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For Parents: How to have a **Family Council**



BACKGROUND

Finding time to spend together as a family can be a difficult task, especially as your kids get older. But it is important to be able to spend some quality time each week or twice a month talking with each other, creating deeper relationships and bonds, and working to problem solve. The family unit can strengthen each of its members to be able to withstand the problems that occur within every-day life.

PREPARATION

- Review the objective of the lesson and understand why it is important to talk to your child about being a family unit.
- Think about good times you have had when everyone in your family was there. Consider ways to counteract the negative experiences such as bickering or fighting with positive bonding ones like playing a fun family game.
- Help your child to understand each member of the family is unique and brings out different strengths when combined together.

OBJECTIVE

Teach your child to see value in meeting together as a family unit. Show them what happens when they dedicate time and effort to being closer to each member of the family.

LESSON: WHAT IS A FAMILY COUNCIL?

A **family council** is when all members of a family gather together to problem solve. This is not a time to make a checklist of chores but instead a meeting to produce ideas and garner familial responsibility. It is at time where all members can freely share thoughts without discouragement or disagreement and work together to solve a problem that is affecting the whole unit.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE A FAMILY COUNCIL?

Communication is one of the most essential tools we have in understanding those we interact with on a daily basis. However, if we don't dedicate time to solving problems with each other, family relationships could become less strong, and there could be less unity. This is why the family council is important. It gives each member of the family time to ask and answer questions, talk out problems, and work with one another to create mutual respect and understanding.

When conducting a family council with your kids, express how much your family has impacted your life, and give examples of some of those ways. You could talk about something that your spouse does that your child likes to do as well. Or you could mention how one person's action, such as when someone makes dinner, can affect the whole family.

After these **positive affirmations**, it is a good time to bring up any concerns you have or make goals with your family. You may wish to discuss school and studying habits, kindness and respect in your home, eating healthier, being a good neighbor, media use and screen time, healthy relationships, intimacy, sex, online dangers, financial planning, or any other topic that is pertinent to your family.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD DURING A FAMILY COUNCIL

- What is something that our family is good at?
- What do you like about our family?
- What could we do to improve our family?
- Do you feel close to every person in our family?
- Do you ever have ideas you want to share with everyone?
- How can we communicate better with each other?
- What are some ways we could practice kindness with one another?
- Do you know your siblings likes (favorite food, favorite music, etc.)?

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Gathering together and talking will create deeper and stronger relationships.
- This is a time to be cell phone and technology free and really take the time to listen to each other.
- Lasting relationships, like those found within the family unit, need to be nurtured and cherished to grow.
- Living with people can make them seem less real. We have to take the time to ask questions and learn about those whom we see on a daily basis. It is just like any other relationship.
- This is also a great time to make plans as a unit to do something fun together like a family

trip. every member can help with this endeavor by budgeting and contributing ideas.

- These gatherings are not a one time thing. Creating a habit of open family communication will allow you to grow close together and will lead to other valuable insights and conversations. If you want to further empower your child, start using these “family gathers” to teach about healthy online behavior, media literacy, and the changes that happen during puberty using our book [*30 Days of Sex Talks, Empowering Your Child with Knowledge of Sexual Intimacy*](#) (available on Amazon.com).

ACTIVITY

Challenge your children to have game nights with just each other. If they do this, it will allow them to interact more freely with one another and provide them an opportunity to chat one on one.

During your meeting (hopefully each week), have one family member choose a new dessert or snack that the family can make together next week before you all meet again! This will help each member of the family feel important and also contribute one of their own ideas to the enjoyment of the whole.

FOLLOWING UP

As you gather together, ask individuals what they think about the weekly meetings. See if the family is enjoying the experience, or brainstorm ideas of how to make it a better experience.

RELATED DISCUSSIONS

(These can be found in [*30 Days to a Stronger Child*](#))

Respect

Assertiveness

Community

Empathy

(These can be found in [*How to Talk to Your Kids About Pornography*](#))

Building a Foundation of Trust

Creating a Home of Openness

Curiosity is Normal

Full Accounts and Daily Connections

GLOSSARY

Child: A person between birth and full growth.

Family: A group consisting of parent(s) or caregivers and children living together in a household. The definition of family is constantly evolving, and every person can define family in a different way to encompass the relationships he or she shares people in his or her life. Over time one's family will change as one's life changes.

Family Council: A time to gather as a family to uplift one another, solve a problem together, and plan for the future.

Positive Affirmations: Statements that affirm something to be true, meant to empower others and facilitate positive thinking.

Relationship: The state of being connected with another person, or the way in which two people are connected.