Recovering Together Program

Children's Curriculum

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Rocky Mountain Quality Improvement Center

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INTRODUCTION

Recovering Together Program Description

The Recovering Together Program (RTP) is a year-long therapeutic and educational program for mothers and their children, serving mothers who need help with both child maltreatment and substance abuse issues. Staffed by a multi-disciplinary team, RTP uses culturally appropriate and theory-driven treatment methods that are creatively designed for women and children's special needs. The RTP design includes advocacy and case management services for families. These approaches were selected based on a literature review completed before the initial design of the RTP program and continued throughout the 3 years of field testing, formative evaluation, and modifications of the original model.

RTP consists of three phases. In Phase 1, the "initial treatment" phase, the mothers' and children's individual emotional and behavioral needs are the focus of treatment. Phase 1 includes enrollment in the program, intake interviews, 16 weeks of separate group therapy for women and their children, and recommendations and support for them to engage in community support group meetings or recovery activities. Common community support group and recovery activities include Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings, support groups for victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse, classes related to concurrent legal requirements, and various religious activities. Families are also encouraged to use the local recreation center, with membership paid through RTP. Each participant develops a primary treatment plan during this phase.

During Phase 1, the women learn about addiction and craving and are introduced to the basics of cognitive-behavioral techniques to make changes in their lives. Methods for transferring this information to the women are adjusted to the learning styles and culture of each group of participants. Meanwhile, the children participate in age-clustered educational therapy groups that involve play and art therapy techniques. These techniques allow the children to process their own experiences, learn about various emotions, and understand the effects of addiction on their family.

In this initial phase, the RTP family advocate begins to assist mothers in developing the skills necessary to access needed resources. Common needs include housing, transportation, and employment. In addition, program staff knows that the mother will find it difficult to achieve abstinence if chronic medical problems have not been treated adequately. Maximizing the physical health of both mother and children is addressed in this phase by referral to appropriate local resources.

RTP intervenes in the family's environmental system in all phases of treatment, but more directly in the second and third phases of treatment. During Phase 2**,** RTP helps the participants re-create their family communication and behavior with family skill-building classes. In this "skill-building" phase, the entire family's communication and problem-solving skills are the focus of the intervention. Participants continue to attend community support group meetings in addition to the 12 weeks of family skill-building classes provided by the RTP staff during Phase 2. The skill-building classes may include the mother and her children, as well as partners and extended family members. The curriculum used during this phase is a modification of the DARE To Be You

(DTBY) program (Miller-Heyl, MacPhee, & Fritz, 2001). DTBY is a substance abuse prevention program that includes family training, education, and activities for teaching self-responsibility, personal and parenting efficacy, communication and social skills, and problem-solving and decision-making skills. The DTBY program was selected based on its strong research base and the local availability of DTBY facilities and trained staff. Other prevention program options have been suggested for the family skill-building phase, especially programs such as Incredible Years (Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1997), Nurturing Parents (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, n.d.) and Celebrating Families (Quittan, 2004). Therapy services continue on an individual or family basis during the second phase, if appropriate.

Phase 3, the "lifestyle change" phase, lasts approximately 6 months, or until program discharge. The mother's vocational and social needs are the focus of advocacy efforts during this final phase, which includes ongoing adjunct treatment services as needed, and mandatory support group meetings. During this time, unmet treatment goals are modified or fulfilled, and participants engage in individual or family counseling to support their achievement of realistic treatment goals.

How to Use This Curriculum

Purpose

This is a curriculum for facilitating the groups of children and adolescents in Phase 1. The goal of the Children's Program is to provide the opportunity for children and adolescents to process their experience of living with a substance-abusing parent, and to help them express and manage their feelings in healthy ways. (From this point forward, the term "children" will be used to refer to both the children and adolescents who are program participants.) Often children from substance-abusing homes have also been victims of abuse or neglect. This group focuses on their experience in the family and provides them with tools to increase their understanding of the impact an addiction has on a family and themselves. Tools needed for self-care are taught, such as communicating feelings; identifying resources to tell if they are being abused or neglected, or are scared; understanding that, while it's common to feel responsible for a substance-abusing parent, they really aren't; and realizing they are not alone. This curriculum seeks to provide skills for children to take care of themselves and cope in their family.

Overview of Curriculum Design

Each of the 16 weekly sessions of this curriculum follows the same format:

- Name of session
- Materials needed
- Activity descriptions with suggested times and notes about various age groups
- Together with Parents
- Facilitator notes

Age of Participants

Group activities are broken into three age groups: 5 and younger, 6 to 11, and teens. Placement of children should depend on the level of maturity and needs of the group. Activities should be modified according to specific factors and dynamics in the group, including number of children, maturity, needs, and attention span.

Time Guidelines
The timelines in this curriculum are only a guide, and the activities are a menu to choose from. It is not necessary to facilitate each session in the order in which they appear, or to complete all of the listed activities, if time does not permit. However, prior to considering making a change in a session it is important to remain mindful that this curriculum is interrelated with the mothers' curriculum; thus, coordination is necessary if the program uses both curricula. It is suggested that facilitators find what works for each group, and structure the activities accordingly. As trainers, keep these questions in mind as you go through the curriculum; *What do they know about that topic? What do they want to know? What did they learn? What do they need?*

Format for Each Session

Check-In
The first 10 minutes of each session is a time for children to share immediate thoughts and feelings about their day so they are not focused on those thoughts throughout the group and so the facilitator is aware of the concerns the children bring with them to the session. This awareness is helpful in understanding the child's behaviors and may help the facilitator identify teaching moments. Check-In is a respectful time to listen and be heard. It also sets the tone early in the session on treating others with respect. Use an object to pass around for the person speaking to hold, as it helps the children focus on who should be talking. This object is referred to in this manual as a "power object," because the person who has the object has the power to speak.

Team-Building Activity
The second 10 minutes of each session is set aside for fun, experiential team-building activities to help focus and energize the group. The activities follow a progression throughout the entire phase, starting with low-risk activities and moving to activities requiring more touch and interaction.

First Activity
The next 25 minutes of each session are used to introduce a topic.

Break
During these 20 minutes, children interact through play such as football, puppet shows, tutoring, games, coloring, etc.

Second Activity
The next 25 minutes are used for strategies or practicing skills related to the topic, to reinforce what has been taught in the session.

Processing
In this curriculum, many of the activities are followed by a variety of processing questions as a guide to make the activity relevant to each person's life. Please do not be limited to these questions, nor feel you must ask them all. Take the time to process the thoughts and issues they struggle with. However, due to time constraints, and to end each session with positive family interactions through play, processing questions do not follow family activities.

Relaxation Exercise
Five minutes are devoted to help calm participants and teach them how to calm themselves.

Together with Parents
The last 10 minutes of each session are devoted to family time. The mothers and children will meet together. The Children's Program facilitators briefly share with mothers what the children learned and then initiate positive play between the parent and child. Many of the activities used in family time are the same ones used in the Team-Building session with the children earlier that evening.

Facilitator Notes
At the end of each group it is recommended that you keep notes on each week for each age group to maintain a record of progress and to draw from lessons learned as far as what worked and what didn't for use in the future.

Facilitator Tips

Due to the sensitive nature and topics that may arise during sessions, it is strongly recommended that two people co-facilitate each age group and, if possible, a trained counselor or therapist be one of those facilitators. At the very least, it is recommended a trained counselor or therapist be available to assist in crisis intervention and to assist facilitators with questions on clients or difficult situations.

Facilitators will need knowledge on the effects of child maltreatment and living with a substance-abusing parent, and they should possess skills such as drawing people out, cutting them off, asking questions, and being a good listener. Facilitators must be organized and non-judgmental, and maintain confidentiality at all times.

A significant role of the facilitator is to ensure that children have the opportunity to reflect on individual and group challenges. Though reflection periods may be short, especially for children who have difficulty expressing themselves verbally, this time is very important, as individuals need to know their feelings and ideas are valued and respected. The following are helpful resources for information on facilitating a group through experiential activities and helping members reflect on their experience:

> *Processing the Experience: Strategies to Enhance and Generalize Learning* by J. Luckner and R. Nadler
> *Reflective Learning: Theory and Practice* by D. Sugerman, K. Doherty, D. Garvey, and M. Gass

In addition, depending on the legal requirements in your state, you may have an obligation to report the disclosure of child maltreatment to the proper authorities. This requirement should be disclosed to children at the beginning of services and shared with the mothers when they enroll in RTP. Note that this may affect trust issues with some children, resulting in decreased participation and sharing.

Common Issues for Children and Adolescents in the RTP Program

Substance Abuse and Child Maltreatment
The impact at an early age from parental substance abuse is evident when working with the children enrolled in RTP. (For more information on the effects, see the *Review of Literature*, following.) Children's loyalty to their parents, regardless of whether neglect or abuse has occurred, makes it very important to be sensitive to what is said about the parents in their presence. Because many of these children have been abused or neglected, they come with feelings and questions around both substance abuse and child maltreatment.

As part of the goals for the children's curriculum, talking about substance abuse and child maltreatment gives language to children so they can talk about what is happening in their family. By learning to communicate feelings, identify resources, and recognize abuse and neglect, they may feel more comfortable disclosing if they are scared or maltreated. These topics, though difficult to talk about, will increase knowledge and understanding. The children's understanding that they are not responsible for their parents' substance abuse increases their self-efficacy.

For more information on substance abuse and child maltreatment, review the following websites:

www.americanhumane.org/rmqic
www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/subabuse_childmal.cfm
www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov/resources.asp
http://pca-ny.org/pdf/whatkidsshouldknow.pdf

Children in Foster Care
Some of the children referred to the program live at home with their mothers, while others may live with a relative, in a formal foster care arrangement or a formal relative care arrangement, or in another type of out-of-home placement. Regardless, each child referred to the program struggles with his or her own issues of security and feeling helpless and responsible for the parent's substance use and inability to stop it. Children in foster care may struggle specifically with the following additional issues:

- Blaming themselves for being removed from the home
- Wanting to return to the birth parents, regardless of whether they were abused or neglected
- Experiencing mixed emotions about attaching to foster parents
- Feeling insecure and uncertain abut their future

While in RTP, maintaining a consistent and predictable routine each week will help all of the children feel some order in their lives. It is important to note that when children come to the RTP project, it may be one of the few times each week they see their mothers. Thus, many feelings may surface that may affect their behavior and ability to participate. Reminding them that they will see their mothers during dinner and at the end of each session will also help them feel secure in knowing when the next interaction will be. Should any children refuse to go to the session, asking only for their parents, calmly talk to them about how each mother's participation in her session is one way she is "working, rather than wishing, for change." By allowing their mothers to go to their group session and learn the skills necessary to make their homes a safer place, they are helping make that change.

Emotional Issues
It is not surprising for the children, due to their experiences, to exhibit emotional and behavioral issues. Ideally, an assessment has been conducted prior to group assignment/participation and the children are receiving the support they need in a counseling or therapeutic setting. Although this curriculum was not designed to address these needs and behaviors, it is important for the facilitator to be knowledgeable so that his or her responses to the children are effective and helpful. The following websites contain useful information on understanding and responding to children with anxiety, depression, grief issues, ADD, Down's Syndrome, autism/Asperger's, and parents with mental illness, among others.

www.cfw.tufts.edu/topic/1/40.htm
www.aacap.org/index.ww

Disruptive Behavior
Many of the children have not had consistent, calm parenting and have lived in unpredictable and unstructured environments that lack routine. As a result, they may behave in disruptive ways in groups. Having a behavior management plan is extremely important, since it helps them to understand your expectations and develop self-discipline. Keep it positive; behavior that is rewarding continues. Examples of techniques that help children manage their behavior are:

Group Motivators
Have an empty jar and a bag of marbles (or anything similar). When the group as a whole is on task, add a marble to the jar and compliment the group's behavior. When the jar is full, offer an extra reward to the group, such as a group game, free time, etc. Do not take marbles out of the jar -- it is only for rewarding positive behavior.

The Ticket System
Come up with a creative name for your tickets and reward good behavior with tickets. At the end of each night, let participants cash-in their tickets at your "store." The store can contain simple and inexpensive items that encourage learning and fun.

Reward Charts
If a child is in need of an individual behavior plan, consider using a reward chart. These charts can be handmade, with boxes representing portions of the session time, such as every 15 minutes, or one box for each segment of the session (check-in, team building, activity, etc.). Using small segments allows the child more opportunities for success and keeps him or her focused. When the child earns smiley faces in half of the boxes on the chart (whatever your goal is, keep increasing it as you see success), he or she earns a reward. Another type of charting could be following a dot-to-dot around a picture. As the child earns points, he or she continues to connect the dots until the picture is complete, thus earning a reward. Find what rewards motivate the child, such as playing with you during break, sitting by you, computer time if available, etc.

Choices and Enforceable Statements
Love and Logic techniques are tried and true for giving children some power before they demand it. The language of *Love and Logic* can help keep you calm and remain in control. For example, use language that is enforceable, such as, "I let kids who follow the rules play this

game," instead of, "Play fair!" Try, "Dinner is served until 5 p.m." versus "Hurry up and eat, group is starting." Choose words that are enforceable. *Love and Logic* uses choices, enforceable statements, and one-liners to keep facilitators and parents in control. This approach uses natural consequences to address behaviors.

For more information and ideas on behavior management strategies, visit these websites:

www.loveandlogic.com
www.askdrsears.com/html/6/T061300.asp
www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/discipline.html

Follow-Up

It is important to take time after each session to debrief with the other counselors and facilitators from the women's and children's groups. This time is used to share significant events of the evening, share what worked and what didn't work in the groups, ask for support or suggestions from other professionals in the room, and make note of what to check on or bring up the following week. For example, if the group moved to a discussion that you needed to cut off, for time or other purposes, you may want to share that with others and make a note to revisit the discussion the following week to make sure there was closure on the topic. In addition, it is an opportunity to staff specific families and exchange important information that will enable you to attend better to the needs of the child. It is also important to document information that should be shared with other agencies, such as Child Protective Services, if a child discloses abuse or neglect. (If you feel that a child is in imminent danger you should call CPS immediately.) As noted earlier, it is recommended you also keep notes each week for each age group to maintain a record of progress and to draw from lessons learned as far as what worked and what didn't for use in the future. Note that many of these families' attendance is court-ordered; thus, records kept may become part of the case or court record. (A sample Group Notes form is found at the end of this manual that may be used to support documentation.)

Review of the Literature

I. Common Effects of Parental Substance Abuse and Child Maltreatment on Children

In families where alcohol or other drugs are being abused, children are at a higher risk for emotional, physical, and mental health problems (Children of Alcoholics Foundation, n.d.). These effects are magnified when children have also been abused or neglected. Research shows between one-third and two-thirds of child maltreatment cases involve substance abuse (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). Unfortunately, maltreated children of substance-abusing parents often remain in the child welfare system longer, experience poorer outcomes, and may be less likely to reunify with parents (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2003). Living in an unpredictable, chaotic, and sometimes dangerous environment can impact a child in every area of his or her life. Many factors can affect a child's experience in the home, such as: Is the drug being abused legal or illegal? Does the parent binge or use the drug continuously? How does the drug make the parent act? Is the child being neglected? How old was the child when the parent started using? Whom can the child count on for safety?

Alcohol is a publicly advertised, socially acceptable, and legal drug; thus, it may carry with it less shame than illegal substances. Parents addicted to illegal drugs may follow less mainstream values, focusing on money and self-gratification. They may participate in drug subcultures and show pronounced fear of the authorities. These parents may also be involved in illegal activities in an attempt to support their addiction. Every child has his or her own story and experience and is affected in many different ways. The following are possible effects of parental substance abuse (Children of Alcoholics Foundation, n.d.).

EMOTIONAL EFFECTS

Anxiety Children may be preoccupied with the safety of a parent, the situation at home, or the fear of violence in the home. Constant tension is a great source of anxiety for children.

Guilt Children often blame themselves, taking responsibility for the addiction of the parent and other extenuating circumstances, such as anger in the home, separation, or divorce.

Confusion A consistent routine in the home can be disrupted with unpredictable moods and actions by the drug-dependent parent. Children may feel insecure when a parent's mood fluctuates from loving to withdrawn and where structure exists one moment, but not the next. A parent who passes out and does not remember making promises, revealing information, or behaving in certain ways around their children adds to the confusion.

Shame Ashamed of the "family secret," children may be reluctant or embarrassed to invite friends over to their home for fear of their parent's unpredictable behavior.

Fear Children of substance abuse may be victims or witnesses of physical violence or incest, thus suffering sleep disturbances, flashbacks, anxiety, and depression common with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Mistrust Inconsistent rules, unpredictable behavior, and mood swings can contribute to a lack of trust in authority figures, or in adults in general.

MEDICAL EFFECTS

Children may be impacted at birth if the mother abused drugs or alcohol during the pregnancy. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) are permanent central nervous system dysfunctions with varying degrees of facial dysmorphia, mental retardation, and growth deficiencies.

Child maltreatment and stress-related illnesses in children are also believed to be linked to parental substance abuse. According to the Children of Alcoholics Foundation (n.d.), children of alcoholics

in 1990 were admitted for more injuries, poisonings, substance abuse, mental disorders, and diseases of the gastrointestinal and respiratory systems than children from non-substance-abusing homes. The reason children may be at more risk for injuries when there is parental substance abuse is due to neglectful behaviors, such as not child-proofing a home, providing inadequate supervision, and the lack of routine health and dental care.

BEHAVIORAL EFFECTS

In an attempt to keep a parent from getting angry or using, children may become over-responsible, keeping the house clean and earning high grades. Other children may withdraw, hoping to remain invisible and not create any conflicts that might cause a parent to drink, use, or become angry. Other children may act out with aggression or withdraw completely from family and friends.

Some children may resort to delinquent behavior and/or alcohol or drugs to deal with their stress. With both genetic and environmental factors in play, children of alcoholics are three to four times more likely to become alcoholics and are at a higher risk for depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and suicide attempts compared to their peers.

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTS

Children from substance-abusing families may be physically tired or preoccupied with the stress of their home life, often resulting in poor academic performance, an inability to concentrate, and truancy. They may miss more school due to physical illnesses and are more likely to be delinquent and drop out of school.

II. Efforts to Treat Children

Whether or not parents receive treatment for alcohol or other substance abuse, their children may benefit from supportive programs. Living in an alcoholic or drug-dependent family leads children to develop coping mechanisms to deal with the many impacts listed in the previous pages. These coping mechanisms can be unhealthy and negatively impact a child's direction and behavior in life (Crowley, 2002).

Unfortunately, there are few programs available for children. A study completed in 1999 by Michael J. Stoil, Ph.D., in conjunction with the National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NaCOA), found less than one third of the 240 addiction treatment programs that responded to his survey provided services to the children of clients. The following are current efforts in the counseling field to help minimize the negative impact of living in a chemically addicted family and provide healthy coping skills for young people.

Support Groups	Mutual help groups such as Al-Anon and Alateen emphasize interaction among children of substance-abusing parents using the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions, and the 12 Concepts of Service adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous. Groups are facilitated by members, not necessarily professionals in the field, and all groups are free of charge.
Educational Programs	Common goals of educational programs are to teach the children of addicts about the treatment and the recovery process.

Learning about how other children often cope in these families helps the children understand that they are not to blame for their parents' addiction.

Group Therapy

A consistent, closed group facilitated by a professional encourages interactions with other children to help reduce the isolation children may experience and increase awareness that they are not alone in their experience. Group therapy provides a safe place in which to express feelings and gain perspective on how living in a family with addiction can help them develop healthy coping skills.

Family Therapy

This therapy is particularly effective if the parent has stopped using. It can help families realign healthy roles and boundaries and develop more effective ways of relating to and communicating with one another.

Student Assistance Programs

School-based programs offer early identification and support for children by identifying self-destructive patterns of behavior from living with a drug-dependent parent. Support groups are offered free of charge during school time by trained professionals who can create a safe, supportive, and enriching environment that promotes trust and helps children reach their personal and academic goals (Crowley, 2002).

Community Programs

Programs such as the *Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD)* in Colorado Springs, Colo., offer free substance abuse treatment counseling for families as well as education and training opportunities to build autonomy and assist families in becoming self-sufficient. The CPCD program, developed by Head Start staff, parents, and community partners, focuses on strengthening the environment of the Head Start child by empowering the family and promoting lifelong skills (Join Together, 2000).

The *Children Are People Program* in Mount Vernon, N.Y., offers support groups for children of alcoholics and addicts at Yonkers General Hospital. Children from the ages of 5 to 18 are positively impacted through group discussions, games, movies, art, music, and poetry to build self-esteem and healthy coping skills (Pieper & Zimmerman, 1996).

Regardless of the form of support provided to children, common goals remain consistent across the board. Affirming children's beliefs that they are not responsible for their parents' addiction or the abuse that may occur from it, and educating children to recognize the effects substance abuse has on their family are paramount to working with children. Reducing isolation while building a positive, trusting environment with healthy adults can encourage each child to work toward breaking the cycle of addiction and abuse in the family.

Table Summary of RTP Children's Curriculum

Session	Title of Session	Team-Building Activity	1st Activity	2nd Activity	Relaxation	Together with Parents
1	INTRODUCTIONS	Name Toss	Strengths & Group Norms	All About Me	Deep Breathing	Name Toss
2	TEAM BUILDING	Blanket Down	Counting M&Ms	Group Puzzle	Cross Your Arms	Family Feeling Pictures
3	FEELINGS	Web of Names	Making Feeling Cubes	Feeling Cube Game	Boats in the Wind	Family Feelings Chart
4	STRATEGIES FOR ANGER	Have You Ever?	Anger Thermometer	Releasing Anger	Your Safe Place	Have You Ever?
5	COPING WITH STRESS	Boundary Breakers	Drawing Our Stress	Clay Animals	Magic Messages	Boundary Breakers
6	PROBLEM SOLVING	Crossword Names	Three Solutions	The Wheel of Choice	Rainbow Clouds	Family Crossword
7	EXPLORING MY FAMILY	Name 5	Draw Your Family	Question Ball	You Are the Ocean	Name 5
8	FAMILY STRENGTHS	Fruit Game	Egg Drop	Egg Drop	Stretching	The Great Egg Drop
9	MY STRENGTHS	Everybody Up	Coat of Arms	Stand & Deliver	Review and Pick	Family Coat of Arms
10	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	Count to 10	Telephone & Nonverbal	I-Messages	Mindfulness	Web of Names
11	UNDERSTANDING ADDICTIONS	Musical Hands	Education	Roll the Dice	Lights Out, Quiet Music	Musical Hands
12	FAMILY ROLES	Group Knot	Family Roles Mobile	Introduce Play	Rain	Group Knot
13	PLAY PRACTICE	Anything Fabric	Play Practice	Play Practice	Crazy Moves	Relaxation
14	PLAY PERFORMANCE	Stretch the Group & Pantomime Game	Play Practice	Performance	[Group Process]	Has Your Family?
15	REVIEW SKILLS	Group Juggle	Group Cards	Bingo of Skills	Review and Pick	Group Juggle
16	CLOSING SESSION	Card (or T-Shirt) Party	Card (or T-Shirt) Party	Celebration	Celebration	Certificates

Week 1 - Introductions and Group Norms

Purpose of Session

Participants will understand the primary goals of the RTP program, establish group norms, and participate in a variety of team-building activities.

Materials

- glue
- construction paper
- poster board
- scissors
- markers
- soft ball of any size
- magazines (preschool age)
- folders for each participant
- colored pencils

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- All About Me Collage Pictures

Week 1 Activities

Introduce Ourselves

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Welcome each child to the group. Start with the following name game to help participants feel more comfortable.	Welcome children

Team-Building Activity: Name Toss

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Using a soft ball of any size, have the group stand in a circle. Begin by tossing the ball to someone across the circle and saying, “Here, (Karen).” When (Karen) catches the ball she says, “Thanks, (Renee).” Each person should only receive the ball once. Ask the children to remember who they threw the ball to, and who they got it from. When everyone has had it once (it should start and end with you), try the same pattern, in the same order again, saying the same words previously. Keep the pattern going for several runs. See if anyone can name all the group members. *(Rohnke, 1984).*	Learn names and help children relax.

Check-In and Logistics

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Share how the group will run each week, starting with check-in. Ask on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest, how are you today? Another option is to use the *Fist or Five* method. A fist means 0 (not good), all the way up to a 5. This is a way to help those struggling with verbalizing and can also be used to get input for group decisions. For example, if you want to give the group the choice of more free time at break or free time at the end of group, you can state a choice and ask them to hold up a fist or five for each choice. A fist blocks the decision; it means No! A five means Yes! After check-in, we will do a team-building activity to loosen up and get focused for group. Each week we will explore a new topic through fun activities, learn a new relaxation exercise, and share what we learned with our parents. ***For Younger Kids:*** Try a feelings poster each week. Cut out faces expressing different feelings from magazines and make a chart. Let the children identify how they are feeling by pointing to the faces. The children could also make their own faces to have each week at group and add faces as they learn new feeling words. Consider letting the young children color while sharing, if holding their attention or maintaining their behavior is an issue.	Inform children what to expect in group and give them a chance to share.

Tour the Facility

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Lead the group through the facility and show them where their parent, the bathroom, and drinks are located.	Inform children of locations and help them feel welcome.

First Activity: Strengths and Group Norms

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Give children a piece of construction paper and a colored pencil with which to trace their hand. Ask them to write their name in the palm of their paper hand and to write a strength or positive quality that has helped them through life on each finger. Provide scissors for children to cut out their hand tracings.	Draw upon each child's strengths.

(This activity was adapted from or used with permission from the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension DARE to be You program "Accepting Hands") (darecort@ext.colostate.edu))

Process: Strengths and Group Norms

Time	***Activity***	***Purpose***
15 minutes	Let children share their strengths. Share that one of the purposes of the group is to develop more skills and strengths to help us through hard times. Invite discussion on their purpose in being here, "Recovering Together," and what they would like to get out of the group. Ask the children what they need from the group to feel safe. Write their answers on poster board. Discuss confidentiality. As a sign of commitment to the group and the norms, ask each child to paste his or her hand on the poster board. Bring this poster board weekly to display as a reminder and to allow children to add to it. *(This activity was adapted from or used with permission from the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension DARE to be You Program, "Personal Billboard," 3rd-5th grade Manual, pg. 7.) (darecort@ext.colostate.edu)*	Share positive assets and develop group norms.

Break

Time	***Activity***	***Purpose***
15 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Interact through play.

Second Activity: All About Me Collage

Time	***Activity***	***Purpose***
25 minutes	***For younger children*:** Provide magazine pictures for them to choose from with the option for drawing. ***For older children:*** Provide copies of the images on the following pages for them to answer, color, and paste onto a folder. Let them choose which images to use. ***For teens:*** Follow coloring of the images with sharing to learn about each other. Ask if there are other questions they would like to know about the group members.	Self-exploration and an avenue to share and learn about each other.

Process: All About Me Collage

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Allow children to share their collages with each other and ask questions. Draw attention to the lantern that asks for a wish. You may ask them to share a wish they would have for their family. Share empathy around knowing they don't have a lot of control over what their parents do, but that together we will work, rather than wish, for change. (Members will share their folders with their parents during the Together with Parents activity.)	Provide an opportunity to learn about each other.

Relaxation Exercise: Deep Breathing

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Have children sit on the floor or in a chair. Teach them that learning how to calm themselves can help them gain control of their emotions and actions. Ask them to breathe in for 3 seconds, hold it for 3 seconds, and breathe out for 3 seconds. Repeat several times.	Teach children relaxation techniques to calm themselves.

Together with Parents: Name Toss

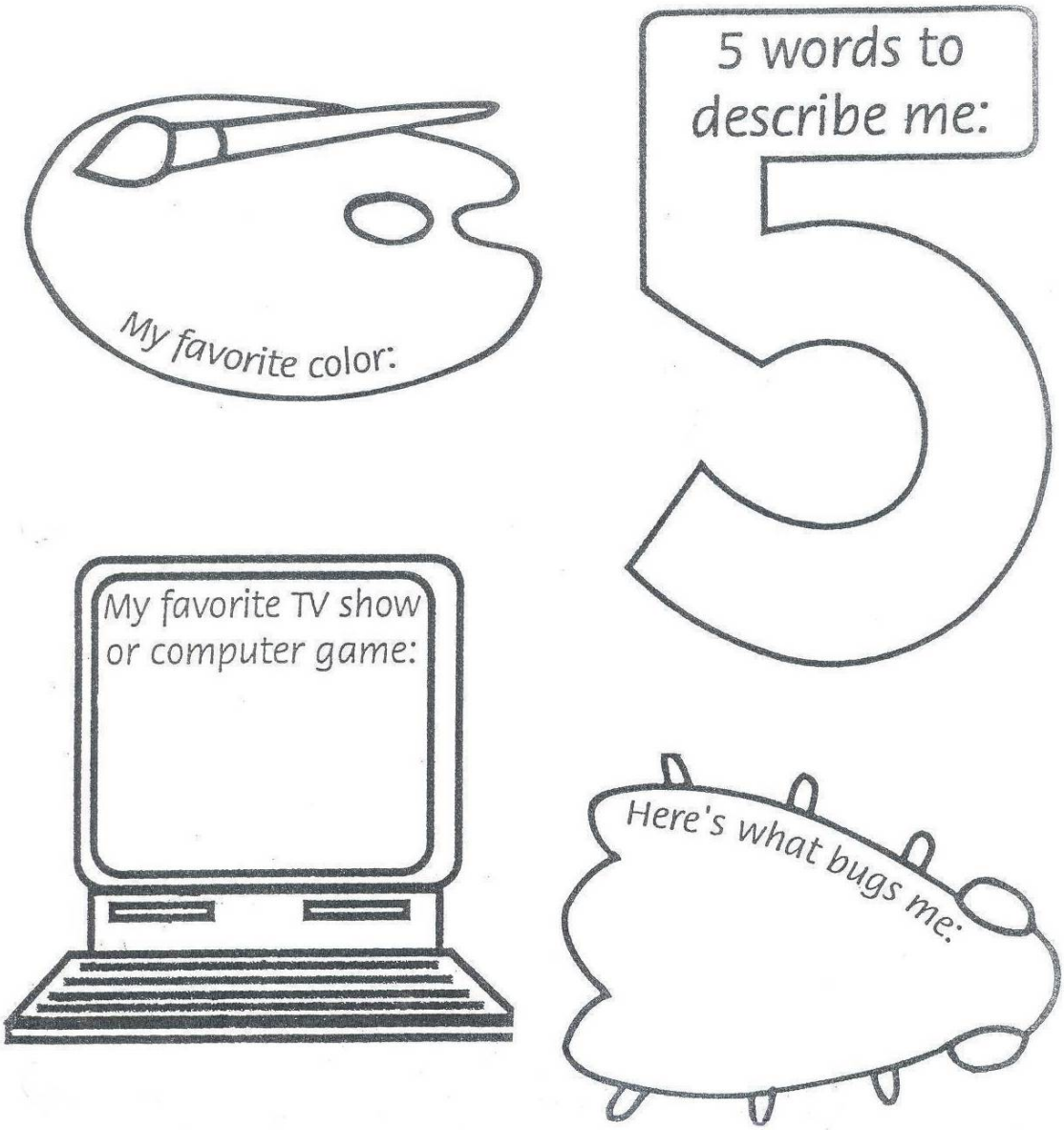
Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Share that the children will be joining their mothers at the end of each session to share what they worked on that day and to initiate play amongst the group. Today, let the children share their collages and then follow the preceding directions for the Name Toss.	Provide positive interaction among children and help them learn each other's names.

Facilitator Tips

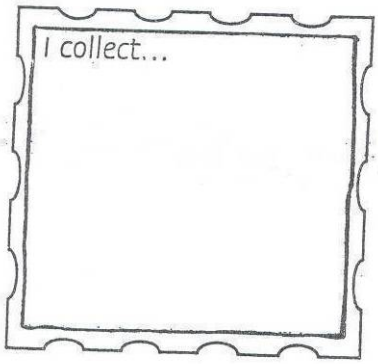
Be aware of children in the group who are currently, or have been, in foster care. If the program is held at a time and place each week where a child visits his or her mother, extra attention and support may be needed. It is very important to communicate clearly how the group will be run (e.g., format, confidentiality, right to "pass" on a question, when they will see their parents, etc.) These children need predictability and safety, and a defined routine each week will help them feel more comfortable. Be prepared for children to ask other members why they don't live with their mothers. Reiterate that the purpose of RTP is to work for change.

Have a behavior management plan or strategies in mind. It is important to be firm and consistent with your boundaries with this population.

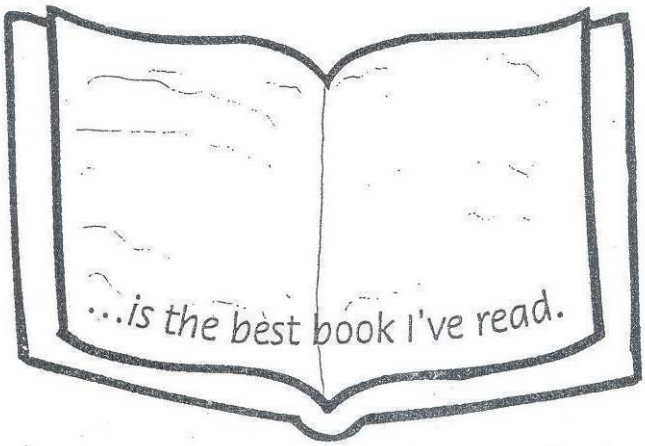
All About Me Collage Pictures

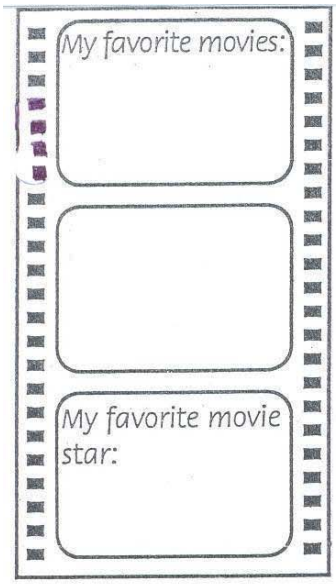


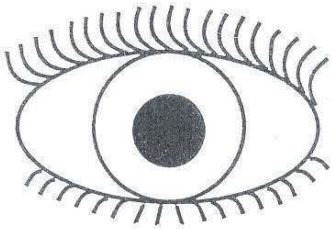
My one wish is...


I collect...

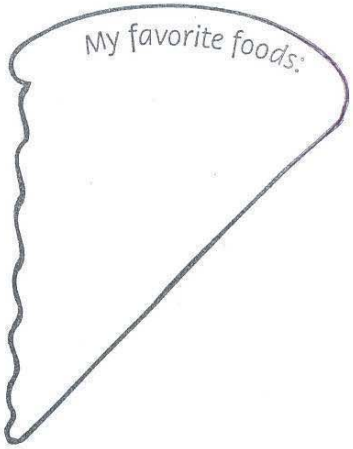
My birthday is:

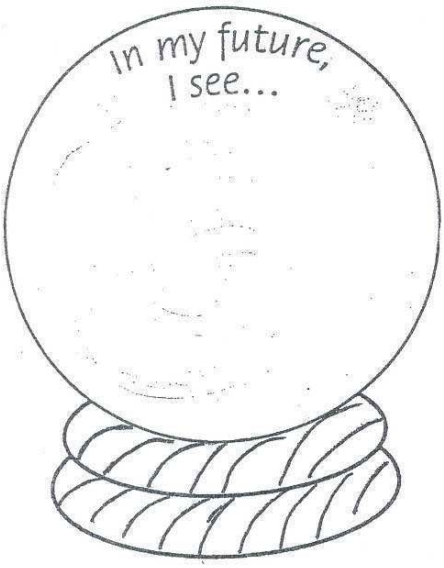

...is the best book I've read.

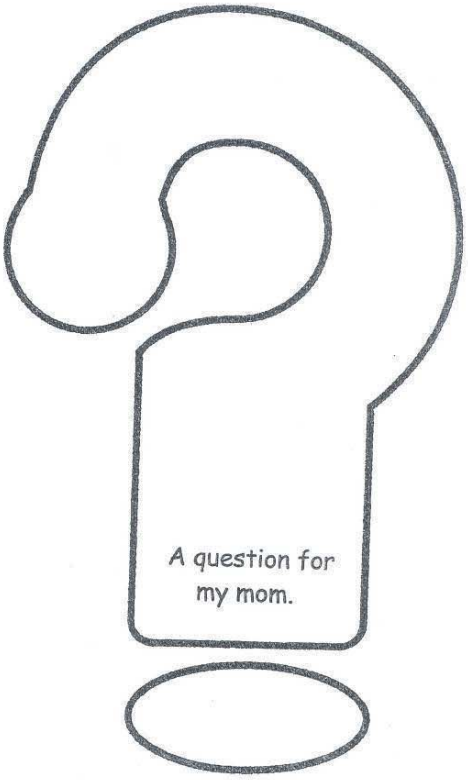

My favorite movies:
My favorite movie star:



My eye color:


My favorite foods:


In my future,
I see...


A question for
my mom.

Week 2 - Team Building

Purpose of Session

Children will participate in team-building activities to increase their comfort level and knowledge of group members.

Materials

- blanket
- scratch paper and pencils
- poster paper and marker
- paper and pen for each person
- clear plastic jar of peanut M&Ms (counted)
- tagboard, cardboard, or foam board
- puzzle pictures
- glue
- poster of group norms
- camera

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Blanket Down photo
- puzzle photos
- Cross Your Arms photos

Optional:

- boxes, ping-pong balls, spoon, etc.

Week 2 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	On a scale of 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five.) Review group norms, names, goals, and the meaning of "Recovering Together."	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Blanket Down

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Have the facilitators stand and hold up two corners of a large blanket. Let one edge touch the ground (see picture). Split the group in two, with each group seated on opposite sides of the blanket. The game is played by sending someone up to the front of each side of the blanket, with everyone else *clearly* behind that person. Make sure the groups can't see (or hear)	Begin with a fun game to revisit names.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	each other around the blanket. On the count of three, drop the blanket. The only two people allowed to speak are the two up front at the blanket. When the blanket drops, the first person to call out the other person's name wins that person on their side. The goal is to get everyone to one side.	

First Activity: Counting M&Ms

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Show children a jar of peanut M&Ms. Ask them to guess the number of M&Ms in the jar and write their guess on a piece of paper. Often they ask what they win if they guess right. Use this question as a learning moment for what they will get from coming to group. Once they have individual numbers, ask them to pair up. The pair *must* agree on one number. It can be a new number, a compromise, or someone's number, but they must agree. Once they have both agreed on a number, ask members to get in groups of three, and try it again, all agreeing on one number. They may add another person to their group, or form a new group completely. Group them in fours and ask them again to find a common number. The goal is interaction and problem solving. Ask each group their final number and write it on the board. Inquire about how they came up with their number. ***For Younger Children: Obstacle Course*** Set up a simple obstacle course in the room. Ideas include going under chairs, going through boxes or tunnels, balancing ping-pong balls in a serving spoon while walking, doing jumping jacks, etc. Let kids go through at their own pace, not as competition. Encourage help among children.	Continue low-risk team-building activities.

Process: Counting M&Ms

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Before you tell them the number of M&Ms, ask if there is anyone who feels so strongly about another number that they would like to deviate from the group and use their own number. Let anyone change who wants to. Use this as an avenue to talk about thinking for oneself and resisting peer pressure. Ask for examples where resisting peer pressure would be wise. Ask about how	Talk about peer pressure and making our own decisions.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	the groups came up with their numbers, and provide time for positive interaction. Reveal the actual number of M&Ms. ***For Younger Children:*** Ask children what kinds of skills they used to go through the obstacle course. Help them generate skills such as coordination, bravery, willingness to try, and trusting. Ask how they could do it again, but as a whole team. Let them try.	

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Break (play cards/board games/catch)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Group Puzzle

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Have the children use one of the pictures at the end of this session description, or choose a different one, paste the picture on a piece of tagboard (or cardboard) and cut the board into puzzle pieces. On the back of each piece, write a different feeling word, such as angry, sad, afraid, stressed, disappointed, guilty, bored, helpless, loved, confused, worried, brave, lonely, joyful, hurt, embarrassed, etc. Ask the group to assemble the puzzle. Option: If the group would like a more difficult challenge, ask them to do a second puzzle without talking.	Continue challenging the group through low-risk activities.

Process: Group Puzzle

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let children share their experience putting the puzzle together. Ask about each of the pictures; what is happening in them, how the person or animals in the picture might feel, and how it feels to look at each picture and imagine yourself being there. One picture is of a rock climber. How is what is happening in this picture a metaphor for our group? The other picture is of two dogs sleeping. Ask each child to choose a puzzle piece and turn it over. Go around the circle and let each participant share the feeling word on the back of his or her piece. Lay all the pieces back down on the floor and ask the children to pick a feeling	Share topics and revisit goals for the group.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	word they felt this week. Let them share.	

Relaxation Exercise: Cross Your Arms

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Sit comfortably on the floor. Put your arms out straight, palms facing each other. Cross the hands at your wrists so they make an X, with your wrists touching. Turn your palms down (facing the ground) and continue to turn your palms in the same direction until they meet. Gently lace your fingers. Bring your clasped hands under and up towards your chest until they lie just below your chin and your elbows lie comfortably against your body. Sit up straight and hold this pose while breathing deeply. Breathe in for three seconds, hold for 3 seconds, and breathe out for 3 seconds. Repeat. Let children drop their arms if they become uncomfortable. (See pictures at the end of this session description.)	Teach children relaxation techniques to calm themselves.

Together with Parents: Family Feeling Pictures

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Break children into their families and share that today's topic has been on feelings. Give each family paper and a pencil and ask them to list 5-10 feelings they often experience in their family. Let them know you will come by to take pictures of the family expressing those feelings and collect their lists. Let them know that next week they will make a Family Feelings Chart using their pictures and feeling words from tonight.	Play and interact within the family.

Facilitator Tips

In Week 2, there may be new children if program enrollment was not closed on the first session. Incorporating new children requires reiterating what was shared last week. As a way to include the current members, let them help you share the information with the new children.

Let the activities this week continue to be lighthearted and non-threatening as children may still be unsure of you, the other members, and the group in general. Encourage children to participate, but do not demand it. If a child does not want to participate, do not let him or her go play. Maintain the choice of participating or quietly watching the group. Hearing what others say is also valuable.

Blanket Down Photo by Karen Finch

Photo by Karen Finch

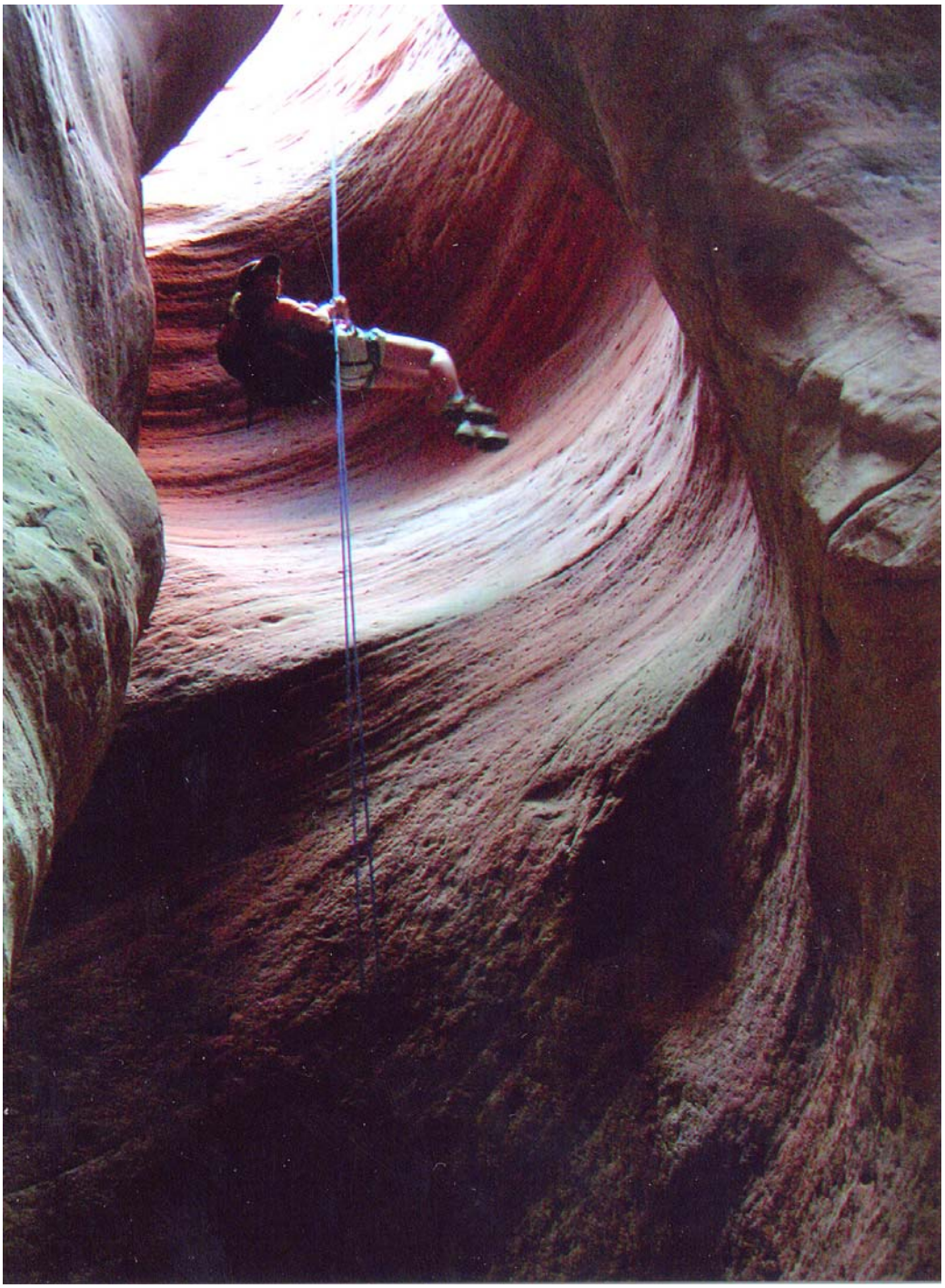


Photo by Shawn Lund Copyright 2005

Relaxation Exercise: Cross Your Arms

Week 3 - Feelings

Purpose of Session

Children will learn to identify emotions and participate in team-building activities. Children will have an opportunity to reflect on the various emotions they feel in their life.

Materials

- poster of group norms
- poster paper
- glue
- markers
- white or colored paper
- small milk cartons wrapped in white paper
- family lists and pictures from last week
- ball of yarn
- scissors

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Web of Names photo

Optional:

- camera
- ball
- magazines
- computer or cartoon faces

Week 3 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale of 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five). Review group norms.	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Web of Names

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the group sit or stand in a circle. Share that they will be making a web together by holding on to a piece of yarn, and then tossing the yarn ball across the circle. When they toss the yarn, ask them to share their name and their favorite thing to do on a free afternoon. Each person should only get the yarn once. Once	Introduce any new children to the group and revisit the purpose of the group.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	everyone is holding a piece of yarn, it should resemble a web (see photo after session description). Share that, like the web, we are connected now. Ask how. Ask a few people to drop their yarn and ask participants what happened to the strong web. Relate their answers to what happens in our families with addiction; things break down. Our goal tonight is to allow the children to talk about what it feels like to live in a home that struggles with addiction. ***For Younger Kids:*** Have the children sit in a circle and roll a ball to each other. When each child gets the ball, ask simple questions such as if they have a dog or family pet, their favorite color, name of sisters or brothers, favorite game, etc.	

First Activity: Making Feeling Cubes

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Help children brainstorm feeling words as you write them on poster paper. Give participants a Feeling Cube. (Feeling Cubes are simply empty small milk cartons wrapped with white printer paper.) The goal of the Feeling Cube is to place six different feelings on the cube, one on each side of the box. A variety of choices can be used, such as drawing pictures, cutting them from magazines, using pictures from the computer, or even taking a child's picture showing different emotions. Ask them to label the emotions. *(This activity was adapted from or used with permission from the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension DARE to be You Program "Unblocked feeling's" Preschool Activity Guide, Session 5, Activity 7-2, pg. 147., (darecort@ext.colostate.edu)*	Identify and explore feeling words.

Process: Making Feeling Cubes

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let the children share their cubes and their emotions. Share that these cubes represent different emotions we feel in our lives; some are happy, some are not. The goal of our group is to find healthy ways to deal with and express all of our feelings.	Share experiences and emotions and identify with others.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Feeling Cube Game

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Going around the circle, ask children to roll their Feeling Cube one at a time and then ask them one of the following questions. Ask a new question with each new round. • Make a face showing that emotion. • Share a time you felt that emotion. • Share a time you felt that emotion in your family. • Share how your family members express that emotion.	Explore emotions specific to their family and coping skills.

Process: Feeling Cube Game

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Opportunities to ask questions linking the emotions with their family experiences may arise during the game. Help them to see that we may not be able to choose how we feel, but we can choose what we do when we have those feelings. Introduce the idea of Magical Thinking -- wishing you didn't feel that way. • Has anyone else ever felt that way? • Have others had a similar experience? • How do others handle their anger, fear, etc.?	Help children see that others have similar feelings and experiences. Provide an opportunity to hear how others handle or cope with feelings.

Relaxation Exercise: Boats in the Wind

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Tell the group: Sit or lie down comfortably. Close your eyes if you would like. Picture the wind on the sea, gently blowing sailboats to and fro. Pretend you are the wind, blowing the boats around. When you breathe in, the boats are pulled in to the shore. When you breathe out, the boats are blown out to sea. Breathe in for 1 second, then breathe out for 1 second. Now breathe in for 2 seconds, and pull the boats to shore.	Teach children relaxation techniques to calm themselves; in this case by breathing deeply.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	Breathe out for 2 seconds, and blow the boats out to sea. Picture the boats way out to sea and breathe in for 3 seconds, pulling them to shore. Now breathe out and push them out to sea.	

Together with Parents: Family Feelings Chart

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Last week, each family wrote down 5-10 feelings they often experience in their family. Facilitators then went to each family and took their picture as they posed in several of these feelings. Tonight, return the feeling list the family wrote down, and the pictures that were taken. Ask them to create a Family Feelings Chart by gluing the different pictures of the family on to a poster and labeling each picture with a different feeling. Ask them to title the poster. (An example might be “The Finch Family Feelings.”) As the facilitators check in with each family, the facilitator may ask the family how they deal with the different feelings in their family, and provide support to the families. Ask them to take the Feelings Chart home and hang it on the refrigerator as a reminder to support each other through feelings.	Raise awareness of feelings in families.

Facilitator Tips

If children struggle with what feeling words to put on their cube, refer them to the feeling words the group brainstormed earlier in the session and help them understand some of the emotions they may have felt. Reiterate group norms and hold the group to them so members feel safe sharing feelings.

When children are new to a group, they often need time to feel secure and comfortable with the other children and facilitators. Once they feel more comfortable, it is common for challenging behaviors to surface. Co-facilitators need to stay firm on their behavior expectations and set up an individual behavior plan with a child if needed.

Web of Names Photo by Cindy Vermeule

Week 4 - Strategies for Anger

Purpose of Session

Children will explore triggers to anger, where they feel it in their body, and how to express their anger non-violently. Members will be given an opportunity to reflect on how anger is expressed around them as well as how they express anger.

Materials

- colored pencils
- container of water and a glass or cup
- balloons

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Anger Thermometer
- How Does Your Family Show Anger?
- Helping Hand

Optional:

- puppets (for younger children)

Week 4 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale of 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five).	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Have You Ever?

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the group sit in a circle of chairs. A facilitator begins by standing in the middle of the circle. There should be no empty seats. The person in the middle calls out, “Have you ever…” owned a dog, been river rafting, eaten sauerkraut, played chess, etc.? This statement must be true of the person stating it. If the statement is also true for anyone sitting, then that person must get up and find another seat before the person in the middle sits in an empty seat. The person left standing calls out the next statement. Remind participants about safety, and to be careful not to bump others out of their seats.	Energize the group.

First Activity: Anger Thermometer

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	To introduce the concept of anger, share that anger is a natural response to a threat and it triggers the "fight or flight" response. These physical reactions are the body's way of preparing to protect us from harm. Because of this, many people instinctively respond to anger aggressively. However, we can't physically lash out at every person or object that irritates us. There are laws and common sense that place limits on how far we can go. Explain the concept of "triggers." Using the *Anger Thermometer* handout at the end of the session, help children color the different temperature ranges of their thermometer. The lines next to their colors are a place to note the things that make them mad, from the small things all the way up to things that make them explode. Ask them to write triggers in the appropriate levels on the thermometer. ***For Younger Kids:*** Use puppets in the coming weeks to help children understand feelings. Perform puppet shows that illustrate situations where a child might get angry, and have the puppet share its feelings and appropriate ways to handle anger.	Help children understand their triggers to anger.

Process: Anger Thermometer

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let children share their thermometers. Point out the different (and similar) things people are triggered by. Ask questions such as: • Why do you think some people become angered by something, but others don't? • Is it truly anger you feel in those situations or is it another feeling, like disappointment or hurt? • What do you do when you become angry? • Do you display your anger differently when you're at home versus when you're at school? If so, why? • What could be helpful about recognizing what triggers your anger and where you feel it in your body?	Learn about our triggers to anger and how we express anger differently.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Releasing Anger

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Prompt the group by saying, “Now that we know what triggers our anger, what can we do about it?” Slowly fill up a cup of water until it overflows. Ask how we stop it from flowing over. Next, slowly blow up a balloon. With each puff of air, ask what makes them that mad. Blow up more. Talk about the two choices we have with the balloon (and what choices people have). Either it blows up or we let it go. (Let the balloon go!) Relate these metaphors to their thermometers and the importance of dealing with anger when it’s small, so it doesn’t get so big that it blows up. Use the handouts How Your Family Shows Anger and Helping Hand. Follow the directions on each handout, which guide children through an understanding of how others express their anger. Help them move to a place of developing strategies for managing anger without hurting themselves or others.	Demonstrate how anger can build up if not expressed.
	For Younger Children: Have the children stand in a circle and show an angry face, angry shoulders, fists, arms, feet, and legs. Let the children share where they feel anger in their body. Lead them through strategies to loosen their tight bodies, such as deep breathing, stretching, and tightening muscles and then releasing to demonstrate how to let anger go.	Help children find healthy ways to express their anger.

Process: Releasing Anger

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let children share their family frames and helping hand strategies. Talk about how they might use these strategies at home and at school with specific examples from their life.	Develop a plan for managing their anger.

Relaxation Exercise: Your Safe Place

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Give the option to sit or lay down, eyes open or closed. Ask the children to think about a place they go to that feels safe and free from fighting or conflict. Share with them that this is a place they can go to when they practice relaxation.	Practice relaxation and create a safe place in their mind.

Together with Parents: Have You Ever?

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the group sit in a circle of chairs. A facilitator begins by standing in the middle of the circle. There should be no empty seats. The person in the middle calls out, "Have you ever …" owned a dog, been river rafting, eaten sauerkraut, played chess, etc.? This statement must be true of the person stating it. If the statement is also true for anyone sitting, then that person must get up and find another seat before the person in the middle sits in an empty seat. The person left standing calls out the next statement. Remind participants about safety, and to be careful not to bump others out of their seats.	Provide family time and model play.

Facilitator Tips

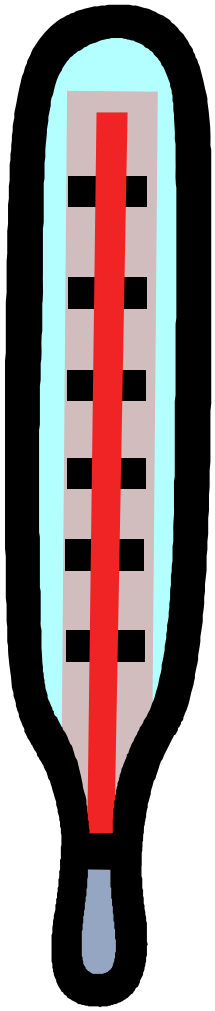
Learning to sense one's feelings, calming oneself, and expressing anger in a healthy way may not be something that has ever been modeled to these children. Be a good role model in group. Be patient working with anger strategies throughout the rest of the 12 weeks and acknowledge their use of skills with every chance. Help them realize they can control their anger, even when people around them don't. If there are members who say they never get angry and struggle with how anger feels, ask them to run in place for up to a minute. When they stop, ask them to notice their body: heart pounding, sweaty palms, hot, etc. This might help the group get in touch with the physical response anger can trigger. The following are some ideas for handling strong emotions.

- Tell yourself, "Uh-oh. I need to stop and think."
- Take a time-out away from the situation. Count if it helps.
- Shake your hands, shrug your shoulders.
- Ask permission to run around the yard, do something physical or play alone for awhile.
- Breathe deeply – close your eyes.
- Slowly repeat a calm word or phase such as "Relax" or "Easy does it."
- Talk to someone.
- Draw or write about your feelings.

Anger Thermometer

What makes you mad?

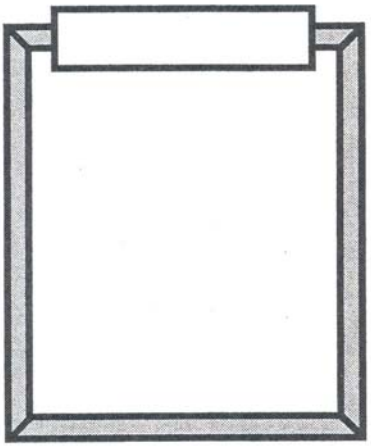
Small things and large things can trigger our anger. It's important to know what your "triggers" are so you can deal with your anger before you really explode. Below, write down things that make you angry, coloring sections of the thermometer for each level of anger.

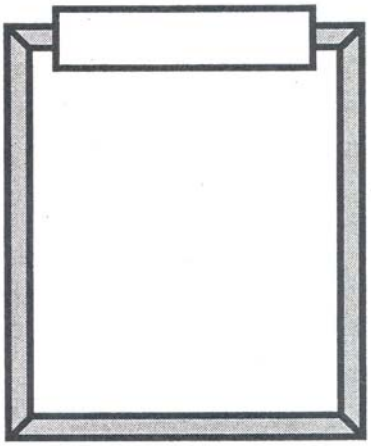


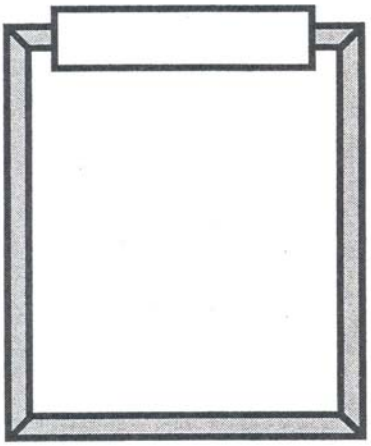
Comment: Need less phallic thermometer here

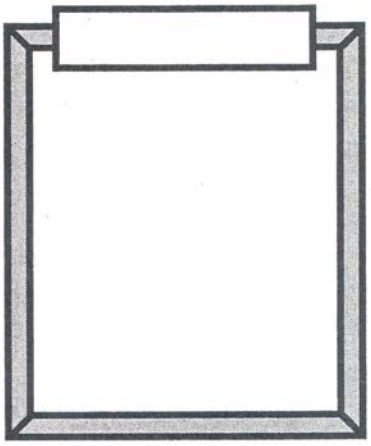
How Does Your Family Show Anger?

When people feel angry, they let it out in different ways. Below, write the names of four people in your family (or in your life) on the top of each picture frame. For each person, draw how he or she expresses anger and write it underneath the frame.









Helping Hand

What are some strategies you can use when you are angry to keep you from exploding?
Write a strategy on each finger.

From www.freeclipart.com

Week 5 - Coping With Stress

Purpose of Session

Children will explore the concept of coping with stress and healthy ways to manage stress. Members will have an opportunity to reflect on the stress in their lives and hear how others cope.

Materials

- power object (ball, rain stick, magician's wand…anything)
- drawing paper
- chalk, markers, or colored pencils
- finger paints (for younger kids)
- clay or play dough

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Boundary Breaker questions
- Magic Messages
- Coping Strategies
- "Let Go" (for teens)

Week 5 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale of 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five). Review what was learned last week.	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Boundary Breakers

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Choose a "power object" such as a koosh ball or stuffed animal, depending on the age group. A magician's wand or a magician puppet is fun to use with the last question. Seat the group in a circle and share the following directions: "I will be asking a series of questions. The only person who can talk is the person with the power object. (It gives them the power to speak.) Everyone will get a chance to answer the same questions as we go around the circle. Listen carefully to each other's answers. I will be asking you what you remember when we are done. Questions can be found on the *Boundary Breaker Questions* page at the end of the session description. *(Rohnke, 1984)*	Learn about each other, practice listening skills, and express wishes for our family.

Process: Boundary Breakers

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Let the group share what they remember about each person's answers. (Note: allow children the right to pass if they do not want others to share what they remembered about their answers.) Ask what it was like to be the center of attention. Some people enjoy it, others find it stressful. Ask what it means to be stressed.	Reflect on each child's responses.

First Activity: Drawing Our Stress

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Give each child a large piece of drawing paper and chalk or markers. Ask them to draw the word "stress" so the word looks stressful! Help them understand the meaning of the word. Ask them to write things all over the paper that cause them stress, such as taking tests, not getting along with other kids, speaking in front of a group, parents fighting, a parent going to jail or using, etc.	Explore the concept of stress.
	For Younger Kids: Sad Paintings Have children finger paint, draw, or color sadness. Help them choose colors and shapes that express sadness, or a picture of a time they were sad.	Express sadness.

Process: Drawing Our Stress

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let each child share his or her drawings. • What does it feel like to you to be stressed? • How is being stressed different from being angry? • What kinds of things did you write down that make you feel stress? • What's the most stressful thing at your house? • What makes the stress go away?	Identify triggers of stress and hear how others experience it.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Clay Animals

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Give each child a piece of play dough or clay and ask them to make an animal of any kind. ***Option for Teens:*** Use the handouts at the back of this session on Coping Strategies, and the poem "Let Go," to talk about how they cope with stress in their lives.	Explore strategies for coping with stress.

Process: Clay Animals

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let them describe their clay animal, and ask them how they think that animal deals with stress. Draw out other healthy ways to cope with stress, such as deep breathing, talking to someone, saying positive things to yourself, and exercising. Each solution involves letting go of the stress and letting it out of your body.	Share ways to cope with stress.

Relaxation Exercise: Magic Messages

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Use the Magic Messages page found at the end of the session description.	Teach children the power of positive self-talk.

Together with Parents: Boundary Breakers

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Share tonight's topic of stress and how we focused on things that help get the energy of stress out of our bodies. Let the children share their stress drawings and clay animals with their mothers. Ask the group to stand in a circle. Introduce the power object and explain how the person with the object has the power to speak. Let them know you will ask a few questions and everyone will answer the same question as the power object goes around the circle. Sample questions: • Favorite food • Favorite sound • One word to describe their family	Provide sharing time among families.

Facilitator Tips

Adolescents, in particular, take interest in what “detachment” would look like in their life. Spend the time necessary to articulate clearly this concept. Many want it to mean they can ignore their parent. Try solution-focused techniques around this issue, for example, “Is there a time your parent’s drinking didn’t bother you? Tell about it.” Help them figure out what they are doing or saying to themselves to detach naturally.

For children who come from homes where there is parental substance abuse or where they are maltreated, it is important to raise the awareness that even though they love their parent, they are not causing the use or maltreatment. Work with them on skills around how to tell someone they are scared, lonely, or being abused.

Boundary Breaker Questions

Directions:
In a circle, start the power object going in one direction. Ask one question and let each child answer that question. Do not allow others to ask questions or comment on another person's answers. This keeps the group focused and hearing what others are saying. Give them the right to pass if they do not want to answer the question. When everyone is finished, ask another question. Ask questions that require a short response. This will keep the game moving quickly. Here are some examples of questions:

Young Children *(Keep asking questions as long as their attention is with you.)*
- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite holiday?
- If you could be an animal, what would it be?
- What is your favorite cartoon character?
- What is something that makes you sad?
- What is something you wish were different in your family?

Elementary Age Children
- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite holiday?
- If you could be an animal, what would it be?
- What is your favorite cartoon character?
- What is your favorite thing about school?
- Describe your feelings about…fast food, ice cream, vegetables, etc.
- What is your favorite sound?
- What is something that makes you sad?
- What is something you wish were different in your family?

Middle/High School Ages
- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite holiday?
- If you could be an animal, what would it be?
- What is your favorite thing about school?
- Describe your feelings about…fast food, ice cream, vegetables, etc.
- What is your favorite sound?
- What subject is the most frequent topic of discussion among your peers?
- If you were tape recording the sound of violence, what would it sound like?
- Choose one word to describe young/old people.
- Other than a relative, name one person who has greatly influenced your life.
- What is something that makes you sad?
- What is something you wish were different in your family?

Magic Messages

Purpose: Feel good about yourself.

Relax in whatever way you are most comfortable.

Close your eyes and let go of your cheeks and jaw.

Let go of your chin and tongue.

Let your eyes roll up toward the top of your head, like marbles.

Listen to your breathing. (long pause)

Repeat these messages quietly to yourself.

My legs are heavy and warm.
My arms are quiet and still.
My heartbeat is steady and even.
My breathing is slow and deep.
My forehead is cool.
My whole body is comfortable.
I am calm and relaxed.
I am peaceful inside.
I feel healthy and strong.
I can remember what I learn.
I can take good care of myself.
I can make friends easily.
I am a very special person in my family.

Think of other messages which are important to you.

Repeat them quietly to yourself.

Know that these messages are true.

Stress Relief for Kids: Taming Your Dragons by Martha Belknap.
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Coping Strategies

To cope means….

- to manage the best you can, even though a situation may be causing you a lot of pain.
- that a situation will not stop you from reaching a goal.
- that a painful situation will not affect how you feel about yourself.
- to find a healthy way to express your anger and hurt.
- to find a way to let the feelings out with someone you trust.

Strategies for coping:

- ***Self-Affirmations***
  A way to receive the approval you need when you don't get it from your parents:
  "Today I feel calm even though some sad things are happening around me."
  "The person that I love and care about said bad things to me, but I know I am valuable and important."
  "I exercise when I get angry and that helps me feel better."

- ***Positive Self-Talk***
  Be careful about saying negative things to yourself. You might start believing them!
  "That was a great game I played."
  "I'm a nice person and a good friend."
  "I'm a good person and I do my best."

- ***Talk to Someone***
  So you don't feel so alone.

- ***Practice Relaxation to Calm Yourself***
  You can be calm in your chaotic world.

- ***Exercise or Play***
  Get the stress out!

- ***Practice Detachment***
  Separate yourself from the adverse effects that another person's addiction can have on your life. "To let go does not mean to stop caring, it means I can't do it for someone else."

Let Go

To let go does not mean to stop caring,
it means I can't do it for someone else.

To let go is not to cut myself off,
it's the realization I can't control another human being.

To let go is not to enable,
but to allow learning from natural consequences.

To let go is to admit powerlessness,
which means the outcome is not in my hands.

To let go is not to try to change or blame another,
it's to make the most of myself.

To let go is not to fix,
but to be supportive.

To let go is not to judge,
but to allow another to be a human being.

To let go is not to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes,
but to allow others to affect their own destinies.

To let go is not to be protective,
it's to permit another to face reality.

To let go is not to criticize or regulate anyone,
but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To let go is to fear less, and to love more.

Author Unknown

Week 6 - Problem Solving

Purpose of Session

Children will learn and practice a variety of ways to solve conflicts non-violently. Children will have the opportunity to reflect on current problems in their home and at school, and apply the skills learned to solve them.

Materials

- markers
- poster paper or butcher paper for group crossword puzzle
- paper for family crossword puzzle
- Wheel of Choice (see handouts) glued on to large paper
- pencil or bottle for spinner
- colored pencils
- bookmarks (see handouts) glued to colored cardstock

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Wheel of Choice photo
- directions to make Wheel of Choice
- photos of children
- Three Solutions
- Wheel of Choice questions
- Wheel of Choice bookmarks
- Rainbow Clouds

Optional:

- puppets (for younger children)

Week 6 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale of 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five).	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Crossword Names

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Using a large piece of butcher paper, start the crossword by writing, “Recovering Together.” Next, ask for a volunteer to write his or her first name using a letter in those words. Let all the children, one at a time, add their names using a letter from one	Energize the group.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	other person's name. Depending on the number and interest in the group, add last names, nicknames, adjectives, character words, etc. Preface the topic of the day reflecting on the problem solving they did to find a letter that would work for their name. ***For Younger Children: Group Picture*** Have the children lie down on a large piece of butcher paper. Trace around their upper body with their hands connecting with the next person. Let them decorate their body outlines.	

First Activity: Three Solutions

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Display the Wheel of Choice and talk about each technique. Show the children one of the pictures of children found at the back of this session. Ask what they think is happening in the picture and how the people in it might feel. If there is a conflict, ask what choices there are to solving it. Repeat this process with the group with several other pictures, and end by giving each person a worksheet to explore solutions to a problem at home (see worksheet Three Solutions at the end of session description). ***For Younger Children:*** Use puppets to act out solutions to problems. Give the children a problem and ask the puppets to work it out without using violence. You can also read some of the scenarios at the end of this session and ask what they could do to solve each problem.	Explore options for solving problems.

Process: Three Solutions

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let those who want to share their family problem share it. Draw solutions and common experiences from the group.	Personalize the learning.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: The Wheel of Choice

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Have the group sit in a circle with the enlarged wheel in the middle. Talk about the choices on the wheel and what they mean, and give examples. Ask if there are other solutions they would like to add to the wheel. Using a pencil or bottle as the spinner, let members take turns spinning. For each spin, ask a corresponding question (see questions at the end of session description). Let the person spinning offer how that solution might solve that problem. Add questions you feel would be relevant to your group.	Continue practicing ways to solve problems.

Process: The Wheel of Choice

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Processing will take place during the activity as children read, think, and explain what each item means. Provide each child with a Wheel of Choice bookmark (see bookmark page at end of session description). Talk about ways they could solve problems in their home while they color and decorate their bookmarks. ***Option for Teens:*** Have them make their own creative bookmarks to help remind them of the skills.	Check for understanding.

Relaxation Exercise: Rainbow Clouds

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Details of this breathing exercise can be found on the Rainbow Clouds page at the end of the session description.	Teach children relaxation techniques to calm themselves.

Together with Parents: Family Crossword

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Ask families to sit together. Share the topic for today: problem solving and strategies. Let the kids share their bookmarks with parents to explain the choices. Give each family a paper with “Recovering Together” written on it. Let them work together as a family to write the names of each family member, including pets, as they create a crossword puzzle.	Provide family time to interact and play.

Facilitator Tips

When children write out a problem in the home, help them identify what they have control over in that situation. If they write about how hard it is to hear their parents argue, help them identify where they can go so they can't hear the arguing, what they can do, such as trying to focus on music or other things, what they can say to themselves to not blame themselves for the situation, and who they can call if they feel unsafe.

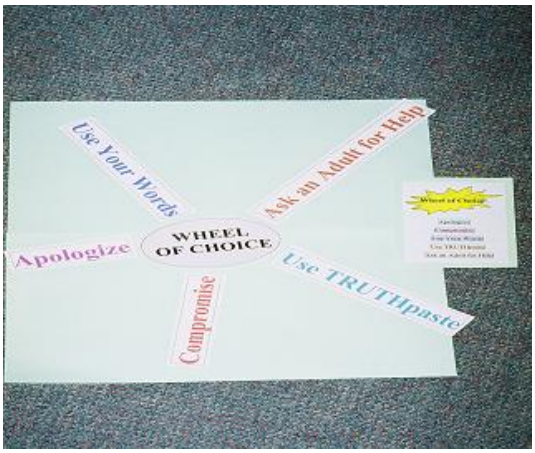


Photo by Karen Finch

Directions to Make the Wheel of Choice

1) Copy or cut out the Wheel of Choice label and the skills labels.
2) Glue all parts to a large piece of paper or tagboard for easy spinning.
3) Add any other skills you deem appropriate.

WHEEL OF CHOICE

Use Your Words

Ask an Adult for Help

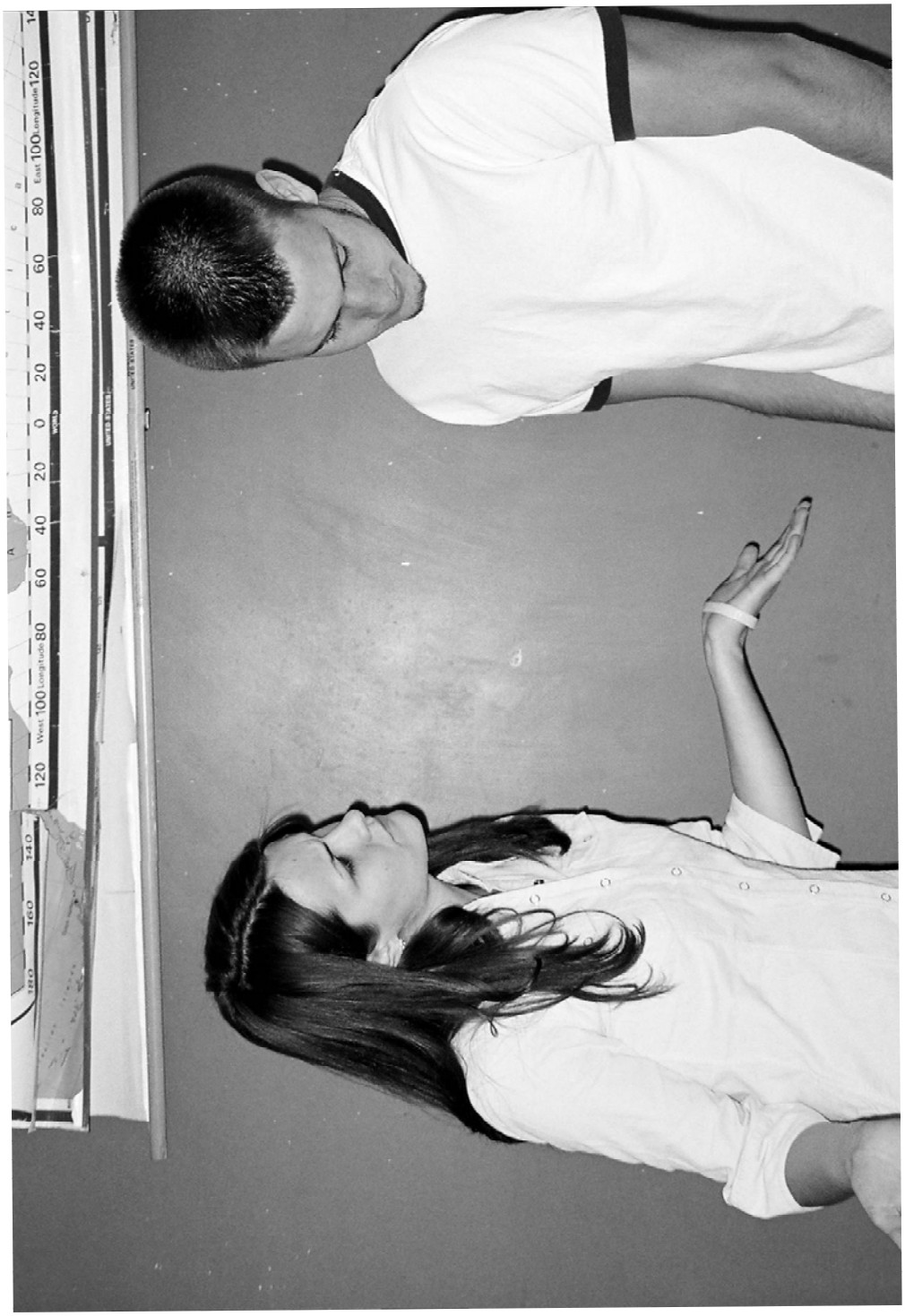
Use TRUTHpaste

Apologize

Compromise

Spin Again!

KAILEY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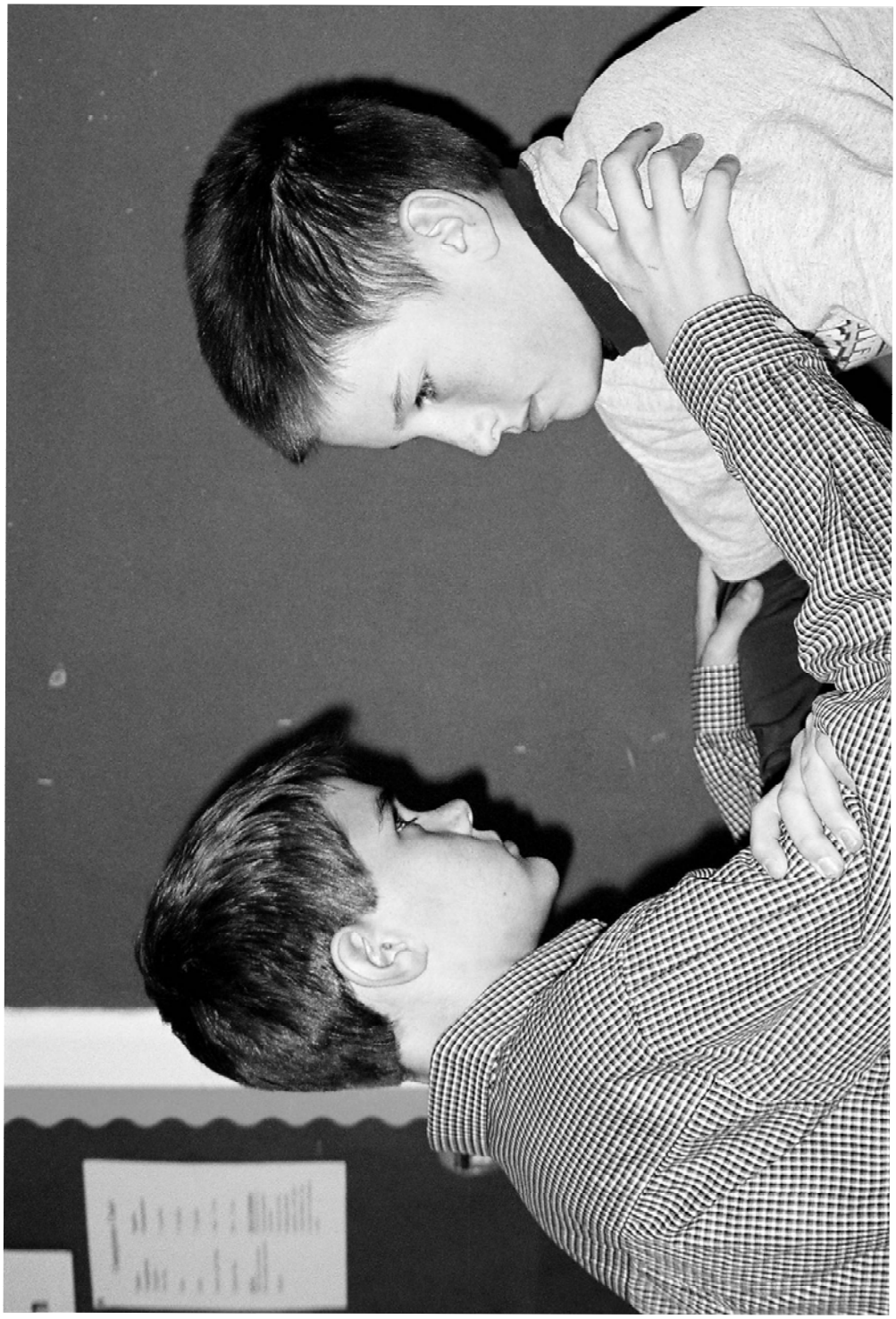
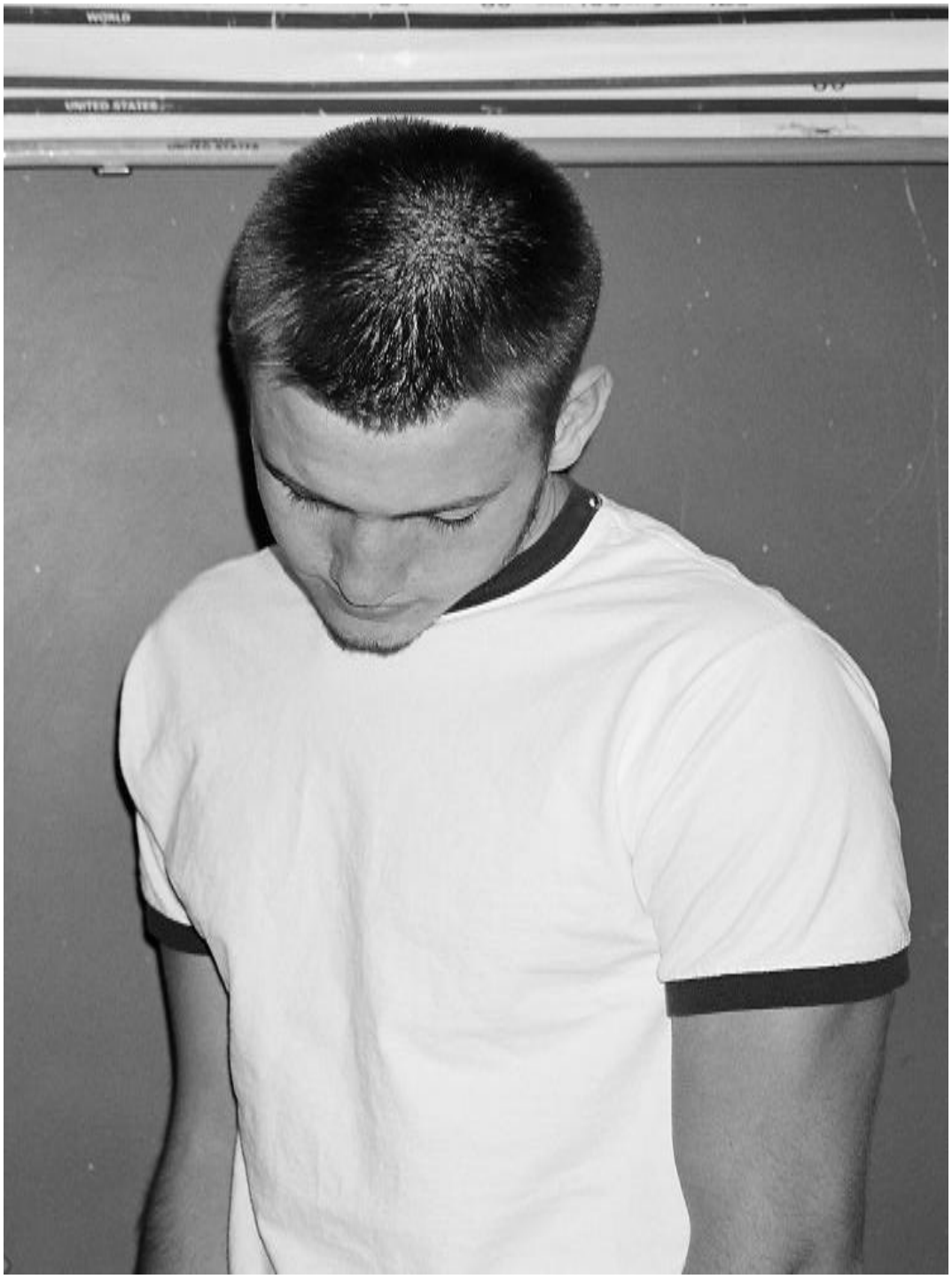
New Teasers




WORLD
UNITED STATES

Three Solutions

What's a problem you have at home for which you would like some options for solving?

_____

_____

What do you think are 3 possible ways to solve this problem?

1) Solution:_____

_____

Is there a consequence? If so, what?_____

2) Solution:_____

_____

Is there a consequence? If so, what?_____

3) Solution:_____

Is there a consequence? If so, what?_____

Circle the solution you would choose.

Wheel of Choice Questions

Ask an Adult for Help

- Your mom is passed out on the floor and you have to go to school.
- Your parents get in a really angry fight and start hitting each other and throwing things.
- Your brother is being mean, messing up your card game of solitaire. You've asked him to stop and now you just want to hit him.
- Someone close to you touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Your brother is really angry and you see him hitting the dog.

Use Your Words

- You want your mom to know you are scared when she leaves you alone at night.
- You're trying to be alone in your room because you are sad about something that happened with your mom. Your little brother keeps coming in wanting to play with you.
- You are mad at your mom for not picking you up from school on time. You had to sit out in the dark alone for 20 minutes. She asks you what's wrong and you say, "Nothing."
- You don't want to go to school but won't tell your mom why. She gets mad and grounds you.
- Your teacher is frustrated with you because you haven't been turning in your work and your grades are going down. The teacher says she wants to understand and asks how she can help.

Compromise

- Your mom asked you to wash the dishes and your brother has to take out the trash. You feel it's unfair because you always have to do the dishes.
- You and your sister both want to watch TV, but not the same TV show. How do you solve this problem?
- You want to spend time with your mom and show her things from school, but she says she is too tired.
- You're trying to be alone in your room because you are sad about something that happened with your mom. Your little brother keeps coming in wanting to play with you.
- Your mom wants you to watch your little brother Friday night, but your friend invited you to his birthday party.

Use TRUTHpaste (Be Honest)

- You lied to your mom about where you went after school, and she found out.
- Your mom asks how you felt when your friend came over to visit yesterday when dad was angry and yelling at mom.
- Tired of your parents' drinking, you dump a six pack of their beer down the drain.
- Your friend has been noticing you exaggerate your stories to the point where she thinks you are just telling lies. She confronts you about it.
- Your mom asks you to walk to the store and get a jug of milk. The cashier gives you too much change back.

Apologize

- You are having a bad day because some people at school are picking on you. When you get home, your brother asks if you want to play and you yell at him. He goes and plays outside.
- Your parents got in a yelling match one night and you were tired of hearing it. When your sister came in to be with you because she was scared, you told her to go away.
- You and your friend were going to the movies, so your mom said you could get $5 out of her wallet. Your friend convinced you to grab $10. Your mom is angry when you get home.
- You call your mom a bad name out of anger one night when she is drinking. When is the best time to apologize?
- Tired of your parents' drinking, you dump a six pack of beer down the drain and throw away a pack of cigarettes. Dad is asking what happened to his stuff.

Wheel of Choice Bookmarks

Wheel of Choice

Apologize

Compromise

Use Your Words

Use TRUTHpaste

Ask an Adult for Help

Wheel of Choice

Apologize

Compromise

Use Your Words

Use TRUTHpaste

Ask an Adult for Help

Wheel of Choice

Apologize

Compromise

Use Your Words

Use TRUTHpaste

Ask an Adult for Help

Wheel of Choice

Apologize

Compromise

Use Your Words

Use TRUTHpaste

Ask an Adult for Help

Rainbow Clouds

Purpose: quiet your breathing

Lie or sit down and close your eyes (optional).

Imagine a clear blue summer sky overhead.
Notice some soft white fluffy clouds drifting by.
Invite one of those clouds to come visit you.

Watch it float down close to the ground.
Hide yourself inside of it.
Feel the cloud wrapped all around you.

Breathe in the softness of the cloud.
Watch the cloud become pink.
Breathe pink all around inside of you.

Notice how you are feeling.

Change the cloud to another color you like very much.
Breathe in your new color.

Notice how you are feeling now.

Change the color again…and again.
Breathe in all the colors you like the best. (long pause)

Enjoy being wrapped in your rainbow.
Enjoy hiding inside your rainbow cloud.

Stress Relief for Kids: Taming Your Dragons by Martha Belknap.
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Week 7 - Exploring My Family

Purpose of Session

Children will have an opportunity to reflect on the many facets of their family and hear how other people interact in their families.

Materials

- beach ball
- drawing paper
- colored pencils
- round ball with the numbers 1 through 11 randomly marked on it

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Question Ball questions
- You Are the Ocean

Week 7 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale of 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five). Review what was learned last week.	Allow participants to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Name 5

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Holding a beach ball, one person stands in the middle of the circle. The person in the middle goes to another child and says, "Name 5 _____." It can be anything: Name 5 candy bars, 5 states, 5 kinds of cars, 5 colors, 5 names of people in the group, etc. Once the person in the middle says, "Name 5 ____," he or she hands the ball to the other child, who then starts passing the beach ball all the way around the circle until it comes back to him or her. If it gets back to that child before "naming 5," that child goes into the middle. If the child can name 5 before the ball comes back around to him or her, the person in the middle stays there and tries again. *(Source unknown)* ***For Younger Children:*** Adapt this activity by asking the little kids to pass the beach ball around the circle without using any hands! Pass with feet or arms! Next, have them practice keeping the ball overhead and	Energize the group.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	passing it, and then pass it under their legs.	

First Activity: Draw Your Family

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Ask each child to draw a picture of his or her family on a typical night. Ask them to color their pictures.	Allow children to express family dynamics through art.

Process: Draw Your Family

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	As each child shares his or her drawing ask, "What is something you would like to know about your family?" After all have shared, ask a series of questions about their families. Ask the group to point to the family member in the drawing who: • Cooks for them the most • Reads to them the most • They get in trouble from the most • They play with the most • Gets the angriest at home • They talk to about difficult things • They hug the most • They would like to spend more time with • Any other questions you would like to ask	Share family strengths and dynamics.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Question Ball

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Create a question ball by taking a big round ball and marking the numbers 1-11 randomly, in large print around the ball. The numbers correspond with the questions listed in the handout Question Ball Questions at the end of this session description. Sit or stand in a circle. When the ball is rolled (or tossed) to a child, and the child stops or catches it, the number on the ball closest to his right thumb is the number of the question he is to answer. The child then rolls (or tosses) the ball to someone else across the circle.	Provide a fun way for kids to explore the dynamics in their family. Provide an opportunity to hear similarities in how people feel and what they have experienced.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	Children are free to pass on any question they don't want to answer. Facilitators may choose to let the children pick their own question, or to simply continue throwing the ball.	

Process: Question Ball

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	• What is an answer that stood out to you? • What was a common answer we heard? • What was the hardest question for you? • What is it like to share about your family?	Allow participants an opportunity to share how the activity impacted them.

Relaxation Exercise: You Are the Ocean

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	See the You Are the Ocean handout at the end of the session description.	Teach children to calm themselves.

Together with Parents: Name 5

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	First, allow children to share their drawings with their families and talk about the night's topic. Holding a beach ball, one person stands in the middle of the circle. That person goes to another participant and says, "Name 5 _____." It can be anything; Name 5 candy bars, 5 states, 5 kinds of cars, 5 colors, 5 names of people in the group, etc. Once the person in the middle says, "Name 5 ____," he or she hands the ball to the other person, who starts passing the ball all the way around the circle until it comes back to him or her. If it reaches that person before they can "Name 5," that person goes into the middle. But if that person can name 5 before the ball comes back around, the person in the middle stays there and tries again.	Provide time to interact and play together.

Facilitator Tips

Be sensitive to youth in foster care and realize these activities may bring up strong feelings about their family being separated. Provide one-on-one time if needed. Allow them the choice to draw their family picture representing their family before they were moved to another home, or the home they are currently in.

Question Ball Questions

NOTE: Choose the questions below or make up your own questions to best fit the group you are working with.

1. What is your favorite thing to play with?
2. What do you like most about your mom?
3. What do you like most about your dad?
4. What do you like about having brothers or sisters?
5. What is something that scares you at home?
6. What is something that makes you sad at home?
7. Who is someone you feel comfortable talking to?
8. What do you do at home when people are mad?
9. What happens to you when you get in trouble at home?
10. What is your favorite thing to do after school?
11. What is your favorite thing to do with your family?

You Are the Ocean

Purpose: Listen to your breathing

Sit comfortably and close your eyes (optional).
Let go of your cheeks and jaw.
Let go of your shoulders and elbows.
Imagine that you are at the beach in the summertime.

(Long pause)

Feel the warm sunshine on your face.
Smell the salt air.
Taste the salt on your lips.
Feel the cool ocean breeze on your skin.
Listen to the sound of your breathing.

(Long pause)

As you breathe in, see the waves roll in.
As you breathe out, hear the waves roll out.
Feel your breath flowing with the ocean.
Feel the rhythm of the waves.
Let the sunshine soak into your body.
Be at peace with the waves.
Be at peace with your breathing.
Become one with the ocean.

Stress Relief for Kids: Taming Your Dragons by Martha Belknap.
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Week 8 - Family Strengths

Purpose of Session

Children will be given the opportunity to reflect on the strengths and resources in their family.

Materials

- straws
- fresh eggs
- newspaper
- markers
- masking tape
- large trash sacks
- poster paper

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- The Great Egg Drop – Family Strength and Resources

Week 8 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or five).	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Fruit Game

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the group stand in a circle. The facilitator stands in the middle of the circle and asks each child to choose the name of a fruit. Everyone should choose a different fruit (the person in the middle does not have one.) Once the fruits are established, the person in the middle tries to get out of the middle by saying someone's fruit three times before *that* person can say it once. If the person in the middle says it three times before the other person says it once, the two switch places and the person who was in the middle takes the other person's fruit name. If not, he/she remains in the middle, and tries again. Strategies exist, such as not looking at the person whose fruit you will call. Keep it moving fast. *(Source unknown)* ***Option:*** A harder alternative is to use the children's names instead of a fruit. When the children begin	Energize the group.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	changing places and taking other people's names, it gets confusing!	

First Activity: The Great Egg Drop -- Family Strengths and Resources

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
35 minutes	(See directions on the handout The Great Egg Drop -- Family Strengths and Resources)	Learn about and share positive qualities about families.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor) Gather and keep the eggs during break to prevent breakage!	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: The Great Egg Drop -- Family Strengths and Resources

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Continue with the Egg Drop Activity. Care for the eggs when finished until the family activity to prevent breakage.	Continue focusing on family strengths.

Process: The Great Egg Drop -- Family Strengths and Resources

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Let each child share his or her egg protector design. Re-introduce the concept of stress and talk about asking for help from their resources when needed. Reassure children who are worried their eggs will break and let them know stress has been a factor in everyone's family who is here tonight. That is why we are here, to learn more skills and get more resources so our families won't "break" under stress. Our eggs might break and that's okay. The activity is more about understanding what stress can do and using the skills we are learning to handle stress (and about having fun!) What strategies have we learned to deal with stress? Identify some before dropping the eggs with parents.	Share and reintroduce strategies for dealing with stress.

Relaxation Exercise: Stretching

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Lead children in various stretches and positive thoughts as a way to relax.	Teach children relaxation techniques to calm themselves.

Together with Parents: The Great Egg Drop -- Family Strengths and Resources

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Bring the group together and share what the participants have built and why. Give members time to share the strengths and resources they identified with their family. Bring the group back together and ask the kids to line up so everyone can see their designs. Ask them to drop their eggs on the count of 3 at arm's length. Be sure to put plastic trash bags under each person's egg! Ask those whose eggs did not break to stand on a chair (use spotters) and drop the egg again on the count of 3. Talk about continuing to focus on building the strengths and resources of the family and readdress that having your egg break is okay. We are just having fun while learning the concept and strategies for dealing with stress. Talk about as we learn new skills and "Recover Together," we have a stronger system in place to protect our family when stressful things happen.	Provide family time to talk about the strengths and resources in the family.

Facilitator Tips

Consider a token gift to give each family after the children have dropped their eggs. An inexpensive or handmade gift reflecting a strength in their family will serve as a concrete reminder to hold together with strength and make the final memory of the night a gift rather than a broken egg.

The Great Egg Drop -- Family Strengths and Resources

1. Using poster paper, brainstorm with participants strengths in their families. Help them realize things they might not have thought of as strengths.

2. Present to the group a carton of raw eggs (one egg for each participant). Talk about how the egg is like our family; right now it is fragile. Ask how knowing what our strengths are can help the family. (Wait to give eggs out until they are ready to build!)

3. Brainstorm resources -- people who have helped or could help them when they are down. Give each participant 25 straws to represent their resources (e.g., grandparents, siblings, teachers, etc.)

4. Give each person about 30 inches of masking tape. The tape represents the family sticking together!

5. Instruct them to build something with the straws and tape (strengths and resources) to protect the egg. They may not use any other objects in their design. Their design will be put to the test when they join back up with their parents at the end of the session today. They will be dropping the eggs!

(Gerstein, 1994)

Week 9 - My Strengths

Purpose of Session

Children will be given the opportunity to explore and celebrate their strengths.

Materials

- colored pencils/markers
- glue and scissors

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Coat of Arms
- Family Coat of Arms

Optional:

- deck of cards, picture cards or color cards

Week 9 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five).	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Everybody Up

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Break everyone into pairs and have each pair sit facing one another holding hands and with feet touching. Partners try to stand at the same time. Once successful, try groups of 3 and then 4 and eventually the whole group! *(Rhonke,1984)* ***Option: Concentration*** Using a deck of cards, turn them all over on the floor. Have the group circle around them. Children can turn two cards over, trying to make a match. If they make a match they receive another turn. The goal is to remember where the match was! ***For Younger Children:*** Try this memory game with simple picture cards or color cards.	Help children relax and become focused on the group.

First Activity: Coat of Arms

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Give each child a Coat of Arms (see page at end of session description) and colored pencils. The paper is divided into four parts and labeled 1-4. As you read the question for each part, ask them to draw and write in their answer. ***For Younger Children:*** Cut out each segment of the Coat of Arms and let them decorate and glue them to a shield with a handle. The segments represent: 1) My friend 2) My favorite color 3) Someone I can talk to when I'm sad 4) Something I can do when I'm mad	Identify personal strengths and values.

Process: Coat of Arms

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Let children share their Coats of Arms. Celebrate their unique answers and help them see that it is because we are different that each of us is special.	Share strengths.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor***)***	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Stand and Deliver

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	First talk about values, beliefs and strengths, and where and who they often come from. As you read the statements below, point to one side of the room for half of the statement, and the other side of the room for the corresponding half. Ask members to think about which one is truer for them and ask them to move to the side of the room that corresponds with their belief or attitude. If they feel they are in the middle, they may stand in the middle of the room. After each question, briefly ask each side about their opinion. Help participants see that we can disagree with others, but still be respectful. Repeat the process. Keep this game moving fast to hold their attention and to get through more statements. Add any other statements you would like. Possible Statements:	Identify personal strengths and values. Practice sharing opinions without judging each other.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	• Prefer hot weather/cold weather • Rather be indoors/outdoors • Love to talk/would rather listen • Don't like to lose/not competitive • More important to like your job/more important job pays well • Motorcyclists should wear helmets/should be their choice • Prefer TV or video games/prefer games not involving the TV	

Process: Stand and Deliver

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Processing will also take place during the activity when they are given a chance to share. • What is risky about sharing your opinions? • Are there people you feel safer sharing your opinions with? What do they do that makes you feel safe? • Are your opinions heard at home? • What is your style for disagreeing with someone's opinion? Is it different at home versus at school? • Have you been encouraged to share your opinions at home? • What keeps you from sharing them?	Talk about the children's ability to share opinions at home.

Relaxation Exercise: Review and Pick

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Review the relaxation activities completed up to this point and let the group choose one they would like to do. Participants can also choose to make up their own.	Practice skills for relaxation.

Together with Parents: Family Coat of Arms

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Divide into families and provide each family with colored pencils/markers and a Family Coat of Arms. Together, let them create their Coat and answer the questions. Share answers. As we come closer to closure of this group, the Coat of Arms is a chance to review strategies and strengths for the family. When time is up, let them take it home to complete.	Provide family interaction time.

Facilitator Tips

Spend some quality time on processing the *Coat of Arms*, particularly around how members feel about sharing opinions, thoughts, and feelings at home. Reflecting on the communication in the home and what they have control over brings all the skills and topics addressed back to light.

Coat of Arms

Coat of Arms

_____

Name

1. Something I'm good at:

2. People I can talk to:

3. If I could be an animal, I'd be a:

Why?

4. Ways I show my family I love them:

Family Coat of Arms

Family Coat of Arms

1. What does your family do together for fun?

2. Something you contribute to your family.

3. What's a tradition in your family?

4. A wish your family has.

Week 10 - Communication Skills

Purpose of Session

Children will have an opportunity to reflect on communication styles and learn how to communicate with "I"-statements.

Materials

- pictures of children in conflict (from session 6)
- paper strips taped as headbands
- markers
- ball of yarn

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- photo of I-Message activity for adolescents
- What's an I-Message?

Week 10 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five).	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Count to 10

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the group sit in a circle. The group goal is to count from 1 to the number of group members present, with each person only saying a number once. The order the participants speak in must remain random. It will not necessarily follow around the circle from person to person. Have members try different strategies like closing their eyes or sitting with their backs to each other. Talk about this game, how they communicated, and their frustration level as a preface to today's topic on communication. *(Rhonke,1984)*	Energize the group.

Activity: Telephone

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the group sit in a circle. Lead several rounds of *"Telephone"* to set the tone for talking about how our real message can get lost along the way.	Explore how people miscommunicate.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	Each person whispers the message, in turn, to the next person, until it goes all the way around the circle. Let the group create the messages or use the following examples: 1) Just be patient, Jasper Jack, you shall have your jam jar back. 2) Polly's pink pony is pulling Paul and Peter to the grocery store. 3) Cats and Cadillacs keep Carl and Carol crazy. ***For Younger Children: Practice listening skills*** By following simple directions, four- to six-year-olds can work in pairs and take turns pretending they are a "talking toy." One child pushes the "record" button on the other child who is "the toy" and says a few things. The "toy" child tries to repeat it back. Have partners switch roles. Talk about basic listening skills such as being quiet, watching the speaker, and not interrupting. How does it feel to be listened to?	

First Activity: Nonverbal Messages

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Make groups of two. Discuss nonverbal communication and body language, and how we sense when someone's words and body language don't match. Spread the pairs around the room and read each direction aloud to the group. Have them follow the directions for 30 seconds (say switch after 15 seconds so each person gets a chance to talk.) At the end of 30 seconds, give them a new topic. **1) Sit back to back and talk to each other.** *Topic: If you could have any animal, what kind would you want?* **2) Turn and look at each other but do not look your partner in the eye, focus on another part of the head while you talk.** *Topic: Favorite restaurant to eat at and why.* **3) Look anywhere in the room, except at your partner.** *Topic: What you want to be when you grow up.*	Experience ways of communication.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	4) Look at each other and communicate without sound. *Topic: Describe a scar and how you got it.* **5) Talk naturally with no specific directions.** *Topic: Your experience with snowboarding or skateboarding.*	

Process: Nonverbal Messages

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Which one was most uncomfortable? Why? What are some nonverbal messages you experience in your family? How do they make you feel? What do you do when you are given those messages?	Share feelings and messages they are given at home.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/ read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: I-Messages

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Teach how and why I-Messages work. A "You" statement is one where we talk about the other person: "You're so mean," "You got us in trouble for talking." I-Messages talk about ourselves and can help keep the other person from feeling and acting defensive. Teach the parts of an I-Message and how asking for what we need helps us take responsibility for what we feel. (See handout at end of session.) Using the black-and-white pictures of children from the Week 6 session, help children practice appropriate I-messages.	Learn how to communicate and respond to body language.
	Option for Children: Simon Says Pick a child to be "it." That child will give simple instructions to the group by saying, "Simon says touch your nose," or "Jump on one leg." Give each child a turn. The other children follow the command, but only if "Simon says." If they do not hear the child begin their directions with, "Simon	Practice listening and following directions.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	says," then they continue doing what they are doing until another direction is given that starts with, "Simon Says." ***Option for Adolescents:*** Give each participant a paper headband with a different behavior on it from the following list: • Ignore me • Interrupt me with your story • Don't look at me • Finish all my sentences • Rush me, you're in a hurry • Don't say a word, but listen • Interrupt me with a joke • Comment on my clothes Do not let the person read their own headband. Give the group a topic to talk to each other about and let them mingle for several minutes, treating each other as their headband states. Ask the group to sit down but leave their headbands on. Ask what they think their headband says. Reveal them and talk about how these behaviors also impact hearing what someone has to say.	

Process: I-Messages

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Talk about how an I-Message can be helpful at home and school. Go around to each person and give a statement. Let them decide if it is a "You" message or an I-message. • I feel ignored when no one asks about me. • You care more about Jonny than you do about me. • I feel sad when no one tells me how good my report card is. • I get confused when my curfew changes each week. • When I am forbidden to see my friends, I get angry and feel misunderstood. • You never spend time with me. • When we don't spend time together each night, I miss you.	Understand how an I-Message may impact another's response.

Relaxation Exercise: Mindfulness

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Get comfortable and close your eyes or gaze down lightly at the floor. Begin to notice your breath. Breathe in deeply, then exhale. Notice how you can feel your breath brush your upper lip as you exhale. Start to notice any sensations in your feet. Maybe they are heavy, hot, tingling, numb, or cold. Notice sensations in your stomach. Maybe it is tight, full of butterflies, hot, or cold. Notice any sensations in your hands: tingling, pulsing, jittery, hot, or cold. Bring your attention again to your breath. Breathe in slowly for three seconds, then out for three seconds. Repeat. Slowly open your eyes.	Teach children relaxation techniques to calm themselves.

Together with Parents: Web of Names

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	With participants standing or sitting in a circle, share that they will be making a web together by holding on to a piece of yarn and throwing the yarn ball across the circle. (This was done in Session 3). Ask participants when they catch the yarn to share how they are feeling about the group. Then ask them to hold a piece of the yarn before they toss it to someone across the circle. Once everyone has had a turn and is holding a piece of the yarn, it should resemble a web. Point out that we are all connected by this group and its purpose, "Recovering Together." Ask a few people to drop their yarn. Ask what happened to the strong web. Relate their answers to what happens in families; things can break down. Our purpose in the group is to learn ways to prevent a breakdown, and become stronger as a family.	Share each person's feelings about being in the group and show how these feelings connect the group.

Facilitator Tips

The more examples members hear of I-Messages, the more ingrained it will become. In all future sessions, listen for these messages and help participants become aware of how others respond to "you" messages. Help them to change their language. It is important to reiterate that even though

others may not use I-Messages, this is one more thing we have control over that can change a situation.

Communication Activity with *Headbands* Photo by Karen Finch

What is an I-Message?

When we send “You” messages to people -- “You make me angry,” “You don’t listen to me” -- they may feel embarrassed, angry, hurt, or insulted. “You” messages shift the focus of the feelings to the other person, and result in blaming, accusing, or labeling other people. “You” messages often don’t work because when we blame others for our feelings, we risk them not accepting the blame.

When we express our feelings and concerns in “I” messages, we take responsibility for ourselves and communicate openly and directly. We say, “I’m worried,” “I’m angry,” “I’m scared,” “I’m sad,” and we tell why. We take responsibility for our own feelings and leave the other person’s behavior up to them.

How to Give an I-Message

“I” messages focus on an individual’s feelings and other people’s behaviors, not on people themselves. We might like the person, but don’t like how they are acting. Try to start your I-Messages with “When.”

1. **Describe the behavior**
   “When we talk about my Dad…”

2. **Tell your feelings**
   “…I get angry…”

3. **Tell why**
   “…because I don’t like how he has treated us.”

4. **Sometimes “you” is used when it’s not critical or blaming, just descriptive.**
   “When you are late coming home from work, I worry something may have happened to you.” The feeling still belongs to the person giving the statement.

Week 11 - Understanding Addictions

Purpose of Session

Children will have an opportunity to explore habits/addictions and reflect on how addiction has affected their family.

Materials

- markers and colored pencils
- poster paper
- pictures of habits for younger children (from magazines)
- one small and one large clear jar, each filled with water
- quiet music
- poster of the 7 C's and copies for participants (see handouts)
- pair of dice
- food coloring (one color)

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Musical Hands photo
- Information about addiction
- The 7 C's
- Roll the Dice questions

Week 11 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five)	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Musical Hands

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the group sit in a circle. Everyone lets their hands rest on their knees, palms up. The group picks a short song to sing (e.g., "Row, Row, Row Your Boat") and as the group begins singing, someone starts the circle of hands by gently slapping, with their right hand, the right hand of the person to their left. Once someone slaps your hand, you slap the hand of the person on your left, and so on. The object of the game is to ***not*** be the person whose hand is being slapped when the song ends! Continue with new songs determined by the group.	Energize the group.

Activity: What is an Addiction?

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Fill a small clear jar and a large clear bottle with water. Share that these two jars represent a small person, such as the children, and a larger person, such as an adult like their parent. Share that you are about to put two drops of food coloring into each jar. This is similar to the child and the adult taking two pain relievers. What is the difference in the colors in the jars? What if I add two more drops, and two more, and so on? Let them see how the larger jar absorbs the color more because it has more water in it. This is why adults can take larger doses of substances than kids can take and it does not affect them in the same way. Talk about how medicines can be good for us and help us heal, but how they can hurt us if we take too much. ***Activity: True or False?*** Tell the group you will be making a series of statements. If they think a statement is true, ask them to salute. If they think it is false, ask them to cross their arms. Use these questions to teach about addiction. (Refer to the information in the back of this session if needed.) 1) Carrots grow on trees. 2) Kids have a right to feel safe at home. 3) I feel safe at home. 4) Alcoholism is a disease. 5) I can catch the disease from others. 6) I can stop my parent from using alcohol or drugs. 7) I can control my own anger, even if people around me don't. 8) When people can't control how much they drink or use drugs, they need help to stop. 9) Drugs and alcohol can make good people act badly. 10) I didn't cause the addiction and I can't stop it. ***Younger Children:*** Using a piece of poster paper, help the children understand and brainstorm healthy and unhealthy habits. Use pictures from magazines if helpful.	Explore addictions.

First Activity: The 7 C's

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Teach children the 7 C's of addiction (see handout). Reintroduce Magical Thinking and relate it to the 7 C's. If we can't change our parent's addiction, what can we change so we will be okay?	Reaffirm to members their parent's habits or addictions are not their fault.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Roll the Dice

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Give each child several chances to roll the dice. Ask them the question on the following page that corresponds with the sum on the dice. Use this activity as an avenue for participants to process what they have experienced in their family. ***Younger Children:*** Roll one die and ask age-appropriate questions (see handout).	Explore how habits and addiction can affect a family.

Process: Roll the Dice

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Process during the game as they share their answers. When appropriate, direct them back to the 7 C's for comfort and information. Other questions might be: • Which "C" stands out to you the most? • How does hearing the 7 C's make you feel? • What is helpful about hearing others talk?	Allow children to share feelings and what they have learned.

Relaxation Exercise: Lights Out, Quiet Music

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	The goal of this exercise is to just let the children relax themselves. Play quiet music and let them be in any comfortable position, asking for quiet time for 5 minutes.	Learn to relax through music.

Together with Parents: Musical Hands

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Share our topic of addiction and the 7 C's. Have the group sit in a circle. Everyone lets their hands, palms	Provide positive family interaction.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	up, rest on their knees. The group picks a short song to sing (e.g., “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”) and as the group begins singing, someone starts the circle of hands by gently slapping, with their right hand, the right hand of the person to their left. Once someone slaps your hand, you slap the hand of the person on your left, and so on. The object of the game is to ***not*** be the person whose hand is being slapped when the song ends! Continue with new songs determined by the group.	

Facilitator Tips

By week 11, some children may share a change in how they are treated at home. It is important to note that change and celebrate it. It is also important to introduce the concept of relapse when talking about addictions. Giving children this language and knowledge may help alleviate anxiety should a parent use substances while in the program.

Musical Hands photo by Cindy Vermeule

Information About Addictions

Q: What is an addiction?

A: People who have an addiction have lost control over their ability to stop the addictive behavior, even though they know it is harming them or others. They may also lose control over how they act when they are using. Addicted people sometimes act in hurtful ways. It can be scary and embarrassing. Drugs and alcohol can make good people act badly. People who are addicted have a hard time showing they care for or love others. They may not be much fun to live with! It's okay to love the person, and hate the problem.

Q: How does an addiction start?

A: We don't know all the reasons why. Some people start out using alcohol or drugs a little bit, and end up addicted to it. A person might use drugs or alcohol to calm their nerves, forget their problems, or relieve their pain. They end up needing the drug or alcohol to feel normal. Once a person loses control over it, they need help to stop.

Q: If it's a disease, why don't they just go to the doctor or hospital?

A: At first, they might not be aware they are sick. Or if they are, they may not believe alcohol or drugs are the problem. They might blame everything else like people, their job, the house, or lack of money. But really, it's the alcohol or drug that's the problem. This is called denial.

Q: How can an addiction affect the children?

A: When someone has an addiction, everyone in the family is affected. The family gets out of balance because so much attention goes to the problem. Children may try many different things to get the attention they want and need, or to try to make things okay. These ways can become bad habits; like trying to be perfect, by being funny all the time, by being quiet, or by getting into trouble a lot. Children can't change the addicted person and the family, only themselves.

Q: How do you make them stop drinking?

A: You can't. You didn't cause it, you can't control it, and you can't cure it. They need to get help. That's why they are here! You are here because addiction affects the whole family!

Adapted from the National Association for Children of Alcoholics

The 7 C's

I didn't **Cause** it.

I can't **Cure** it.

I can't **Control** it.

I can **Care** for myself by

Communicating my feelings,

by making healthy **Choices**, and

by **Celebrating** myself.

National Association for Children of Alcoholics

Roll the Dice Questions

Younger Children:

1. What's a good habit you have?
2. What's a bad habit you have? How does that habit affect you?
3. What's a good habit your mom has?
4. What's a bad habit your mom has? How does that habit affect you?
5. What's a good habit your dad has?
6. What's a bad habit your dad has? How does that habit affect you?

Older Children:

2. Tell of a time you felt embarrassed by your parent's addiction.
3. How does your parent's behavior change when they are using?
4. Tell of a time you felt afraid of your parent when they were using.
5. Have you ever felt like calling the police because you were afraid? Tell about it.
6. Name one person you can talk to who understands your problems.
7. Do you walk on eggshells at home? When?
8. Tell of a time you felt afraid for your parent.
9. Tell of a time you felt angry with your parent for using.
10. How can you tell when your parents have been using?
11. Which "C" is the most important for you right now?
12. What do you do when your parent is using in the home?

Week 12 - Family Roles

Purpose of Session

Children will be given an opportunity to reflect on the effects of chemical dependency on a family and identify the common roles often assumed in a family with a substance-abusing parent.

Materials

- pre-made mobile on family roles (see directions at end of session description), made with:
  - string or yarn
  - glue
  - 2 small sticks (paint stirrers or tongue depressors)
  - crayons or markers
- highlighters (one for each participant)

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Group Knot photo
- Making a Family Roles Mobile
- Roles children may take on in an addicted family
- The Wizard's Family

Optional:

- knee-high nylons for group knot
- puppets

Week 12 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five)	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Group Knot

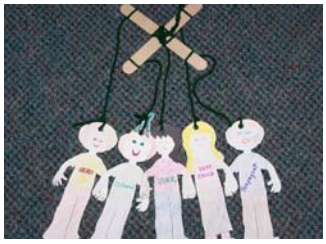
Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Have the group stand in a circle. (This activity works best with up to ten people in a group using an even number of people.) For safety reasons, clear the area around the group, moving away any sharp objects or furniture they may fall on. As the group stands, ask how it feels. As suggestions, offer the qualities of a healthy family: comfortable, lots of space, no fighting. Ask everyone to raise their right hand, reach across the circle and hold someone's hand. Now ask them to raise	Energize the group and create a metaphor for the chemically dependent family.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	their left hand and hold a different person's hand across the circle, preferably not somebody next to them. Ask them for adjectives that describe how this feels. Now that they are in a knot, ask about the difference in how it feels to them. If appropriate, relate these feelings back to how people might feel in a family struggling with addiction. They may share that it is uncomfortable, or it hurts, etc. In our quest to work rather than wish for change, tell them their goal is to work together to untangle this uncomfortable knot, without letting go of each other's hands. For safety, let them rotate their hands if needed to prevent injury or pain. Consider a time limit to keep the group on track. If they do not have time to finish, reflect on how that is similar to their own family right now. Maybe everything is not all fixed now, but the family is still working on it, and that's okay. Let them share their feelings about the activity and what it took to solve it. It is possible to get circles within a circle! Ask the group if they would like to attempt the knot exercise again during break, or over the next couple of sessions during free time. ***Optional:*** Supply knee-high nylons if some participants are sensitive to touch or have a difficult time bending. This is also helpful if boys and girls have touching issues across gender lines. Each member in the circle, or just the person of concern, can hold the knee-highs in each hand, as an extension of their hands. The elasticity of the nylons also provides children with more room. *(Rhonke,1984)*	

Process: Group Knot

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Being so closely linked, when one person moved, what tended to happen to everyone else? Did someone take on a leadership role in that activity? Was there anyone who made a lot of jokes during the activity or tried to make everyone laugh? Were there people who remained quiet and never said a word? Were there people who were not working with the group that caused anger in other members? This activity demonstrates our topic today of the roles people tend to take on in a family to cope with the stress of living in a family that uses alcohol or other drugs.	Link the activity to the metaphor of family roles.

First Activity: Family Roles Mobile

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Using a mobile (pre-made), talk about and demonstrate how each member of the family is important and can affect all the other members. Let them know a family gets out of balance because so much attention goes to the problem. Give examples and pull down on a character: • Parent is late for dinner • Child doesn't do his chores around the house • Parents fight in front of the children • Parent drinks and passes out • Parent goes to jail Talk about how each member helps keep the system in balance. Pull down on the substance abuser on the mobile, stating sometimes they are not able to do their normal tasks in the family because they are using. Ask the group what happened to the mobile. Talk about how when a member of the family uses, the family can become out of balance. Children may try different ways to get the attention they need or to make things okay. These ways can become bad habits. To relieve the pain they may feel and restore the balance, people in the family tend to take on roles in hopes of keeping the family together. The roles take attention and responsibility away from the user. Share what the roles are on the mobile and give an explanation of each and how each role uses that behavior to cope in the family. Give participants a copy of the information sheet found at the end of this session description. (Wegscheider-Cruse, 1988) ***Option for Younger Children:*** Create the family mobile as a group. Have figures already cut out and let the children color or decorate them and make the mobile with their figures. Ask about their families; when their parents fight or something happens at home, does everybody act the same way? Some get quiet, some make jokes, some get in trouble, etc. Briefly show them the different ways people act to hide it when they hurt. Then ask, or show, other healthy ways each of them could respond.	Reinforce that each member of the family affects the others. 

Process: Family Roles Mobile

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	• What roles look familiar for members in your family? For you? • What are other roles you can think of that children may use to cope with? • How do you think these roles help you cope in your family?	Personalize the learning and check for understanding.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Read the play together with the goal to act out this play for their mothers in two weeks. By acting it out (as a play or a puppet show), we can talk about the roles in our families and what we need. Choose parts for the play and give each child a highlighter to highlight their lines. Allow the different age groups to come together for the play. Briefly talk about logistics and costumes and reassure members who have difficulty memorizing or reading that the play is not meant to be a cause of stress for them but more for fun. Adapt the play as needed and add parts such as stage manager or makeup artist for those not wanting to be in the play. ***For Younger Children:*** Introduce the puppets and let them make up their own puppet show about family and feelings.	Continue to learn about the roles people play through theater.

Relaxation Exercise: Rain

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Ask the group to follow your lead. Change sounds when you feel it is appropriate. 1) Rub your palms together. 2) Snap your fingers on your right hand. 3) Snap your fingers on your left hand. 4) Snap fingers on both hands at the same time. 5) Slap your thighs. 6) Pound your chest. Reverse the order.	

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	Option: If the group is comfortable with touch, seat the group in a circle, all facing the same direction (clockwise or counterclockwise), close enough to lay their hands flat on the person's back in front of them. One person in the circle begins the "wind" motion on the back of the person in front of him, "passing" the motion to that person, and that person "passes" it to the next, and so on, until the motion goes all the way around the circle to the first person. The first person then begins the "light rain" motion, and so on. Follow the following order of motions: 1) With palms flat, make a circular motion starting lightly (wind). 2) Change to a light tapping motion with your fingertips (light rain). 3) Change to a heavier tapping motion with your fingertips (heavy rain). 4) Change back to number 2. 5) Change back to number 1. Stop and wait for all sounds to cease. *(Rhonke,1984)*	

Together with Parents: Group Knot

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Share the night's topic on the roles people often take on to cope in a stressful environment and the play the kids will put on in two weeks. Lead the group in the Group Knot, as in the beginning of this session. Break the group into smaller groups to keep the numbers under 10. Talk also about how a healthy family feels versus the uncomfortable and often painful ways families coping with addiction feel. Relay the metaphor that recovering together is like helping us untie the knot. Have the group stand in a circle. (This activity works best with up to 10 people in a group using an even number of people.) For safety reasons, clear the area around the group, moving any sharp objects or furniture they may fall on. As the group stands, ask how it feels. As suggestions, offer the qualities of a healthy family: comfortable, lots of space, no fighting. Ask everyone to raise their right hand, reach across the circle and hold someone's hand. Now ask them to raise their left hand and hold a different person's hand across the circle, preferably not somebody next to	Provide family time and positive interactions.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	them. Ask them for adjectives that describe how this feels. Now that they are in a knot, ask about the difference in how it feels to them. If appropriate, relate these feelings back to how people might feel in a family struggling with addiction. They may share that it is uncomfortable, or it hurts, etc. In our quest to work rather than wish for change, tell them their goal is to work together to untangle this uncomfortable knot, without letting go of each other's hands. For safety, let them rotate their hands if needed to prevent injury or pain. Consider a time limit to keep the group on track. If they do not have time to finish, reflect on how that is similar to their own family right now. Maybe it is not all fixed now, but the family is still working on it, and that's okay. Let them share their feelings about the activity and what it took to solve it. ***Optional:*** Supply nylon knee-highs if there are participants sensitive to touch or who have a difficult time bending. This is also helpful if boys and girls have touching issues across gender lines. Each member in the circle, or just the person of concern, can hold the knee-highs in each hand, as an extension of their hands. The elasticity of the nylons also provides members with more room. *(Rhonke,1984)*	

Facilitator Tips

Relieve immediate fears of public speaking by sharing that there are many parts children can play if they do not want to be an actor in the play. Let them know their mothers have also learned about these Family Roles and ask them how they feel it applies to their family. As participants reflect on what role or roles they feel they have taken on to cope, it is important to applaud them for finding a way, first off, to cope in their family. Point out that their role has helped them survive. It is also important to reiterate that these roles are not forever, and that is what RTP is about – figuring out what works and what doesn't in the family so we can all work to change it.

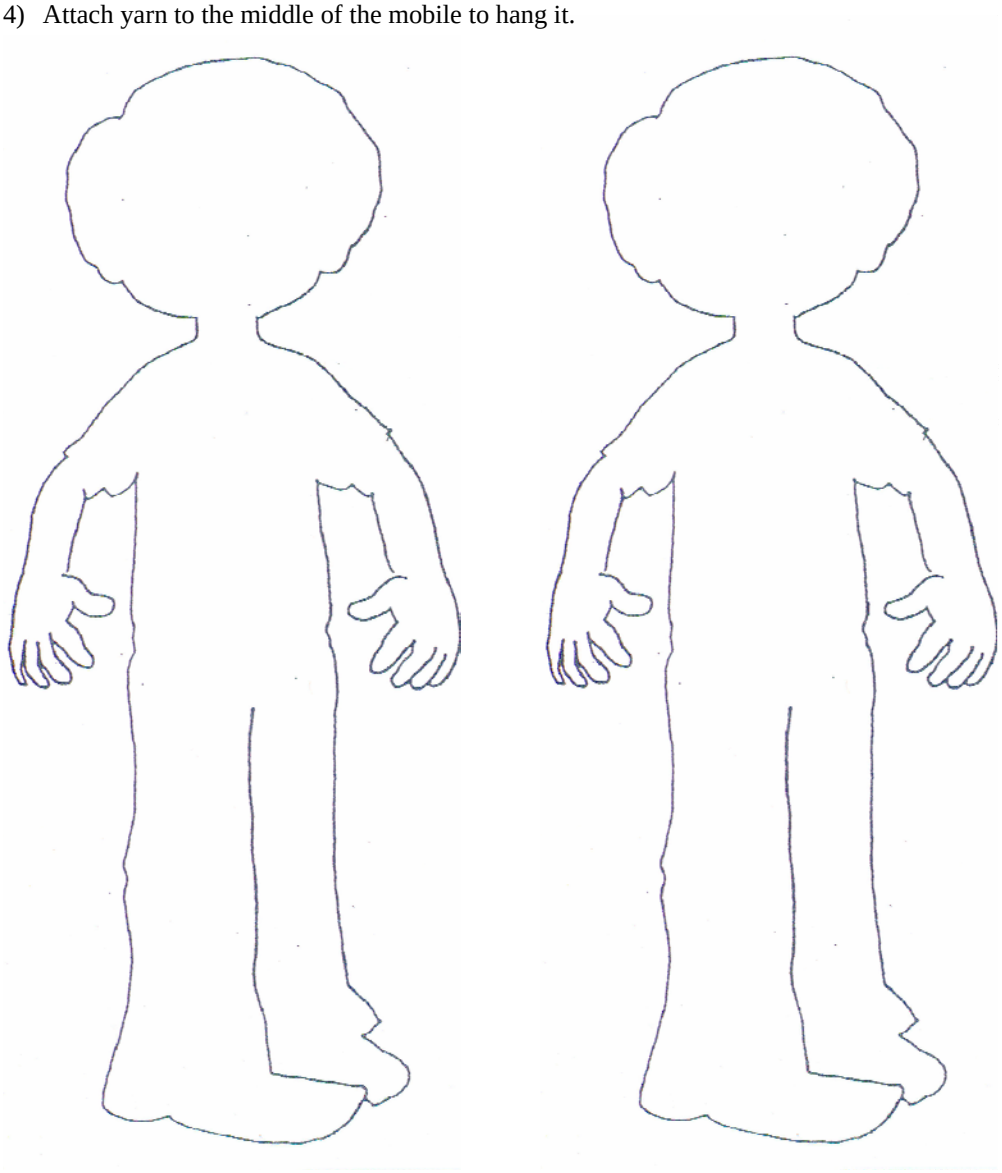
Allowing children to put their name in a hat for the parts they would like to play can make choosing parts fair and fun. Start with one character. Anyone who wants to play that character puts his or her name in the hat. If there are children who do not want to be in the play, develop other roles such as stage hand, make-up artists, scene decorators, etc., and have the kids draw or choose from those.

Group Knot Photo by Cindy Vermeule

Making a Family Roles Mobile

Directions:

1) Arrange four sticks (i.e., tongue depressors or paint stirrers) together in a cross shape. Attach them together with glue.
2) Copy and cut out five separate figures. Create a user, clown, hero, scapegoat, and lost child.
3) Attach the figures to each end of the sticks with yarn by punching a hole at the top of the head and threading yarn through it. Tie a simple knot so one figure can be untied for a demonstration.
4) Attach yarn to the middle of the mobile to hang it.



Roles Children May Take On in an Addicted Family

Children may take on more than one of these roles. These are roles being played out, they are *not* who the child is. The roles are coping skills for surviving in stressful families.

The Family Hero

- Usually the oldest child; does well in school
- Thinks all the problems will end if he doesn't cause any
- An admired leader, serious, mature and seemingly "together"
- Underneath feels inadequate, not good enough, scared, guilty, and lonely
- Needs to learn that no one is perfect and it's okay to make mistakes and have fun

The Troublemaker (Scapegoat)

- Does poorly in school
- Blames others, acts angry, and causes problems to get attention
- Underneath feels like a misfit, left out, lonely, guilty, and hurt, wants attention
- Needs to learn how to get along better with others and express anger in acceptable ways

The Forgotten Child (Lost Child)

- Quiet, shy, often unnoticed
- Loner, stays away to avoid problems or disturbing others
- Underneath feels fearful, anxious, confused, and unsure
- Needs to learn he/she is important, learn how to express feelings, and ask for what he/she needs

The Clown (Mascot)

- Class clown, happy-go-lucky, likes to be the center of attention
- Disruptive and has lots of energy
- Makes jokes and acts happy to hide sadness or to cheer others up
- Underneath feels fearful, anxious, confused, and unsure
- Needs to learn it's okay to be serious, smart and helpful and that he/she doesn't always have to be funny -- he/she can share sad and angry feelings too

Roles adapted from AA and CoA literature in the public domain.

The Wizard's Family

A Play or Puppet Show

Cast of Characters:	**Played by:**
Wizard	_____
Wise Fairy	_____
Troublemaker	_____
Hero	_____
Forgotten Child	_____
Clown	_____
Narrator	_____

Narrator: Hello, and welcome to our show about the Wizard and his family. This is a play about the roles kids sometimes take on in a family to help cope with the stress of living with an addicted parent. First, let's introduce the family.

Wizard: Hi! I am the Wizard. I work at the magic office and have four children.

Hero: Hi! I am _____. I am the oldest sibling in my family.

Troublemaker: Hi! I am _____. I like to stir up trouble!

Forgotten Child: Hi! I am _____. I like to just be alone.

Clown: Hi there, people! My name is _____. I like to tell jokes!

Narrator: Today the Wizard works at his magic office. Lately he has been having a hard time at work and has been away from his kids a lot. His kids worry that he has been drinking too much when he has had a hard day at work. Today at work he got a phone call from the school where his kids go.

Wizard: (Ring, Ring) Hello, this is _____ the Wizard. What? He got in a fight on the playground? I just don't know what to do with that child. Thanks for calling. I will talk to him after school.

Narrator: That night the Wizard talked to_____(troublemaker) about what happened at school.

Wizard: Your teacher said you got in a fight today at school. What happened?

Troublemaker: Another kid wouldn't let me play on his magic broom, so I got mad and hit him.

Wizard: I don't understand why you would do that. Maybe we should ask the Wise Fairy.

Wise Fairy: Sometimes when families are under a lot of stress, the people in the family might act in a certain way. This is called their role in the family. One role is the "troublemaker." I think _____ is being the trouble maker. __ _____, what is it like to be the troublemaker?

Troublemaker: I get really angry and don't know how to handle it. I think that if I'm not getting in trouble, then no one is going to pay attention to me. I need help dealing with my anger and I need lots of attention for doing good things.

Wise Fairy: Thank you.

Narrator: The Wizard wondered how_____'s (the hero) day was at school and asked him. The Hero said,

Hero: Today I worked very hard at keeping _____ (troublemaker) out of trouble. I got very upset and started crying when I missed one word on my spelling test.

Wizard: Why would you get so upset about that? Let's ask the Wise Fairy.

Wise Fairy: Another family role is called the "hero." I think _____ is being the hero in the family. Can you tell us what that is like?

Hero: I worry a lot about taking care of my brothers and sisters. I feel like it's my job to take care of the family and don't want to let anyone down. I need help learning to relax and accept my mistakes.

Wise Fairy: Thank you for helping your dad understand what your role is like. Is that you _____(forgotten child)? We haven't heard much from you today. I wonder if it's because you are playing the role of the "forgotten child" in your family? Can you tell us what that is like?

Forgotten Child: I try to keep quiet and stay out of everyone's way. I don't want to cause anyone in my family to start yelling at each other. I need help learning to speak up for myself and ask for things when I need them.

Wise Fairy: Thank you.

Clown: Hey Wise Fairy, why did the chicken cross the road?

Wise Fairy: Hello _____(clown). I was just thinking about you and your role in your family. _____ plays the role of the clown in her (his) family. When families are under stress, the clown tries to relieve some of the tension, hoping that everyone could just relax. What is it like being a clown?

Clown: I try to make everyone laugh to get attention and to help everyone chill out! I get anxious from all of this stuff. I need help understanding all of my feelings and being able to express them. I need help to understand that I am not responsible for making everyone happy all the time.

Wizard: Thanks Wise Fairy. I understand more about the roles that each of my children are playing. Maybe I could hear again what each of them need.

Wise Fairy: Absolutely! Thanks for asking.

Troublemaker: I need help dealing with my anger and I need more positive attention for all of the good things that I do.

Hero: I need help learning to relax and accept my mistakes. I need positive attention for who I am, not just for doing things right.

Forgotten Child: I need help learning how to be involved with the family. I need to learn to speak up and ask for what I need.

Clown: I need to learn about my feelings and I need time to talk about serious things with you.

Narrator: And so the Wizard Family learned a lot today. They have learned that magical thinking doesn't work. They can't just wish things were different, they have to work for change. Now that they understand their family better, they might be able to help each other.

THE END

(LaMunyon, 2004)

Week 13 - Play Practice

Purpose of Session

Children will practice the play, *"The Wizard's Family,"* to present to their parents next week. Children will continue to reflect on the family roles often played out in families with a substance-abusing parent.

Materials

- yard of fabric or a large towel
- copies of the play
- puppets
- props for the play, telephone
- wizard's costume
- fairy's costume

Week 13 Activities

Check-In

Time	***Activity***	***Purpose***
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five)	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Anything Fabric

Time	***Activity***	***Purpose***
10 minutes	Have everyone stand in a circle. Show the group the fabric (or towel) and ask, "What could this be?" Demonstrate an idea first and then pass the fabric from person to person with each one sharing an idea and demonstrating. Keep going around the circle as long as ideas exist! Some examples include: • Superman cape • Diaper • Magic carpet • Picnic blanket • Toga *(Source: www.creativedrama.com)*	Stimulate their creative thinking!

First Activity: "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Allow practice time for the play.	Reinforce the learning of family roles by acting it out in a play.

Process: "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Talk with the group about how the play is progressing and what they are learning.	Learn through reflection and share feelings and ideas.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor)	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Perform the play to the younger children as a dress rehearsal. Option: use puppets.	Continue practicing.
	Option: Activity: Mirroring Have children pair up. Decide who will be the mirror. One person will do the actions and the other person (the mirror) will copy them. Then let the partners switch roles. Ask them to do exactly what their partner does. To do this you must be able to sense your partner's next move. Here are some examples: • Move your hands in large circles • Move hands side to side, up and down • Knock on a door • Comb your hair • Climb a ladder • Brush your teeth	Provide an activity to focus the group.

Process: "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Regardless of whether the group chose to do a dress rehearsal or the mirroring exercise, go around the circle and give each person a chance to share something positive about the play or another person. Discuss logistics of the play such as costumes.	Remind children that the people are more important than the play.

Relaxation Exercise: Crazy Moves

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Stand in a circle. Ask a volunteer to start. He is to make any move he would like, and the group will follow him for about 10 seconds. Say, “Switch” and the next person starts a new move, and everyone follows. Moves can be dancing, stretching, or any movement. Relax and have fun with it. Let members know tonight at family time, we want to show their parents how we have been learning to calm ourselves. Together, choose a past relaxation technique to share.	Teach children relaxation techniques to calm themselves.

Together with Parents: Relaxation

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Share with parents about the day’s topic of play practice and remind them of the performance next week. Have a member, or the facilitator, lead the group in a relaxation exercise learned in previous weeks.	Provide family time and model relaxation.

Facilitator Tips

Allow free time for all ages outside of play practice during this session. If the group needs direction, ask what games or challenges they liked over the last 12 weeks that they would like to try again. This night should serve as a release from all their hard work and constant attention to difficult issues. Let them play.

Week 14 - Play Performance

Purpose of Session

Children will be given an opportunity to perform their play on family roles to the mothers to share what they have learned about living in a family struggling with alcohol/chemical addiction.

Materials

- props for the play
- costumes
- camera

Week 14 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five)	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity 1: Stretch the Group

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Have the children stand in a circle. Ask for a volunteer to start by leading the group in any stretch they would like for 10 seconds. Go around the circle and let each child lead the group in a different stretch. Continue if time permits.	Energize the group.

Team-Building Activity 2: Pantomime Game

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Write the following on pieces of paper and have children pull them out of a hat and act them out to the group. The group's task is to guess the activity. Add your own actions. • Playing baseball • Baking a cake • Changing a flat tire • Skiing or snowboarding • Learning to swim • Walking through mud • Being trapped in a box	Energize the group.

First Activity: Rehearse "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
30 minutes	Have fun with costumes and practice the play. Take group and individual pictures to use on the Closure Cards. ***For Younger Children:*** If a dress-up clothes box is available, let the younger children play dress-up with the big kids! Use the metaphor of dressing up as a way to explain how we take on family roles, like putting on a costume or a mask. It's not really who we are, it's how we act.	Rehearse the play.

Process: Rehearsal "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Let children process their feelings before the performance. Talk about how they feel about their mothers seeing the play and bring it back to what they have control over. Draw from our relaxation techniques to keep them calm and confident.	Provide teaching time for managing emotions.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor) Play dress-up, take pictures and have fun!	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Together with Parents: "The Wizard's Family"

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
25 minutes	Perform the play for the mothers. Talk as a group afterwards on these common roles in families and how children are affected. Take pictures of the play for the closure activity. • What are the four main roles from the play? • What purpose do these roles serve for kids? • Have you seen any of these roles in your child? • These are just roles, not who the person is. • How can this information help you as parents? • How do you think the children felt performing this play for you tonight? • Ask the children what they liked about the play or to share any comments they have. ***Younger Children:*** It is at the facilitator's discretion whether the younger kids watch the final performance	Talk about what happens to children in an addicted family.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	of the play. Another alternative is to keep the younger children in a separate group and make puppets resembling themselves using lunch sacks, markers and other creative means. Ask them what role their puppet might play in the family. Let them play with puppets and share them with the entire group at the end of the session.	

Together with Parents: Has Your Family…?

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Gather the entire group in a circle (standing or sitting). The facilitator reads each of the following questions. Instruct the families that if they have done the activity as a family, their family steps inside the circle. When a family steps in, everyone claps for them, including themselves, as a way to honor or celebrate the family. Then they jump back out of the circle and the next question is read. Do as many as time permits. Add your own ideas. • Dressed up and gone out to dinner • Been on a road trip • Swam in the ocean together • Been hiking together • Toasted marshmallows over a fire • Had a food fight • Played football together • Been in a pillow fight together • Played hide and seek together • Planted a tree together • Baked something together *(Gerstein,1994)*	End session with play time with the group and celebration of the family.

Facilitator Tips

We have tried separating families to talk about family roles after the play but found this to be very uncomfortable for families. They were not yet ready for that level of intimacy. Keeping them all in a group increased the comfort level and discussion among participants.

Week 15 - Review Skills

Purpose of Session

Children will be given the opportunity to reflect on the skills learned throughout the group and will begin the closure process.

Materials

- bag of 10-15 soft items (koosh balls, stuffed animals, tennis balls, etc.)
- BINGO chips (cut up paper, pennies, rocks, chocolate chips, etc.)
- handmade cards for each participant and pens/markers

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- Recovering Together Bingo callout cards and cards

Optional:

- t-shirts and fabric paint for participants

Week 15 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? (Option: Fist or Five) Inform children of the events planned for the next two weeks to begin the closure process.	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings.

Team-Building Activity: Group Juggle

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	Use a soft ball of any size and have the group stand in a circle. Begin by taking out one ball and asking what it is. Correct the group when they are literal and say, “This is anger.” Pull another ball out and ask them, “What it this?” Say, “This is sadness.” Keep pulling balls out and giving them feelings, problem-solving strategies, and coping skills as a review to things they have learned. Share that life is not so easy as to give us just one of these to juggle at a time. Similar to the name toss in session 1, establish a pattern so everyone has it once. Practice the pattern (the key to juggling!) with one ball. Let children know you will continue to throw balls, one at a time, to the person you are throwing to until all the balls are being “juggled” (following the pattern) in the circle. Let it be fun and chaotic.	Review skills learned.

Time	*Activity* *(Rhonke,1984)*	*Purpose*

Process: Group Juggle

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Ask them to name some of the strategies learned in group to help them calm their lives and maintain control of their actions. Let them know next week will be the last week for this phase of RTP, and if we were to practice all that we have learned, what could we do differently with this next group juggle, if our goal was to keep calm and controlled, and not let any balls drop to the ground? Ask for suggestions and repeat the juggle. Ask for opinions on how that juggle was different from the first and why. Encourage them to practice the strategies learned in their lives.	Review skills learned.

First Activity: Group Cards

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Share with the children that for closure of this phase, we will pass around cards today for everyone to sign for each other. If you get your own card, just pass it along. Write or draw anything that you would like. Some things to consider are: • What you learned from each person • What you like about each person • What you hope for each person Pasting pictures from the play and adding key words they have learned as strategies can enhance the meaning of the gift. ***Option:*** Write on t-shirts instead of cards.	Provide a chance for children to share thoughts and feelings about each other.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
20 minutes	Break (play/read/draw/tutor) or continue signing group cards.	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Second Activity: Bingo of Skills

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
30 minutes	Using the Bingo Card handouts at the end of this session, play Bingo to focus on the skills learned in	Review skills learned.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	the group. Each skill on the BINGO cards is included. Cut these out and place them in a hat. As you read a skill, the children will place a piece of paper, piece of candy, a coin, or anything you would like to use as chips on that skill. Once a bingo is called ask the child to explain the items under his/her chips before declaring him/her the winner. Play as many games as time allows. The children can call the type of game: regular bingo, diagonal only, vertical only, four corners, etc. Process during the activity on what skills they are using in their lives. ***For Younger Children:*** Review all the activities the children have done with you and ask if there are any they would like to do again.	

Relaxation Exercise: Review and Pick

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
5 minutes	Review the relaxation techniques used in the group and let the children pick one or make up their own.	Practice skills for relaxation.

Together with Parents: Group Juggle

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Use a soft ball of any size and have the group stand in a circle. Begin by taking out one ball and asking what it is. Correct the group when they are literal and say, “This is anger.” Pull another ball out and ask them, “What it this?” Say, “This is sadness.” Keep pulling balls out and giving them feelings, problem-solving strategies, and coping skills as a review to things they have learned. Share that life is not so easy as to give us just one of these to juggle at a time. Similar to the name toss in session 1, establish a pattern so everyone has it once. Practice the pattern (the key to juggling!) Let participants know you will continue to throw balls, one at a time to the person you are throwing to until all the balls are being juggled in the circle. Let it be fun and chaotic. *(Rhonke,1984)* Talk about the stress it creates when so many things come at us in life. Practicing relaxation and other stress-relieving strategies is important. Ask what they could do to get control of the juggle. If time permits, redo the juggle so it is calm and slow.	Share the need for practicing stress-reducing strategies.

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
	Option: Family Bingo Play one round of Bingo with the parents and their children to also remind them of the skills learned.	Provide family time to play and review skills learned.

Facilitator Tips

It is important to let members know what will happen after group ends (whether they move on to Phase 2 immediately or if there will be a break). It is important to spend time with each participant individually checking in on how they are feeling about group ending and helping them name the people and resources they have to talk to outside of group.

Recovering Together Bingo

Directions: Cut these skills out and place them in a hat to draw.

Ask an adult for help	Apologize	Compromise	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words
Lead the group in deep breathing	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name two choices you have when you are angry	What is Magical Thinking?
The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO	The USER
Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?	Give an I-Message	I didn't cause it, I can't cure it.	Name two good habits
Name one of your family's strengths	Where's your safe place?	Who is someone you can talk to?	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Ask an adult for help	Apologize	Compromise	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words
2	Lead the group in deep breathing	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name two choices you have when you're angry	What is Magical Thinking?
3	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER	**BINGO 1**	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO
4	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?	Give an I-Message	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two good habits
5	Name one of your family's strengths	Where's your safe place?	Who is someone you can talk to?	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Ask an adult for help	Lead the group in deep breathing	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name two choices you have when you're angry
2	Apologize	The HERO	Use TRUTHpaste	Compromise	What is Magical Thinking?
3	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER	**BINGO 2**	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	Use your words
4	Who is someone you can talk to?	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two good habits
5	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?	Name one of your family's strengths	Where's your safe place?	Give an I-Message

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Give an I-Message	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two good habits	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words
2	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?
3	Ask an adult for help	The CLOWN	**BINGO 3**	Lead the group in deep breathing	What is a trigger to your anger?
4	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO	Name two choices you have when you're angry	What is Magical Thinking?	The TROUBLE MAKER
5	Name one of your family's strengths	Apologize	Compromise	Where's your safe place?	Who is someone you can talk to?

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Lead the group in deep breathing	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name two choices you have when you're angry	What is Magical Thinking?
2	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO	Where's your safe place?	Who is someone you can talk to?	Name two ways to relax
3	Apologize	Ask an adult for help	**BINGO 4**	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?
4	Give an I-Message	I didn't cause it, I can't cure it	Compromise	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words
5	Name one of your family's strengths	Name something you like about yourself	Name two good habits	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Give an I-Message	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two good habits	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER
2	Lead the group in deep breathing	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?
3	Name two choices you have when you're angry	What is Magical Thinking?	**BINGO 5**	Where's your safe place?	Who is someone you can talk to?
4	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO	Ask an adult for help
5	Apologize	Compromise	Name one of your family's strengths	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Who is someone you can talk to?	Lead the group in deep breathing	Use your words	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER
2	Where's your Safe place?	Give an I-Message	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?
3	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO	**BINGO 6**	Ask an adult for help	Name one of Your family's strengths
4	Apologize	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself	What is a trigger to your anger?	Name two good habits
5	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name two choices you have when you're angry	What is Magical Thinking?	Compromise	Use TRUTHpaste

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Name a bad habit	Who is someone you can talk to?	Ask an adult for help	Apologize	Use your words
2	What is Magical Thinking?	Where's your safe place?	Lead the group in deep breathing	What is a trigger to your anger?	The HERO
3	The CLOWN	Name one of your family's strengths	**BINGO 7**	What's an addiction?	Give an I-Message
4	The TROUBLE MAKER	Use TRUTHpaste	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	Compromise	I didn't cause it, I can't cure it.
5	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name two choices you have when you're angry	Name two good habits.

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Ask an adult for help	Name something you like about yourself	Name two ways to relax	Apologize	Compromise
2	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Lead the group in deep breathing	What is a trigger to your anger?
3	What's an addiction?	Give an I-Message	**BINGO 8**	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO
4	Who is someone you can talk to?	Name two choices you have when you're angry	What is Magical Thinking?	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER
5	Name one of your family's strengths	Where's your safe place?	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two good habits	Name a bad habit

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Ask an adult for help	What's an addiction?	Give an I-Message	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words
2	Lead the group in deep breathing	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two good habits	Where's your safe place?	What is Magical Thinking?
3	Name something you like about yourself	The TROUBLE MAKER	**BINGO 9**	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?
4	Name a bad habit	Name two choices you have when you're angry	The CLOWN	Apologize	Compromise
5	Name one of your family's strengths	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	Who is someone you can talk to?	Name two ways to relax	The HERO

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Give an I-Message	Use your words	What's an addiction?	Use TRUTHpaste	Ask an adult for help
2	Lead the group in deep breathing	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO	Name two choices you have when you're angry	What is Magical Thinking?
3	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER	**BINGO 10**	Who is someone you can talk to?	Name two ways to relax
4	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name a bad habit	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two good habits
5	Name one of your family's strengths	Where's your safe place?	Apologize	Compromise	Name something you like about yourself

	B	I	N	G	O
1	Name one of your family's strengths	Apologize	Compromise	Where's your safe place?	Who is Someone you can talk to?
2	Lead the group in deep breathing	Use TRUTHpaste	Use your words	Name two choices you have when you're angry	Ask an adult for help
3	The CLOWN	What is Magical Thinking?	**BINGO 11**	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?
4	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?	Give an I-Message	The TROUBLE MAKER	Name two good habits
5	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	The HERO	I didn't cause it. I can't cure it.	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself

	B	I	N	G	O
1	The FORGOTTEN CHILD	Apologize	Ask an adult for help	Use TRUTHpaste	Give an I-Message
2	Where's your safe place?	The CLOWN	The TROUBLE MAKER	Name two choices you have when you're angry	Compromise
3	Name two ways to relax	Name something you like about yourself	**BINGO 12**	Use your words	The HERO
4	Name a bad habit	What's an addiction?	What is a trigger to your anger?	What can you do when you feel stressed?	Name two good habits
5	Name one of your family's strengths	What is Magical Thinking?	Who is someone you can talk to?	Lead the group in deep breathing	I didn't' cause it, I can't cure it.

Week 16 - Closing Session

Purpose of Session

Celebrate what was learned and relationships that were formed.

Materials

- signed cards (or signed t-shirts) from last week
- certificates (see certificate at end of session)

Handouts and Teaching Aids (included after session description):

- certificate

Week 16 Activities

Check-In

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
15 minutes	On a scale from 1-10, how are you today? Ask on a scale from 1-10, "How helpful has this group been for you?" (Option: Fist or Five). Let members share their thoughts.	Allow children to share immediate thoughts and feelings about closure.

Closure Activity: Card (or T-shirt) Party

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
35 minutes	Present each child with the card or shirt that the children signed along with what growth or positive qualities you have seen in them through group. As each child receives his or her card, ask them to reflect on the following: • What about this group was most valuable to you? • What was the most memorable time for you? • What was something you learned that you think you will always remember? • What would you like to say to the group?	Celebrate the growth and commitment to group and let children express their thoughts and feelings.

Break

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*
10 minutes	Break	Use the facilities and interact through play.

Together with Parents: Family Celebration

Time	*Activity*	*Purpose*

60 minutes	Bring families together to share and celebrate. Reward completion certificates to families and provide time for closure among participants. Share what happens in the next phase of the program.	Provide family time for celebration and interaction.

Facilitator Tips

Show confidence in the children's ability to use the skills learned to respond to daily things. Spend time one-on-one with each child, again checking in and supporting them. Make contact with each parent to show support for their child and the family's continued road to recovery.

Certificate of Completion

Awarded to

_____

for successfully completing

Recovering Together Program

Phase One

Date _____

_____ _____

Facilitator Facilitator

Working, rather than wishing, for change.

Resources

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Recovering Together Program Group Notes

Date _____ Session #_____ Age Group_____

Facilitators_____

What worked in this session?

What didn't work well in this session? What could be done differently?

Significant events or concerns from the group?

Notes for next week:

Supply List for Children's Curriculum

Common Supplies

Common Supplies:

___glue
___scissors
___markers
___white and colored paper
___poster paper/butcher paper
___deck of cards
___magician's wand/puppet
___pencils
___pens
___colored pencils
___stapler
___masking tape
___variety of puppets
___camera

Miscellaneous Supplies

Miscellaneous Supplies:

___bag with 10 soft items (koosh balls, nerfs, stuffed animals)
___small soft ball of any size
___beach ball
___soft large nerf ball
___ball of yarn
___magazines to cut up
___newspaper
___tagboard or cardboard or foam board
___folder – one for each participant
___blanket
___clear plastic jar of peanut M&Ms (the larger the jar the better!)
___small milk cartons
___computer or cartoon faces
___balloons
___fabric paints and/or permanent markers
___bottles (one large, one small)
___food coloring (one color)
___straws (25 straws per participant)
___fresh raw eggs (one for each participant)
___pair of dice
___quiet, relaxing music
___highlighters (one for each participant)
___2 small sticks (tongue depressors or paint stirrers)
___one white t-shirt per family

Optional Supplies

Optional Supplies:

___one t-shirt per person
___knee-high nylons

About the Author

Karen M. Finch, M.Ed., L.P.C.

Karen received her M.Ed. in Counseling from Colorado State University. She has worked with many populations including victims of crime, people with disabilities, families and children of all ages using experiential and adventure techniques. She lives in Mancos, Colorado with her husband, Brad, and continues to serve as a school counselor.