

social life of the school. They have the chance to form and maintain valuable peer relationships with their non-handicapped schoolmates.

### ***Peer Tutoring***

Another way teachers are encouraging students to form relationships while assisting in each other's learning is through peer tutoring. Teachers use this strategy effectively in many learning situations throughout the school day. The simplest approach is a system of peer partners who help each other in a variety of ways: reviewing rote material; preparing for a spelling test; learning math; or working together to correct each other's assignments and edit essays. Peer partners can help each other synthesize and assimilate new material; for example, they can work together summarizing and sharing key points in a text.

Teachers also use the peer partner system to motivate and encourage students to try new things or to expand limited skills. One example we observed involved a young student named Donnie in a Grade 4 classroom. Donnie sat with a peer at a table. The peer was doing an exercise in his math notebook while Donnie manipulated some plastic blocks placed on his desk by the teacher. The peer used the blocks for assistance in solving equations while Donnie used them to develop fine motor control, and to see and touch number groups.

At first, Donnie knocked the blocks off the table and his peer partner bent and picked them up, arranging them in a pattern. Donnie ignored the blocks. The peer picked up a block and showed Donnie how to open it. He showed Donnie the small plastic toy inside. The peer encouraged Donnie to pull open the block by himself. Donnie pushed the blocks away. Donnie's peer then took a Cheezie from a bag in his desk, showed it to Donnie and hid it inside the block. Donnie struggled to open the block and, when successful, ate the treat.

The peer then showed him two blocks. "I have two blocks now, Donnie," he told him. "I'm going to put the Cheezie in one