**Improving Positive Peer Relationships**

From: http://www.ncab.org.au/Assets/Files/McGrath%20H.%20&%20%20Noble%20T.%20The%20big%20picture%20of%20positive%20peer%20relationships.pdf

* Classroom level
  + “Class vision” at start of year
    - Collaboratively developed by teacher and students
    - Vision for how classroom can be and how students will behave to be consistent with vision (expectations)
  + Classroom committees
    - Working collaboratively on a shared goal or responsibility
    - E.g. classroom newsletter committee or classroom birthday committee
  + Classroom meetings
    - Times for practicing social skills like active listening, negotiation, respectful disagreeing
  + Circle time
    - Work together to discuss curriculum topics, solve problems, or discuss shared concerns
  + Random grouping
    - All students work in a group or a pair with all other students so that they get to know each other and have positive experiences together
  + Educational games and shared special days
    - E.g. Italian Day, Thinkfests
    - Students can have fun together, get to know each other, and share success
  + Camps with “cooperative” focus
    - Getting to know you activities and different cooperative tasks with small groups
* Curriculum
  + Cooperative learning strategies
  + Social & emotional learning curriculum
  + Authentic group projects
    - Opportunity to bond, work towards a common goal, and share satisfaction of achieving goal
    - The task is authentic because the group’s product, solution, outcome or recommendation matters to the school community.
      * Ex: Ask each group of four students to make recommendations as to how the school could reduce it’s ecological footprint. One group might focus on water, another on gas and electricity, a third on reusable items and so on.
    - Process characterized by student ownership, student-direction, and teacher facilitation. For example students would decide on which resources to use and whether their final product was in the form of a presentation, booklet or a poster.
    - Students need to use research and skills and skills and knowledge from several discipline areas (eg writing, costing, collecting statistics) to complete the task
    - The assessment and feedback on the product/outcome/solution is provided by people with relevant expertise (eg members of a local conservation group) or the power to make decisions (eg school council)
    - Social skills are intentionally practised and reflected on (eg by using a teamwork rubric)
  + Digital storytelling communities
    - Can share aspects of their life or interest
    - Share within story circle
  + Group thinking tasks
    - Group concept maps
    - Ten Thinking Tracks
    - Let students get to know each other, work together, and develop higher-order thinking skills
  + Showcasing strengths
    - Skills Matrix or Classroom Yellow Pages activity
    - Highlight students’ strengths or skills to generate respect and identify common areas of interest
* School-wide
  + Cross-age “house” system
    - Students from different grades interact with each other regularly and in a meaningful way
  + Peer support structures
    - Peer counseling
    - Peer mediation
    - Peer mentoring/buddy systems
    - Peer tutoring
    - PALs: Peer Activity Leaders (older students organize and facilitate cross-age games)
  + Community service
    - Encourage students to plan or help implement this
  + Cross-age school committees
  + Circle of Friends
    - Network of students who offer support and inclusion for an isolated student
  + Student involvement in planning and implementing activities
  + Cross-age extra-curricular activities
    - i.e. band, choir, sporting activities, lunchtime clubs, and drama performance