

Creating Equitable Connection Through Care

In an equitable environment, we want to meet all kids where they are to ensure they have the opportunity to learn, feel cared for, and feel included. Here are some strategies to build connections with all kids:

Coaches Can:

- Warmly welcome all kids by name
- Use moments before session for small conversations
- Move around space to connect equitably with all kids
- Be curious, ask questions, seek multiple perspectives
- Be present and listen to understand
- Implement rituals that contribute to a positive environment
- Share your own humanity, laugh at yourself, have fun
- Reflect on your own attitude and beliefs to uncover biases

- Use body language and gestures to communicate that all kids' ideas are welcome and valued
- Praise effort, not outcome
- Set clear group expectations about how kids treat themselves, each other, and the coach
- Manage conflicts using conversation instead of punishment
- Observe constantly and notice if kids are being included/excluded
- Remember kids' lived experience impacts how they show up, take a moment so you respond effectively instead of reacting