The Four Building Blocks of Relationships

Communication
- Be open and honest with your Little.
- Facilitate thoughtful and productive conversations with your Little.
- Engage in a process of feedback with your Little.
- Engage in active listening—let your Little express her thoughts and ideas.
- Invite your Little’s parents and caregivers to be privy to the details of your relationship; ask for their feedback.
- Communication gives insight into your Little’s interests and personality.
- Clear communication with your Little allows for a strong relationship to grow.
- Focus on improving your communication skills.

Trust
- Trust is the “reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, and surety of a person or thing; confidence.”
- Trust holds the relationship together.
- Trust is the belief that another person has your best interest at heart.
- Building trust requires consistency and reliability.
- In order to build trust, you must communicate that you value your Little, both with words and with actions.
- To earn trust, you must work hard, have patience, persevere, and be consistent towards your Little.

Respect
- To earn respect, you must show respect.
- Treat your Little with generosity and open-mindedness.
- Be tolerant and accepting of the differences between you.
- Work hard to solve problems that arise; solve them peacefully and with compassion towards your Little.
- Honor your Little’s boundaries.
- Do not make judgments about her thoughts, feelings, or opinions, even if you disagree.
- Work together to make compromises and decisions.
- Model respect in your interactions with others when on a match activity.

Boundaries
- Boundaries are personal limits set to ensure safety.
- To form boundaries, one must have a clear sense of self.
- Respecting your Little’s boundaries will help build trust between you.
- Boundaries can include physical space, how often you engage your Little’s parents, your presence at his school, or how often you communicate. Be aware of all potential boundaries.
- Keep in mind what boundaries your Little’s parents or caregiver may impose.