

How to Hold a Family Meeting

Family meetings are a great opportunity for open communication among family members. They are also the perfect time to discuss upcoming events, address conflicts, or clarify expectations for youth. Review this sheet to ensure your next family meeting goes as smoothly as possible.

- **As family leaders**, parent(s) decide to begin holding family meetings.
- **Work together as a family** to get everyone's commitment to the process.
- **Describe the meetings** as an opportunity for the whole family to meet without anything else going on (meals, games, TV, relatives) to talk about goals and plans and strengthen what is already so great about the family.
- **Decide together** when and where to hold meetings.
- **Parent(s) lead** the first meeting and share leader duties as the meetings continue.
- **Create Family Meeting groundrules** at the beginning of the meeting. Some examples:
 - *Listen to others*
 - *One person talks at a time*
 - *Respect*
 - *Kind words*
 - *No criticism*
 - *No fighting*
- **Throughout the meeting**, parent(s) model praise and encouragement, active listening, asking open-ended questions and supporting everyone in sharing.
- **Try using a "sharing object"** to facilitate discussion. Only the person holding the object is allowed to speak.
- **Or try using the "go around"** method. Choose a topic, for example: something nice that happened today or last week, and then go around and have everyone answer the topic.
- **Before ending the meeting** decide on the next family meeting date and put it on the calendar.
- **End the meeting** by having everyone say one thing they learned or gained from the meeting, close with an activity, a game, a story or a fun plan.