and make important decisions for how we want to get along with each other in our classroom. Our first task is to start thinking about how we want to interact with each other in our classroom. As a class, you will decide how you want to be treated by each other. Before we begin, let's think about other groups that have come up with specific goals for its members.

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**Examples:** sports teams, families, teachers, the Framers (The Constitution)

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Pick one of the examples that the students came up with and use it to guide the following discussion.

- ▶ Why do you think it is important for \_\_\_\_\_ to develop goals for the group?

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**Examples:** it gives them something to work towards; to keep people safe; so they learn how to treat each other; so they learn how to help each other; so that the group members can all be on the same page.

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Write students' comments on the board.

- ▶ Let's look at the comments on the board. Are the reasons that we identified for \_\_\_\_\_ also relevant to our classroom?
- ▶ Is it important for all of us to agree on how we want to interact with each other in this classroom? Why?

Introduce the importance of working together as a group to establish the goals.

- ▶ Let's think about who should be responsible for coming up with the goals. Do you think one person came up with the goals for \_\_\_\_\_, or do you think several members of the group came up with the goals?
- ▶ Why do you think it's important for several people to write the goals?

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**Examples:** so people will contribute different ideas and perspectives; so it represents the ideas of all group members; so everyone feels included in coming up with the goals.

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- ▶ That's right. It's important for everyone's ideas and opinions to be heard when developing goals for a group.

There are four steps that students will follow to establish the goals for their classroom:

**Step 1:** Think about and discuss ideas for how they want to interact with each other.

**Step 2:** Provide three to five overarching Harmony Goals that represent all of the ideas that were developed. Frame goals using positive language that emphasizes what students should do rather than what they shouldn't do.

**Step 3:** Record, sign, display, and share the goals.

**Step 4:** Monitor, discuss, and revise goals as needed.

- ▶ Now, just like the members of other groups, we are going to work together to develop the Harmony Goals for our classroom. To help come up with goals, think about how you liked interacting with others in your previous classrooms (e.g., when others listened to your ideas), and how you didn't like interacting with others in your previous classrooms (e.g., when people called you names). Then, write down (or raise your hand and share) ideas for how you think we should treat each other in our classroom (e.g., treat each other with respect).

Before students begin, help them focus on respect and inclusion by asking them to think about the following questions:

- ▶ Do you think it is okay for students to exclude another student from an activity?
- ▶ Do we want to have a classroom where everyone feels included, or do we want people to be allowed to exclude someone because he or she is different from the group in some way?
- ▶ Why is it important to develop a classroom where everyone feels included?

When students are finished writing down their ideas (or had a couple minutes to think about their ideas), invite them to share with the class. As students are called on, write down their ideas on a whiteboard. Discuss their ideas and how they might help with establishing a positive classroom community. Narrow these ideas down to three to five goals.

- ▶ We are now in the final stage of writing our classroom Harmony Goals. We need to look at all of the ideas that we came up with and see if we can put them into groups. This will help us come up with about three to five goals for our classroom.

Once the class agrees on the goals:

1. Write or type them in bold letters on the Harmony Goals board. Have students sign the board to show that they all agree to the goals.
2. Hang the Harmony Goals board in the room so it can be a visual reminder to you and your students, and so that other students/teachers/parents will be able to view the goals when they enter the classroom. Make sure the board is placed close to your regular Meet Up space because you will be referring back to it each time you Meet Up.
3. Remind the students that they are responsible for following their Harmony Goals everywhere in the school (e.g., lunchroom, gym class, recess). You might also ask about how, specifically, they will accomplish goals.

**Some possible goals might include:** Treat Others with Respect, Include Others, Help Each Other, and Listen to Others. It is recommended that students write goals using positive language (e.g., treat others with respect), instead of focusing on how they shouldn't behave (e.g., no teasing).

**TIP**

- ▶ How can we help each other follow our Harmony Goals outside of the classroom—at lunch, recess, gym, and in the hallways?
  - ▶ Do you think you will also follow the goals at home (e.g., in your neighborhood)? Why or why not?
  - ▶ How can we be good role models for other classrooms and younger students at our school? For instance, imagine you are on the playground and students from another class want to exclude a boy from an activity because they think the activity is only for girls. Would this behavior be consistent with our Harmony Goals? Why? What could you do if this happened?
4. Assign students the task of informing their families of Harmony Goals.
  5. Let students know that the goals can be changed throughout the year if necessary. The entire class has to vote and agree with all changes.
  6. When new students come into your classroom, have the class explain the Harmony Goals during Meet Up. This process will provide an opportunity for the class to discuss how well they are following the Harmony Goals, and if any changes need to be made.

**It is important that your students are consistently recognized and reinforced for meeting their Harmony Goals.** Whenever you notice students following the goals, recognize them (e.g., “I notice that you are helping Ashton pick up his papers. Nice work meeting our Help Others goal!” When students are not acting in ways that are consistent with the goals, remind them of the goals (e.g., “I notice that you just called Sarah a name. Calling someone a name is not consistent with our Respect Others goal. How can you express your feelings to Sarah in a way that is respectful?”). Provide students with as much guidance and support as needed to assist them with recognizing their actions and interacting in ways that are consistent with the Harmony Goals.

**TIP**

# STEPS

It is important to establish a consistent time for Meet Up, as students tend to engage more when they know when to expect Meet Up. Once that time is determined, announce it to the class. These are the steps you will follow each time you Meet Up:

## Step 1: Welcome

- Gather students in a circle.
- Begin Meet Up with a welcome routine or greeting.
- Encourage students to greet one another by name.

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Examples of a welcome routine/greeting include having students turn to their neighbors and say hello, or reciting a classroom song or chant. You may also add some variety to the routine by having students greet each other in a different language, use a special handshake (e.g., high fives, fist bumps), or think of different ways to say hello (e.g., hi, how's it going, what's up, good to see you, good morning/afternoon).

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## Step 2: Share

- Choose one or two students to share something special, such as a personal experience, achievement, or special belonging story.

To facilitate the sharing process, you may use the spaces on the Meet Up board to write the names of students who have expressed an interest in sharing ahead of time. Or, you can implement a different system for choosing students to share (e.g., invite students to volunteer, call students at random with an option to “pass”).

- Allow the student who has shared to call on two to three peers to ask pertinent questions.

Promote meaningful communication by encouraging students to ask open-ended questions and make relevant comments. Celebrate the diversity each student brings to the group and guide students in discovering the commonalities they share.

### Step 3: Community Check-In

- Choose one or two students to share a “high” and “low” related to the classroom community.

Community Check-In allows students to discuss topics that impact the classroom community as a whole, and the ways in which Harmony Goals are being met (or not met). Involving students in creating and monitoring Harmony Goals and expectations will inspire them to be more invested in maintaining them throughout the school year. A “high” might be that no one is being left out on the playground, or that everyone has been working together to put on a school play. A “low” might be that there is poor sportsmanship out on the soccer field at recess time. If possible, during this time, revisit “highs” and “lows” that were brought up in previous Meet Ups. Oftentimes, a “high” might be that a previous “low” was resolved. Remember that follow-up provides consistency to the process and helps students to connect Meet Up experiences.

- Discuss how each “high” and “low” relates to classroom Harmony Goals.

Guide students in connecting “highs” and “lows” to the Harmony Goals, reflect on the community’s progress, and problem solve as a group.

### Step 4: Quick Connection

Close Meet Up with a predictable and fun routine that encourages community building. Use your Quick Connection Community Builder cards for ideas.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What do I do if the “highs” and “lows” become a tattle session? How do I prevent students from “calling out” other individual students for not meeting classroom Harmony Goals?**

Set up the expectation that treating others respectfully means that you avoid making them uncomfortable in the group. Model “highs” and “lows” that address how the group is meeting goals (e.g., poor sportsmanship is a problem when kids are playing soccer on the playground). If an individual student is singled out during Meet Up, use your posted Harmony Goals as an anchor to keep students thinking about how to talk to and treat each other.

**How do I prevent students from sharing things during Meet Up that might not be appropriate for the entire class to hear?**

Have a conversation with students about items that are appropriate to share during Meet Up, and encourage them to speak to you before sharing if they are unsure if something is appropriate. If a student begins to share something that does not seem appropriate for the entire class to hear, intervene and let him or her know that this might not be something for the entire class to hear, but that you would like to talk privately later to hear more about it. Then, encourage the student to think of something else to share.

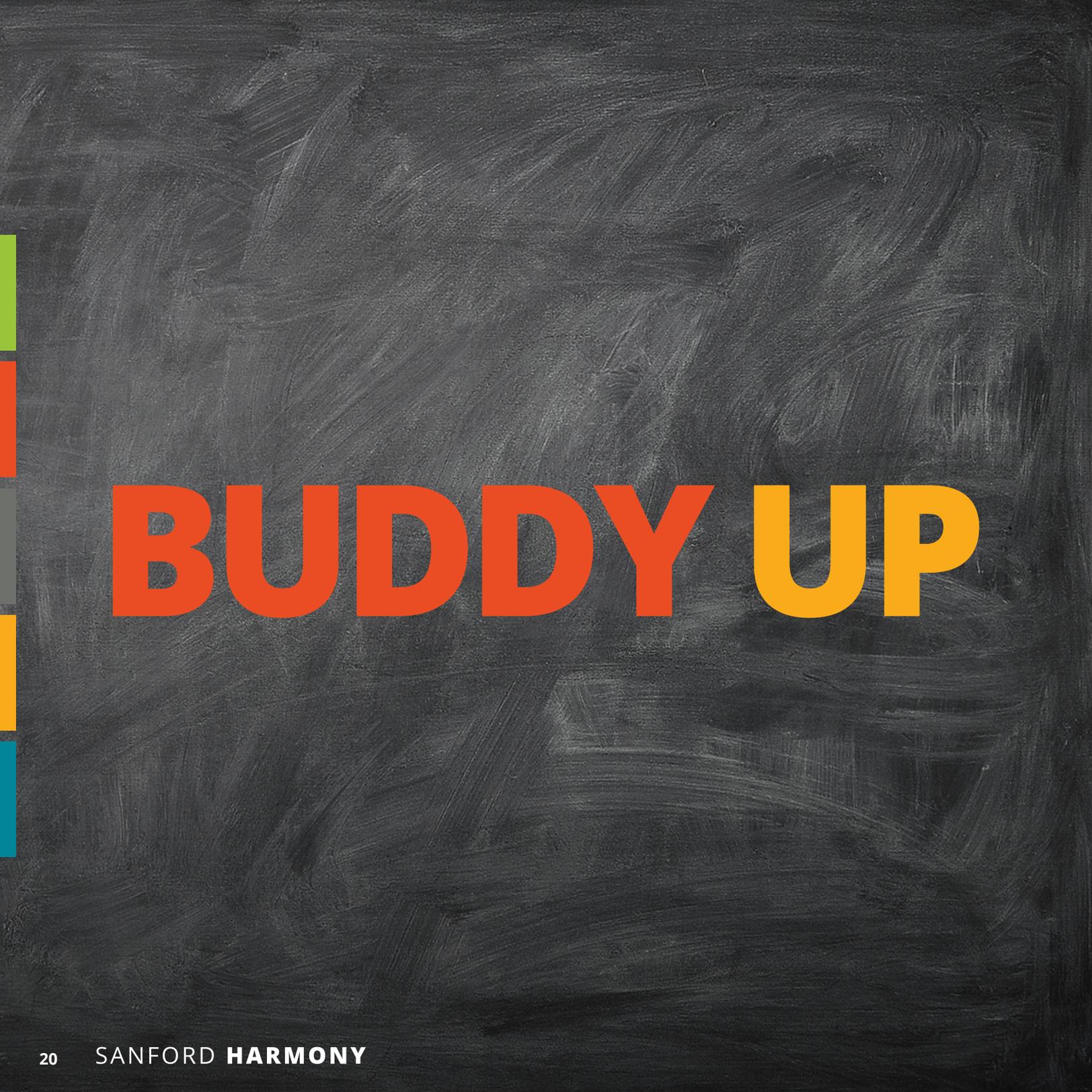
**I am noticing that when we get in our circle for Meet Up, the boys often sit with other boys, and girls with girls. Close friends tend to stick together. How do I mix them up (and should I)?**

It is important to help students become comfortable sitting next to and interacting with a diverse group of peers. One way to accomplish this could be to have students pick a number

out of a hat and ask them to sit in the circle in the order of the numbers that they picked. Another option is to have students join the circle according to personal characteristics (e.g., if you are wearing a red shirt come join the circle, if you have a younger sibling, come join the circle, etc.). It is important that students are not explicitly asked to sit next to peers of the opposite gender; just as you would not explicitly ask students to sit next to someone of a different race or ethnicity. Research with children shows that practices that call attention to race or gender can actually reinforce stereotypes and children's beliefs that "we are too different to be friends." On the other hand, emphasizing the idea of "trying something new" helps children feel more comfortable sitting and talking with children who may not be "just like me."

"Meet Up was a great way for the students to feel connected, and to generate cool ideas they all agreed upon."

— 5th grade teacher



# BUDDY UP

# OVERVIEW

## What?

Buddy Up is a peer buddy system that intentionally creates opportunities for students to get to know one another, form connections, communicate and cooperate, and learn together with all of their classmates.

## Why?

Positive peer relationships are important for school success and overall adjustment, and best educational practices emphasize the importance of promoting diversity in students' social and learning experiences. The goal of Buddy Up is to pair peers and engage them in positive, meaningful, and supported contexts. Using Buddy Up to intentionally bring diverse peers together, creates opportunities to learn about classmates with whom they may not typically spend as much time, broadening their social and learning experiences. Having and being a "buddy" enhances students' sense of connection, shared motivation, and social responsibility toward one another.

## When?

Buddy Up occurs four to five times or more per week, and can last anywhere from 2-45 minutes, depending on the activity.

## How?

Students are paired with a different peer each week. Buddies engage with one another in quick enjoyable activities.

# GOALS & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

## Goals

Buddy Up is designed to:

- Foster a classroom environment where all students feel connected, comfortable, and part of an inclusive community
- Provide opportunities for students to engage successfully with diverse peers
- Provide opportunities for students to connect with one another through meaningful activities and create shared experiences
- Promote consideration, caring, and responsibility toward others
- Provide opportunities for the cultivation of new friendships
- Support social, emotional, and cognitive growth

## Learning Objectives

Supported peer experiences during Buddy Up provide students with opportunities to develop their abilities to:

- Interact with peers who may have similar or different temperaments, interests, and skills
- Share information about themselves
- Listen to and show interest in others
- Communicate and collaborate successfully with diverse peers
- Recognize and empathize with others' perspectives and feelings
- Demonstrate self-control
- Express ideas and feelings with self-confidence and assertiveness
- Disagree respectfully
- Demonstrate caring and kindness toward others



# ROLE OF TEACHERS & STAFF

Teachers and staff play a key role in fostering an attitude of acceptance, inclusion, and caring within the classroom and school, so that all students feel welcome, comfortable, and connected. Teachers can establish Buddy Up as a natural part of students' school experience by weaving buddy activities seamlessly throughout each day. This underscores the idea that engaging with all peers is a valuable and expected occurrence, rather than a departure from "normal" activities. The more opportunities students have to spend time with their buddies, the more comfortable they will become with the routine and with one another. Teachers also set the tone for Buddy Up by bringing their own enthusiasm to the experience, and framing it as an opportunity rather than just another assignment or task. Rarely do students complain—and in fact, they generally have a great deal of excitement for having a new buddy or engaging in a buddy activity.

“Our pilot of Sanford Harmony last year was fantastic! We found it a positive experience for students and teachers. Again and again we were pleased with the positive connections that we saw (and heard about from families). “

— Preschool Director



# TOOL KIT

## Quick Connection (QC) Cards:

These are brief discussions and activities designed to provide peers with opportunities to share, think, collaborate, and have fun together. There are three types of Quick Connection Cards, including: Quick Conversations, Quick Collaborations, and Quick Community Builders. Quick Conversations and Collaborations are used for Buddy Up.

## Buddy Grid:

Use a Buddy Grid to plan buddy pairs and keep track of which students have already been paired together. Simply write the names of your students on both the vertical and horizontal sides of the grid and place an 'X' in the box that represents each pairing that has already occurred.

## Buddy Board:

A Buddy Board is a way to organize and display buddy pairs each week. Display the Buddy Board in a prominent place in your classroom, so students have a reminder of who their buddies are each week.

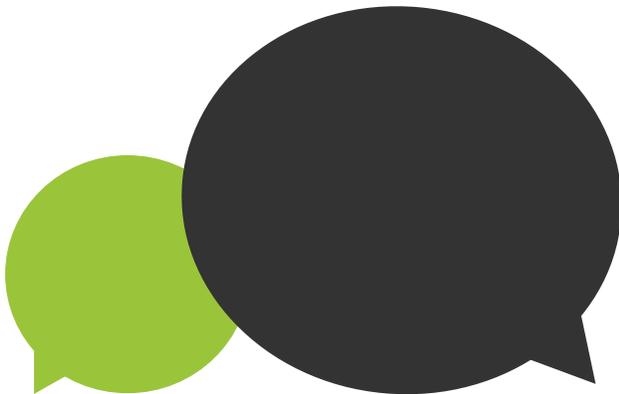
# GET STARTED

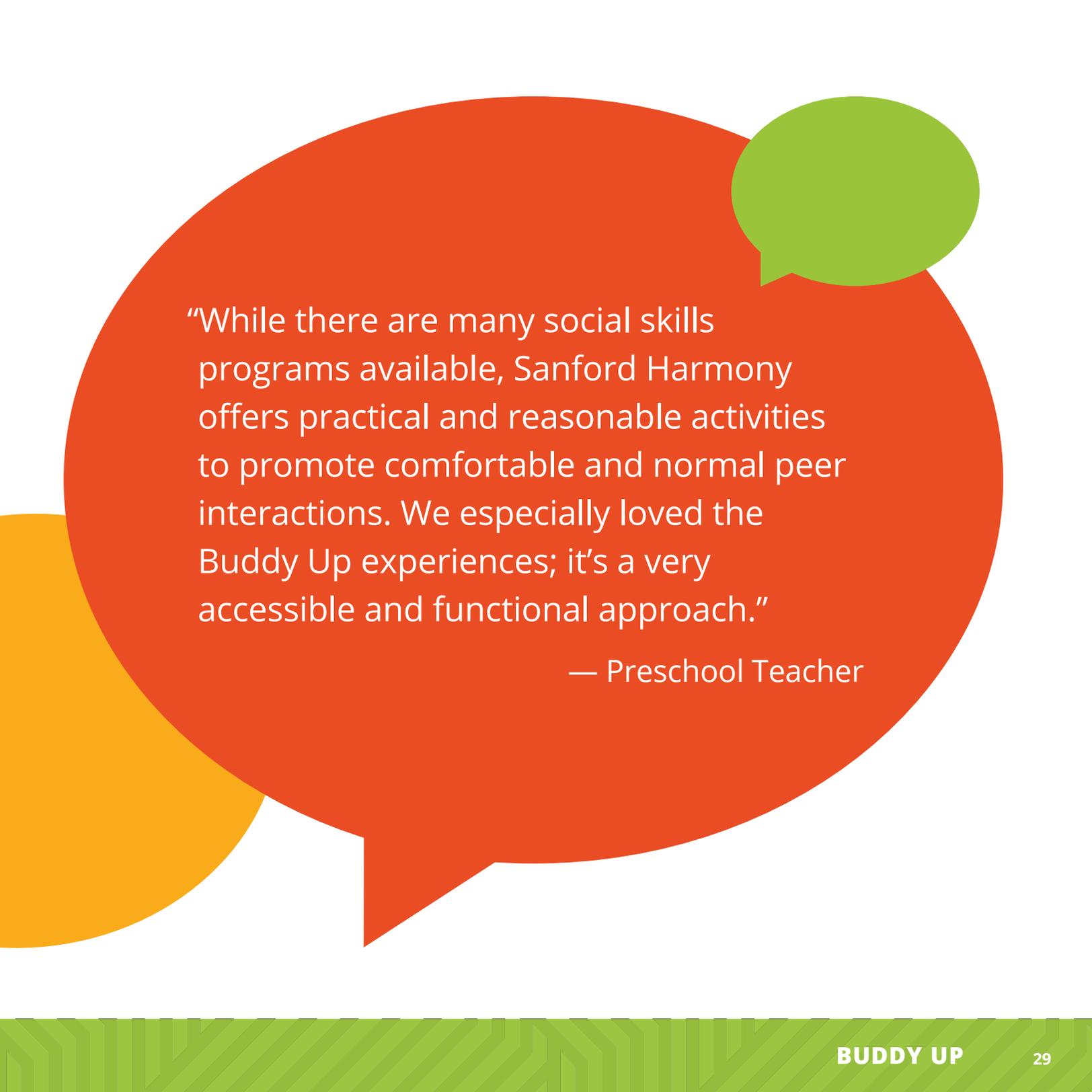
When you start Buddy Up, it is important to introduce the idea to your students and have a conversation about the reasons why you will be implementing Buddy Up. Here is an example of how you can introduce Buddy Up to your class:

Our class is going to be starting something really exciting called Buddy Up next week! Every week, you'll have a new buddy, and we'll plan different activities for buddies to do together. Buddy Up is going to help us get to know one another a little better, and it will give everyone a chance to talk and work with everyone else in the class. Every Monday, you will be able to check the Buddy Board to see who your buddy will be for the week.

Here are some questions to spark a discussion about buddies:

- ▶ What are some of the things that you do here at school with your classmates?
- ▶ Why do you think it's important for people to learn how to get along and work with many different kinds of people?
- ▶ What is a buddy? What are some other names for a buddy?





“While there are many social skills programs available, Sanford Harmony offers practical and reasonable activities to promote comfortable and normal peer interactions. We especially loved the Buddy Up experiences; it’s a very accessible and functional approach.”

— Preschool Teacher



# TIPS FOR EARLY SUCCESS

**Share your excitement!** At the beginning of Buddy Up, a primary focus will be on engaging students with the idea that it's fun to have a buddy. At first, it can be helpful to make discovering buddies an actual activity—facilitate a “dramatic reveal” of the buddy board, or plan a whole group activity in which individual buddy pairs can be recognized.

**Discuss appropriate reactions to buddy pairings.** Together, brainstorm some possible feelings that students might have when they find out who their buddy will be each week (e.g., excited, nervous, disappointed). Explore possible reasons for these feelings and what students might do, including appropriate and inappropriate ways to express their feelings. Remind students that any concerns about buddies should be discussed with you privately. Maintain the expectation that being buddies will be a positive experience.

**Plan for success.** Students should have many opportunities to succeed with their buddy at first. Keep activities simple and provide plenty of support. For young children, working with a peer can be particularly challenging when also presented with new concepts, and may actually detract from learning. Make sure that initial buddy activities are fun and familiar to students.

# STEPS

Incorporating Buddy Up as a classroom practice includes the following steps:

- Assign weekly buddies.
- Select and facilitate activities and routines appropriate for partners (four to five times per week) using your Quick Connection Cards.

## Assign Weekly Buddies

Buddy activities allow students to play and work together in positive ways. Pairing students with less frequent playmates can increase the diversity of their social experiences, and help them develop broader, more flexible social skills.

Pairing students randomly ensures that they will eventually be buddies with each of their classmates. Use your Buddy Board (the one provided or one you have created) to assign buddy pairs. Use your Buddy Grid to keep track of who has already been paired. Display the Buddy Board in your classroom so students have a reminder of who their weekly buddy is. Displaying buddy pairings prominently in the classroom not only provides a visual reminder to students, but it also emphasizes the message that Buddy Up is an important part of the classroom experience. When posting buddy pairings, it is important not to organize the buddy board by gender or other social groupings. For example, do not simply put the boys on one side and the girls on the other side and rotate each column up or down.

- Some (or all) weeks may require a buddy triad in order to include all students, and that's okay.
- Never force students to be buddies if they feel extremely uncomfortable or unsafe with a particular peer.

When first introducing buddy activities to students, it is helpful to pair students who are more compatible in some ways, and have a greater chance of success interacting with one another, while maintaining as much diversity as possible. After a few weeks, as students become more familiar with the routines, and more comfortable having and being a buddy, they will be able to interact more effectively with more of their peers. This may also be an appropriate time to plan more challenging buddy pairings, such as partnering two students that both have strong leadership tendencies. Planning intentionally for these types of pairings allows for up-front consideration of suitable strategies for monitoring and supporting these buddies.

# TIP

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Sometimes I hear, “But I want to be buddies with Katie!” What can I do?**

Sometimes, students really want to be buddies with a particular friend. Explain matter-of-factly that this is his or her buddy this week, and that he or she will have another buddy in the future. Most students accept this quickly. Don't allow hurtful words, and be alert to subtle ways that students might express their disappointment or displeasure when working with their buddy. However, never force students to be buddies—being a buddy should be a positive experience for both peers. Sometimes kids just need to be alone, or are having a tough day. Encourage students to interact with their buddies and provide extra support, but when necessary, consider asking a buddy to join with another pair of classmates, or become a “temporary buddy” yourself, for a student who may need one at the time.

## **My children are young and many of them have difficulty sharing projects they have made together.**

It may be helpful to make a sample project or have an example to show children as you explain an activity. When buddies make projects together, they both may want to keep what they have made. Let children make two projects together if they would like. Before they begin working, help them choose a strategy for deciding which buddy will keep which project, such as choosing which child will keep the first picture they make together. Buddies may also enjoy looking for and deciding together where in the classroom to hang or place their project.



“I liked the fact that the program facilitated dialogue between students who wouldn’t normally interact with each other. I also enjoyed watching different students discovering traits and interests they have in common.”

—5th grade teacher



### **What if they work in parallel rather than together?**

Sometimes children can become so absorbed in an activity that they forget that they even have a buddy! A well-timed comment or question about a buddy or what a buddy is doing can help redirect children back toward one another.

### **Kids in my class have such different temperaments and interests. Some children find it really difficult to be paired with classmates who are extremely loud, active, or talkative. How can I help them work together successfully?**

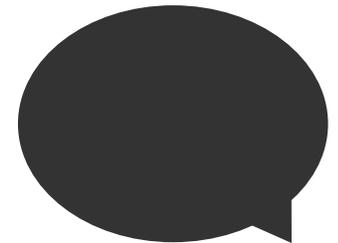
As a class, discuss the idea that everyone has different styles and perspectives. With a volunteer, model incompatible behaviors (e.g., building a tower together, with one of you building very quickly and the other very slowly). Have the class focus on how each person is impacted and how behaviors can be adjusted to show respect and consideration for each buddy.



## Any ideas for specific buddy activities that incorporate academic content?

Below is a list of “Grab and Go” activities that can be used when students have a few minutes to work together, while others are finishing up projects.

- Illustrate your vocabulary words with your buddy.
- Illustrate your spelling words with your buddy.
- Act out your vocabulary words with your buddy.
- Act out your spelling words with your buddy.
- Write a math problem based on information you know about your buddy (i.e., number of siblings, pets, etc.).
- Draw a desert habitat using one piece of paper. Label the animals and plants in your habitat.
- Draw an ocean habitat using one piece of paper. Label the animals and plants in your habitat.
- Draw a rainforest habitat using one piece of paper. Label the animals and plants in your habitat.
- Using one piece of paper, illustrate a main event from the story we are reading this week.
- Using one piece of paper, illustrate a main character from the story we are reading this week and list several character traits.
- Take turns sequencing the story from this week. Each of you will write a sentence until you have your story summarized.



**I don't like boys. Do I have to be buddies with boys (or girls, new students, kids that don't speak English, etc.), too?**

Everyone is an important part of our class, and every person should be respected and included. So, you'll be partnered with each other in the class throughout the year. This will give you a chance to get to know more of the kids in our class, and you may find that you have more in common than you think. For now, it is important that we all treat everyone in the class with respect, whether we are buddies or not.

(This question deserves further follow-up with the individual child and/or the class, such as a discussion or activity about respect and/or inclusion.)

**Do we have to be with our buddy all the time?**

We're going to plan some special activities that buddies will do together every week. You can play or work with your buddy at other times too if you want, or you can choose to spend time with other kids in the class.

**Can I be buddies with Katie instead?**

Raymond is your buddy this week. Everyone will get to spend time with a new buddy each week, so you'll have a chance to be buddies with Katie another week.



**Can I be buddies  
with Katie instead?**

### **What if we just don't get along with our buddy?**

It's true that we don't always get along with one another. We're going to be spending some time this year working on trying to understand each other better and finding ways to get along.

(With encouragement and support, children generally find ways to interact successfully with their buddies, although it can sometimes be challenging at first. However, children should never be forced to be buddies with a particular peer if they are feeling very upset or unsafe about the situation. Let your knowledge of your students guide you in making these decisions.)

### **Which buddy gets to go first?**

When you and your buddy are playing or working together, you'll need to take turns or share. We're going to brainstorm some ways that buddies can do this fairly, and you and your buddy can decide together what you want to do. You can always talk to your classmates or me if you need some help.

**Which buddy gets  
to go first?**

**Do we have to be with  
our buddy all the time?**

# CONNECTIONS

Students interact with many adults throughout the school day—their homeroom teachers, specialist teachers, lunchroom and playground personnel, parents, grandparents, and other family members. All of these adults play an important role in helping students foster positive and healthy relationships. The teacher’s role is to help students share what they experienced and accomplished in Meet Up and Buddy Up with the other important people in their lives. This way, the Harmony Goals, skills, and accomplishments that students identified and experienced can be reinforced in all contexts. On our website ([sanfordharmony.org](http://sanfordharmony.org)), we provide example letters that can be used to encourage Home-School and Within-School Connections. The letters are designed to inform family members, teachers, administrators, and school staff about their Harmony Goals so that these concepts will be reinforced in all contexts.

In addition to providing letters to family members and school staff, other strategies to bridge Home-School and Within-School Connections include:

- Invite administrators, teachers, staff, parents, or siblings to participate in a Meet Up or Buddy Up activity.
- Ask students to put together a play or presentation that represents their Harmony Goals and their experiences during Meet Up; invite family members and other classes to observe their presentation.
- Send periodic letters home letting family members know how the students are doing at meeting their Harmony Goals and the strategies that they used to solve particular conflicts that occurred in the classroom.

- Share the classroom Harmony Goals and students' Meet Up experiences at Curriculum Night. Demonstrate Buddy Up with parents and students at Curriculum Night.
- Arrange for students to present their Harmony Goals to other classes in the school. Plan special Buddy Up activities in which students are buddies with someone from another class.
- Assign students the task of developing a video that illustrates their Harmony Goals that they can share with family members, on the school website, or on YouTube (with administrative and parent permission).





# SANFORD HARMONY™



[sanfordharmony.org](http://sanfordharmony.org)