



ONLINE

*Online workshops to strengthen relationships between
young adolescents and their parenting adults*

Family Workbook



www.KeepConnected.info
www.SearchInstitute.org

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FEEDBACK, PLEASE!

If you have ideas for how to improve this Keep Connected Family Workbook, please send them to Gene Roehlkepartain at gener@searchinstitute.org.

Your feedback will inform future editions.

Keep Connected Online: Family Workbook

March 2021 pilot edition

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Discovering what kids need to succeed

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Introduction and Overview

Welcome to *Keep Connected*! This workbook guides your family in reflecting on your relationships—what makes them work and practical, everyday ways you can strengthen them. It focuses specifically on relationships between parenting adults¹ and young people between ages about 10 to 14. But the core ideas are helpful for any relationship.

What families is *Keep Connected* for?

- Families from many **different backgrounds and structures** have enjoyed *Keep Connected*. All kinds of families can nurture strong relationships and are welcomed.
- Families that are **doing well** and want to spend some time together find it to be beneficial. Families that are **dealing with stresses and challenges** also find it to be helpful. The program’s philosophy is that every family has both strengths and challenges. Both are normal.

How is *Keep Connected* organized?

There are four sessions in *Keep Connected*. Each has three online parts, each about 30 minutes long. They are scheduled to fit what works best in your community. They are:

- An online session for parenting adults;
- An online session for youth; and
- An online session for families (parenting adults and youth together).

A few activities are for your family to do together to help what you learn **become part of your family’s routine**. Many tools in this workbook are to use after each session.

What happens during online sessions?

First, these aren’t “sit-n-git” classes. No long lectures. No expert telling you what to do. You won’t be asked to be the perfect family.

During the **parenting adult sessions**, you will:

- Reflect on your experiences with other parents, discovering that you’re not alone in the ups and downs of parenting today.
- A research-based framework to help navigate the challenges and opportunities in your family relationships in new ways.
- Lasting connections with other parenting adults who can provide ongoing support.

During the **youth sessions**, youth will:

- Explore ideas with other young people about their family roles and responsibilities.
- Prepare for the family sessions.
- Burn off some energy with some activities (even though they’re online!).

During the **family sessions**, you all will:

- Talk within your family and with other families about ways to enrich different aspects of your relationships.
- Make plans and commitments to strengthen different parts of your relationships.

¹ *We use the term “parenting adults” to include any adults who take a primary role in caring for a young person, including biological and adoptive adults, grandparenting adults, foster parenting adults, and others who may have assumed these responsibilities.

Thriving Through the Teenage Years: The Power of Family Relationships

KEY IDEAS

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1 Young people do best when they have strong relationships with parenting adults through the teen years. | 2 Those relationships change through the teenage years. We need to adapt relationships to keep them strong. | 3 Five key actions help to keep these relationships strong. Those five keys will be the focus of this workshop series. |
|--|---|--|

During the Workshop

- 1.1 Keep Connected Overview
- 1.2 Family Strengths Bingo
- 1.3 Relationships in Our Family
- 1.4 5 Keys to Strong Parent/Youth Relationships

After the Workshop

- 1.5 Planner: What Will Our Family Do Together?
- 1.6 A Guide for Your Week
- 1.7 A Family Relationships Checklist



Keep Connected

Strengthening Families by Strengthening Relationships

What You Will Do

Through this workshop series, you will:

- **Connect** with other families who have similar experiences, challenges, and successes.
- **Discover** five keys to powerful parent-youth relationships as you approach the teenage years.
- **Learn** practical ways to build and adjust your relationships as kids grow up.
- **Celebrate** your family's journey together into the teen years.

What You Can Expect

- **Approach:** Every family has strengths and challenges. Everyone has something to contribute.
- **Feel:** Ideas and encouragement from everyone who participates.
- **Follow up:** Easy family activities and tips you can use every day at home.
- **Website:** More ideas and activities on the website, www.keepconnected.info

Brought to you by Search Institute

Keep Connected was developed by Search Institute (www.search-institute.org), a nonprofit organization that focuses on discovering what kids need to succeed in their families, schools, and communities.

Family Character Strengths Bingo

As a family, pick which of these statements fits your family most of your time. If you want, have each person complete the list separately, then compare. Sometimes people see strengths that others don't! You can select as many as you want.

Use the column on the right side to add other strengths that are important to you that aren't included on the page.

Someone in our family has a great sense of humor .	It is important to our family to be generous to others.	We care for each other in our family.	You can count on someone in our family if you need them.	
Faith is a big part of our family life.	Our family is able to adapt to many different circumstances.	Our family has a sense of playfulness when we get together.	Honesty is an important value in our family.	
We like to give compliments in our family.	Someone in our family works to make the community better for others.	We are forgiving in our family.	Our family comes together when facing a challenge or crisis.	
Someone in our family is curious about everything.	Someone in our family expresses deep compassion for those who are suffering.	Our family is hopeful about the future.	We are thankful for what we have in our family.	

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Relationships in Our Family

As a family, jot ideas of things you do to complete the sentences in each of the boxes. (Don't worry if you have to skip some.)

We connect each other with people and places that open up new opportunities or interests when we...

In our family, we show each that we matter when we...

Example: Put down the cell phone when they talk about things that are important to them.

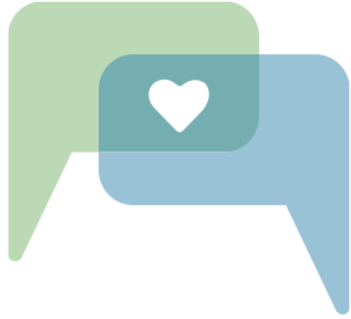


We help each other complete tasks and achieve goals by doing things like

Some ways we treat each other with respect and give each other a say include . . .

Some ways we have encouraged each other to keep getting better include . . .

Checking in on Dad's progress every few days when he set a goal to train to run in a 10K race.



5 Keys to Strong Parent/ Youth Relationships

There are five keys to strong relationships between parenting adults and their children or youth, according to Search Institute research. These five keys are:



Express care: Show each other that you enjoy being together. Show that you care about things that are important to each other.



Share Power: Take each other's ideas seriously. Work together to solve problems and reach goals.



Challenge Growth: Encourage each other to be your best and to be responsible for staying on track. Learn from failures.



Provide Support: Guide and speak up for each other. Help each other overcome obstacles, finish tasks, and reach goals.



Expand Possibilities: Help each other connect with people, ideas, and opportunities that could enrich their lives.

Why these 5 keys matter

When young people experience these five keys in their relationships with parenting adults:

- They develop attitudes and skills that will help them throughout their lives.
- They become more resilient, helping them overcome challenges they face.

These keys can be really important to work on when you're going through transitions, such as changing schools or entering the teenage years.

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PLANNER: What Will Our Family Do Together?

If You Have . . .	Activity	Description	Plan When You'll Do It
1 minute	Post It: A Guide for Your Week	Post this guide somewhere all family members will see it. The refrigerator is a great spot!	
10 minutes	Keep Connected Pledge and Plan	This ongoing project will continue throughout the series. For this first session, you just get it set up and add the family strengths you identified during the workshop session (Handout 1.3). See the <i>Keep Connected Pledge and Plan Guidebook</i> .	
5 minutes	Talk About It	Choose one question to discuss any time you have down time – in the car, waiting in line, over a meal. Write these questions on a sheet of paper (or cards) and post it in your home. Each family member can write their answers to them throughout the week.	
15 minutes	Try It: A Family Relationships Checklist	Each family member fills out a checklist about how they think the family interacts. Then discuss the ways you answered similarly or differently. Include all family members, even those who aren't participating in the workshop.	
10 minutes	Explore It: Developmental Relationships Online	Visit www.keepconnected.info to explore extra activities, videos, quizzes, and other information on family relationships. Plus review the research behind the Developmental Relationships Framework that guides <i>Keep Connected</i> .	



A Guide For Your Week

Display this page where you will notice it through the week (such as on a refrigerator).

1. Think about it

Key ideas to remember

- Kids do best when they have strong relationships with parenting adults* through the teen years.
- But those relationships change through the teenage years.
- Five key actions help to keep these relationships strong.

*Parenting Adults = adults who take a primary role in caring for a young person, including parenting adults, grandparenting adults, foster parenting adults, and other family members.

2. Talk about it

*Discussion starters
for your family*

Our Past:

- What are stories from our grandparenting adults or previous generations that we most remember?
- What values have been important to our family for a long time?

Our Present:

- What are some things that are really important to our family?
- When are times we've felt close as a family? What made that time special?

Our Future:

- Imagine our family in 20 years. Where might we each be living? What might we be doing together?
- What do we hope will be the same about our family in the future? What do we hope will be different?

3. Try it

Tips for families

- When you're frustrated with a family member, ask yourself, "What might I do differently if I was arguing with a good friend?" That question can remind you to think of being in your family as being in relationship.
- For parenting adults: Talk with other parenting adults who have older kids. They may have fresh insights into the ups and downs of parenting through the teen years.



TRY IT

A Family Relationships Checklist

Give each family member a copy of this checklist. Have each privately check the action that you think is almost always true in your family. Then talk about your responses. Share examples and stories to explain. There are no right or wrong answers.



EXPRESS CARE

- We trust each other.
- We really pay attention to each other when we're together.
- We make each other feel known and valued.
- We show each other that we enjoy being with each other.
- We praise each other for our efforts and achievements.



SHARE POWER

- We take each other seriously and treat each other fairly.
- We involve each other in decisions that affect each person.
- We work together to solve problems and reach goals.
- We give each other chances to make decisions and take the lead.



CHALLENGE GROWTH

- We expect each other to live up to our potential.
- We push each other to go further.
- We insist that we each take responsibility for our own actions.
- We help each other learn from mistakes and setbacks.



PROVIDE SUPPORT

- We guide each other through hard situations and systems.
- We help each other be strong, confident, and take charge of life.
- We stand up for each other when we need it.
- We set limits that keep each other on track and moving forward.



EXPAND POSSIBILITIES

- We inspire each other to be hopeful for the future.
- We expose each other to new ideas, experiences, and places.
- We introduce each other to people who can help us grow.

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SESSION 2

The Power of Caring and Caring About Power



KEY IDEAS

1. All of us care about each other in our families.
2. Every family has power dynamics, such as decision making and responsibilities. Each family is different.
3. As our kids grow up:
 - Expressing care can become more awkward.
 - Power issues can turn into power struggles or conflicts.
4. We can learn practical ways to express care and share power that make them enriching and enjoyable parts of family life.

During the Workshop

- 2.1 Express Care: Some Key Ideas
- 2.2 Tips for Parenting Adults: Showing Affection with Teenagers
- 2.3 Questions to Ask
- 2.4 Share Power: Some Key Ideas
- 2.5 Expressing Care: More, Less, Or Not at All?
- 2.6 Tips for Youth: 15 Ways Youth Can Express Care to Parenting and Other Family Adults
- 2.7 Sharing Power: What Approach Fits Your Family?
- 2.8 Sharing Power: What Approach Fits Your Family? (Sample)

After the Workshop

- 2.9 Planner: What Will Family Do Together?
- 2.10 A Guide For Your Week
- 2.11 Highs and Lows
- 2.12 Expressing Care During Shared Family Meals
- 2.13 Yes, And . . .
- 2.14 Practice Negotiating Together: A Step-by-Step Process

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EXPRESS CARE

Some Key Ideas

Positive relationships are built on expressing care. When we express care, we respond to this unspoken request:

“Show me that I matter to you.”

88%
of US parents
believe expressing
care is strong in
their family.

Why Does Expressing Care Matter in Families?

Caring parent-youth relationships help us . . .

- **Deepen bonds** with each other.
- Form positive relationships with **other people**.
- **Reduce stress**, so it is easier to focus, solve problems, and reach goals.
- **Feel more confident** about ourselves and the future.

What Does Expressing Care Involve?

Search Institute has identified five actions that express care:

Be dependable	Be someone I can trust.
Listen	Really pay attention when we are together.
Believe in me	Make me feel known and valued.
Be warm	Show me you enjoy being with me.
Encourage	Praise me for my efforts and achievements.

How Expressing Care Shifts as Kids Grow Up

Family members tend to express care less frequently to each other when kids are between ages 10 and 14. Kids spend more time on their own. They often no longer like the ways parenting adults expressed care when they were younger. It's harder to spend quality time together. Families have to find new ways to express care as teenagers grow up.

There's also good news: Expressing care **starts to improve** during the high school years. That's particularly true if families stay connected, even when it's awkward or hard.



Tips for Parenting Adults

Showing Affection with Teenagers

As kids enter the teen years, they can seem to push parents away. They may bristle or groan with every hug. Or they may pretend to gag with any “I love you.”

What’s Going On?

Around the middle school years, young people are dealing with changes in their bodies and thinking. They are shifting from being children to becoming adults. They are balancing becoming independent and also wanting parenting adults’ affection and encouragement.

As Parenting Adults...

We need to adjust how we show that we love and care for them. How do we EXPRESS CARE when a tween seems to say STAY AWAY? Try these strategies:

1. **Ask** them what they want, and adjust accordingly. What are they comfortable with in different settings? (For example, they may be comfortable with a hug at home, but not in front of their friends.)
2. **Respect** boundaries and privacy. Saying “Love you!” before they head out the door for school may go over better than in front of all their friends.
3. **Spend time** together—and not just doing chores or homework. A few minutes of undivided attention lets them know that they’re important to you. You enjoy being with them.
4. **Do physical things** together. Play basketball. Run. Build something. Work out. Do what works best for your family.
5. **Keep smiling**, joking, and laughing together—even if it means laughing at yourself.
6. **Try not to take it too personally.** Don’t assume that a rejection one day will mean the same thing will happen tomorrow. Remember that kids are working through all kinds of feelings.

Remember:

Each young person is different. The key is to listen to each child. Find **what works to keep you connected**, even if how you connect needs to change.



How can you turn power struggles into power sharing?

Ask yourself these questions:

THE MAIN POINT:

Power struggles are not really a “behavior issue.” They are a relationship issue. Learning to “share power” is key to a strong parent-child relationship.

Questions to Ask:

When kids approach the teen years, everything seems to become a power struggle! Why? The basic answer is that they’re growing up:

- Their brains are changing. They’re starting to think differently.
- They’re trying to figure out who they are.
- They are shifting from mostly depending on others for everything toward having more responsibility and self-control.

Underneath all these changes, power struggles are signs that your relationship is changing. That’s a normal part of growing up. In the long run, it’s good. **But it’s hard right now!**

- 1. What will help you slow down and cool down?** Take deep breath. Don’t make it worse by escalating.
- 2. What’s behind the power struggle?** Is it an important difference of opinion? Is something major at stake (such as safety)? Are you tired, stressed, or upset about something else?
- 3. Are they right this time?** Are you holding on too tightly? Have they matured and can take on more responsibility? It may be time to give more responsibility.
- 4. What’s the best way to share power in this instance?** Should you listen carefully, and then decide yourself? Should you offer choices? Should you negotiate a win-win? Should you let the child make the decision?
- 5. Do you need to stay firm this time?** You can listen, explain, and empathize. Then make tough decisions and maintain the needed expectations and consequences.
- 6. When can you say yes?** Saying yes when you can makes it easier to say no when you need to.
- 7. How will you keep expressing care?** You love your kids, even when you’re mad at them. They are more likely to accept decisions if they know you really listen to them and want the best for them.
- 8. What’s the big picture?** Your ultimate goal is to help your child learn and grow, including learning to negotiate and make good decisions. Sometimes we may need to renegotiate and let go so our kids can learn, even though they will make mistakes.



SHARE POWER

Some Key Ideas

“Share power” doesn’t mean “give up” power. When we share power in our family, we respond to this unspoken request:

**“Treat me with respect
and give me a say.”**

57%
of US parents
believe sharing
power is strong in
their family.

Why Is It Important for Families to Share Power?

Sharing power in families helps **parenting adults** . . .

- Deepen their relationships with their kids.
- Learn to trust their kids.

Sharing power in families helps **young people** . . .

- Become more responsible and motivated.
- Adjust to school transitions.
- Communicate, negotiate, and solve problems.
- Avoid risky behaviors and make better decisions.
- Be prepared to form relationships throughout life.

Sharing Power Is a Common Source of Conflict in Families

Sharing power leads to more give-and-take in relationships. But it can also lead to conflicts. Parenting adults may have different expectations than young people about when, where, and how to share power and give young people a voice.

Most families have more conflicts over power and independence during the middle-school years. The conflicts tend to even out or decline through high school.

Expressing Care: More, Less, Or Not at All?

In the chart below are some different ways parenting adults sometimes express that they care.

- Write one of the following four symbols in each of the boxes based on how much you would like your parents to express care. **Would you like your parent to . . .**

+ Do this more?

= Do this the same?

- Do this less?

X Not do this at all?

- In each row labeled “something else you like,” write one other way you like your parent(s) to show you that they care that relates to that area (if you can think of something).

Specific ways a parent may express care *(Add others you experience—or wish for)*

Be dependable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Remembers to do what they said they would do with you.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shows up on time to pick you up.
<i>Something else you like</i>		
Listen to each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Really pays attention to you when you’re talking.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Puts down their smart phones when you have something important to discuss.
<i>Something else you like</i>		
Believe in each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shows real interest in the things that you like, such as your music or your online games.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tells people stories about things you have accomplished.
<i>Something else you like</i>		
Be warm	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gives you hugs in front of your friends.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spends a day together doing something you really enjoy.
<i>Something else you like</i>		
Encourage each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheers really loudly when you’re in a concert, game, tournament, or other performance.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sends you a text to say they are thinking of you on a day that you have a hard test.
<i>Something else you like</i>		

- Out of all the ideas of what a parent does you added and put + signs by, draw a star ★ by 1 or 2 that you would most appreciate, and would like to talk about with your parent.



Tips for Youth

15 Ways Youth Can Express Care to Parenting and Other Family Adults

Ways to Express Care

Here are 15 ways you can let your parenting adults and other close family adults know that you care about them. They're likely to appreciate these expressions. But if you want to be sure they like something you say or do, just ask them!

1. Say "thank you" when they say or do something you appreciate.
2. Send a text or email just to ask how they're doing.
3. Offer to help with a project they're doing.
4. Volunteer to run errands with them—just to keep them company.
5. Give them a hug if they seem discouraged or stressed.
6. Put away your cell phone when you're talking with them.
7. Laugh at their jokes—and tell them your own jokes. Send a funny meme.
8. Show up when you promise. If you can't every time, apologize.
9. Give them a greeting card on their birthday and other special occasions.
10. Leave a note or a picture on the bathroom mirror to let them know you're thinking of them.
11. Offer to hang out with them, even if you could go spend time with friends.
12. Watch a TV show or movie that they'd prefer to see. Listen to their music.
13. Ask them to tell you stories about their life and other things that are important to them.
14. Make time to do an activity together that both of you really enjoy.
15. Say "I love you," even if it's a little bit awkward.

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Sharing Power: What Fits Your Family?

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Identify the specific topic about which you're having power struggles. Pick a topic that comes up pretty often, but focus on just one topic at a time. Write that topic here: _____
2. Read the different statements under "The parenting adult's approach," which are written from a parent's perspective. These are not necessarily right or wrong. It depends on the issue, the circumstances, and the family. Often this is where the disagreement—the power struggle—happens.
3. Write the topic from #1 above under **the actual approach** that your family most often uses to decide how to deal with those conflict or power struggles. Then have each person individually put your initials under the approach that you think would be the **best approach** for a decision to be made about that issue. Don't argue or question each other.
4. Have each person give three reasons why they think it's important for the decision to be made the way they chose. They may want to refer to the four actions within "sharing power" as they are making their case. Everyone else should really listen, remembering some of the key ideas in "Express Care," too.
5. After everyone has spoken, see if you can come to agreement of about an approach that would be okay for everyone, even if it isn't your first choice. If you can, draw an arrow to "move" the "power struggle issue" from where it is (and you're having power struggles) to a new place that you all agree is better. (If you really have a hard time working through this kind of problem together, take time in the next week to try the "Practice Negotiating Together" tool, which gives you a process for working through disagreements.
6. See what happens the next time this issue comes up and you use this new approach. Do you still have power struggles? If so, you may still need to do some fine-tuning!

THE PARENTING ADULT'S APPROACH						
"This is the decision, because I said so."	"This is why I made the decision that I made."	"What you think will help me decide."	"Here are three choices. Which one should we do?"	"Let's decide this together."	"Let me help you, but it's your decision."	"It's your choice. I'll stay out of it."
Parenting adult has all the power	Different ways to share power between youth and parenting adult					Youth has all the power

Sharing Power: What Fits Your Family? (Sample)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Identify the specific topic about which you're having power struggles. Pick a topic that comes up pretty often, but focus on just one topic at a time. Write that topic here: _____
2. Read the different statements under "The parenting adult's approach," which are written from a parent's perspective. These are not necessarily right or wrong. It depends on the issue, the circumstances, and the family. Often this is where the disagreement—the power struggle—happens.
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6. See what happens the next time this issue comes up and you use this new approach. Do you still have power struggles? If so, you may still need to do some fine-tuning!

THE PARENTING ADULTS APPROACH						
"This is the decision, because I said so."	"This is why I made the decision that I made."	"What you think will help me decide."	"Here are three choices. Which one should we do?"	"Let's decide this together."	"Let me help you, but it's your decision."	"It's your choice. I'll stay out of it."
<p>What we eat for dinner each night</p> <p>Setting bedtime/curfew</p>	<p>Choosing who family members spend time with socially</p>	<p>Where we should go for a weekend vacation</p>	<p>Which chores a young person should do</p>	<p>Choosing how to practice faith or spirituality</p>	<p>What we wear to school/work</p>	
Parenting adult has all the power	Different ways to share power between youth and parenting adult				Youth has all the power	

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PLANNER: What Will Our Family Do Together?

If You Have . . .	Activity	Description	Plan When You'll Do It
1 minute	Post It: A Guide for Your Week	Display this guide where all family members will see it. The refrigerator is usually a great spot!	
	Keep Connected Pledge and Plan	Decide as a family one way you want to be more intentional about expressing care and one new way you want to focus on sharing power. Then add a "reminder ribbon" and "sharing sun" to your Keep Connected Pledge and Plan. See the <i>Keep Connected Pledge and Plan Guidebook</i> .	
5 minutes	Talk About It	Choose one question to discuss any time you have down time – in the car, waiting in line, over a meal.	
5 minutes	Try It: High and Lows	Adopt this activity from <i>Keep Connected</i> sessions as a part of your family routine. Try it during meals, while you're on a walk, or before you go to bed.	
2 – 20 minutes (how much fun you're having?)	Try It: Yes, And	Laugh your way through this activity based on improv comedy. It keeps a conversation going in a fun way while adding laughter to your day.	
30 minutes	Try It: Expressing Care During Shared Family Meals	Choose a time for a shared meal when distractions are minimal, when people are not in a hurry, and when people don't have other tasks competing for their attention.	
30 minutes	Try It: Practice Negotiating Together	Practice this step-by-step process for working through a problem. Start with a small dispute. Then decide how you might use it for bigger challenges.	
10 minutes	Online Exploration	Visit www.keepconnected.info to explore extra resources on express care and share power.	

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A Guide For Your Week

Display this page where you will notice it through the week (such as on a refrigerator).

Think About It

Key Ideas to Remember

EXPRESS CARE: Show each other that we enjoy being together and want the best for each other.

- All of us care about each other in our families.
- It can be harder to express care as kids grow up. So we have to find ways to adjust so it works for everyone.
- Expressing care really begins with really listening to each other.

SHARE POWER: Treat each other with **respect and give each other a say.**

- Sharing power can be hard in family relationships. But it's important, particularly during the teen years.
- We share power in different ways for different issues.
- You can turn power struggles into power sharing.

Talk About It

Discussion Starters for Your Family

- Who is really good at showing you that they care about you? What do they do that you really appreciate?
- What do you enjoy doing together as a family that you haven't been able to do lately? What do you enjoy about it?
- When has someone shared power with you by treating you with respect or giving you a say? What did they do? How did it affect you?
- How is your family like previous generations of your family when it comes to sharing power? How is it different? Share stories.

Try It

Tips for Your Family

- When family members tell you that they're dealing with something hard, ask them about it later so they don't have to bring it up again.
- Make time for humor, fun, and laughter amid the practical tasks.
- Include each other in thinking about decisions, even when one person has to make the final call.
- When you disagree, take time to understand each other's point of view.
- For parents: Let young people make decisions about activities you do together and what you talk about.

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Highs and Lows

Use this activity from Keep Connected as a part of your family routine. Try it during family meals, while you're on a walk or driving around, or before you go to bed.

1. Sit together (in a circle, if possible). Put away distractions, such as electronics.
2. Invite each person to share one “high” (a good thing about their week or their day) and one “low” (challenge they encountered this week or today).
3. Some guidelines for sharing:
 - Keep it brief (2-4 sentences)
 - Share only what you want to share
 - You may pass if you choose.
4. Some guidelines for responding:
 - Feel free to respond with a word of support (“congratulations,” “I’m sorry”), but . . .
 - Don’t interrupt
 - Don’t argue
 - Don’t ask a lot of questions
 - Don’t take over with your own story
 - Don’t give advice or try to “fix” a problem
5. After has shared their highs and lows, thank everyone for sharing and listening to each other. You can move on to other activities. Or you may continue with other Keep Connected activities.



Expressing Care During Shared Family Meals

It can be hard to set aside time to share a meal together as a family. But finding that time can be a **great way to express care**. Pick one day this week when you'll all share a meal. Then talk about these expectations or rules—or set your own—to make it a great opportunity to express care to each other. Begin by asking each family member to talk about a high (good thing) or a low (hard thing) for the day. Then use other conversation starters from Family Handout 2.3b.

Quick reminders to make meals times to express care



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TRY IT

Yes, And...

One of the ways improv comedy works is by using a technique called “yes, and...” No matter what other actors say or do, you don’t disagree or take the scene in a different direction. Rather, you say, “Yes, and...” building on the previous idea. Watch [this video example](https://youtu.be/cSzCfsGvwj0), (https://youtu.be/cSzCfsGvwj0) which contrasts “yes, and” with “yes, but.”

The same dynamic happens in our families. By saying “yes, and,” we show interest in something that matters to someone else. Then we add to it from our own perspectives.

You try it! Have one family member read a story starter (below). Then someone else says, “yes, and” then adds to the story. The next person does the same thing. Keep going until you’re completely stumped, or you’re laughing too hard to continue.

Try These Story Starters (or make up your own):

- On my way to school/work today, I came across... [complete the sentence, then the next person says, “Yes, and...” to continue the story]
- The person I most admire in the world is _____ because they...
- If I won a \$1 million prize, the first thing I would do is...

When you’re done, think together about how “yes, and” might help you show each other that you’re really interested in what they’re interested in.





Practice Negotiating Together

A Step-by-Step Process

For each person to share power in families, you need work through disagreements. This activity lets you practice a simple negotiation process. Remember: The goal isn't to get "your way." The goal is to find a solution that meets everyone's needs and keeps your relationships strong.

1. **Pick a small and specific area of conflict** that affects everyone in your family. Describe it without blaming anyone. For example, "Our kitchen and living room always have stuff piled around" is better than "Andy never picks up his junk on the living room floor."
2. **Find a time and place when everyone can focus.**
3. **Describe the issue**, as you understand it. Ask others to clarify it from their perspective. Work together to understand the problem that everyone agrees is accurate without blaming anyone.
4. **Brainstorm what might contributing to the problem.** These can include things people do, things about the circumstances, and any other issues.
5. **Ask people each to think of ways they might be contributing to the problem.** Consider potential ways everyone might be contributing, not just one person.
6. Agree on a **shared and specific goal** that everyone really cares about and benefits from.
7. **Brainstorm a bunch of ways your family could tackle that problem**, both individually and as a group.
8. **Evaluate your ideas.** Which ones would help the most? Put them together. Refine them. Think of the pros and cons. Focus on ideas that everyone believes could work.
9. **Pick one or two things you'll do.** Talk about how you're going to check in on how it's going. Decide what you'll do if everyone doesn't follow through.
10. After a few days, **check in** to see how it's going. Adjust, if needed. You can even go back to your longer list of ideas to try something else. If you're still stuck, brainstorm again to come up with more ideas.
11. Once you've tried (and refined) these steps for smaller challenges, your family will be ready to try this process on other, **bigger challenges you face.**

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SESSION 3

In the Zone: Challenge and Support Growth



KEY IDEAS

- In positive relationships, we challenge each other to grow in different parts of life so that we can each be and become our best selves.
- When we encourage each other to grow, it's also important also to provide support in different ways.
- Challenge growth is best when it focuses on our own goals or priorities, not on things other people wish we would do.
- We improve the most in the “Growth Zone,” where we are stretched to learn and try new things, but are also supported. The Growth Zone is the intersection between Challenge Growth and Provide Support.

Use During the Workshop

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Finding the Growth Zone

Here are some areas where youth and parents may want to grow and need both challenge and support. Checkmark some that are important in your family. Add others that may be missing.

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Being really good at creating or using technology | 6. Doing your best in school or at work | 10. Treating other people well |
| 2. Being a good friend to others | 7. Being spiritual or following religious practices | 11. Being artistic or creative |
| 3. Being mechanical and fixing things | 8. Excelling in sports or athletics | 12. Being a leader |
| 4. Being compassionate and helping others | 9. Taking care of yourself (health, diet, exercise, sleep) | 13. |
| 5. Being a responsible person | | 14. |
| | | 15. |

How have you tended to approach each of the issues that are important to someone in your family? Write the number for each issue in the appropriate box below.

<p>FOR OTHERS</p> <p>In areas where they want to grow, are you providing the kinds of support and challenge that they want and need? If not, what might you do to shift the balance?</p>	<p>High support and Low challenge <i>(Too Cold)</i></p>	<p>THE GROWTH ZONE</p> <p>High support AND High challenge <i>(Just Right)</i></p>	<p>FOR YOU</p> <p>In areas where you want to grow, are family members providing the kind of support and challenge you want and need? What would it look like? Have you asked them?</p>
	<p>Low support AND Low challenge <i>(Hasn't Come Up Yet)</i></p>	<p>Low support AND High challenge <i>(Too Cold)</i></p>	

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CHALLENGE
GROWTH

Some Key Ideas

Having other people challenge us to grow isn't always fun. But we all need others to believe in us and expect more from us. Challenging growth means

“Push me to keep getting better.”

70%
of US parents
believe challenging
growth is strong in
their family.

What Does Challenging Growth Involve?

Search Institute has identified four everyday actions that challenge growth:

Expect my best: Expect me to live up to my potential.

Stretch: Push me to go further.

Hold me accountable: Insist I take responsibility for my actions.

Grow from failures: Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.

Why Is It Important for Families to Challenge Each Other to Grow?

Challenging ourselves and encouraging each other is part of how we learn and grow. Without challenge, we get bored.

When parenting adults **challenge kids to be their best**, young people:

- Learn to talk about different points of view.
- Test their own abilities.
- Practice managing emotions.
- Stay focused on long-term goals.

In the process, young people discover their **power to shape their own lives**.

What Does Challenging Growth Look Like During the Teen Years?

As kids move into the teen years, they need to become more self-motivated. So while parenting adults often need to encourage their kids, they also can shift responsibility by:

- **Asking challenging questions that help kids clarify their own thinking.**
- **Encouraging kids to consider differences in opinion.**
- **Gradually sharing more responsibilities as youth demonstrate growth.**

BE AWARE!

Not all the ways we might challenge our kids are good. The following hurt kids' motivation:

- Emotional manipulation
- Dismissing kids' experiences and emotions
- Inconsistent or harsh discipline



PROVIDE
SUPPORT

Some Key Ideas

An important part of a good relationship is to support each other. We do this by giving practical help to each other, giving feedback, and standing up for each other when we need to. Providing support means

77%
of US parents
believe providing
support is strong in
their family.

“Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.”

What Does Providing Support Involve?

Search Institute has identified four actions that provide support:

Navigate: Guide me through hard situations and systems.

Empower: Help me be confident and take charge of my life.

Advocate: Stand up for me when I need it.

Set boundaries: Put in place limits that keep me on track.

Why Is It Important for Families to Provide Support to Each Other?

When youth have support from parents, they are more likely to:

- Feel secure and confident;
- Be more engaged in school and learning;
- Have lower rates of substance abuse; and
- Experience less stress or emotional problems.

Parents also need support. When they have support from family members, extended family, and friends, they are more likely to:

- Use positive parenting practices;
- Experience lower stress from work-family conflicts; and
- Be able to provide the support and advocacy their kids need.

What Does Providing Support Look Like During the Teen Years?

When they are young, babies and children depend on their parenting adults for almost everything. As they grow, they can do more on their own. They may get better than their parenting adults at some things (such as school subjects, technology, or other talents).

But that doesn't mean they don't need support. It just means that the ways parenting adults provide support needs to shift. Kids learn to take initiative, solve problems, and be responsible—all critical parts of growing up. Parenting adults are still there to give perspectives about new challenges in life, help problem solve, guide them, and place limits when needed.

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Understanding the “Growth Zone”

What happens:

Your experiences:

Too Easy (The Boredom Zone)



What you’re doing is too easy because you already have the skills and knowledge you need to do it. So you get bored and don’t put any effort into it.

As a result, you don’t really get any better because it’s not interesting or motivating. You’re not challenged to grow in that area.

What are areas in life where you haven’t tried hard because it was easy for you and you weren’t pushed to learn or improve?

Just Right (The Growth Zone)



You push yourself—and others push you—to do something that is a little harder. But with effort, guidance, practice, and encouragement, you learn to do it.

When this level starts to get easy, you add more challenge (or “weight”) so you can keep getting better.

What are areas of life where you have been pushed hard and have been able to learn, grow, and improve as you practiced, built skills, and gained confidence?

Too Hard (The Frustration Zone)



Sometimes you’re asked to do things that you’ve never done before or that are much harder than you’ve done before.

If it’s too hard, you may not be able to make any progress at it. So you are likely to get frustrated and give up—or just not try in the first place. You just stay where you are and don’t grow.

What areas of life have been so hard for you that you’ve just given up, even though you wish you could do them?

PLANNER: What Will Our Family Do Together?

If You Have . . .	Activity	Description	Plan When You'll Do It
1 minute	Post It: A Guide for Your Week	Display this guide where all family members will see it. The refrigerator is usually a great spot!	
15 – 20 minutes	Keep Connected Pledge and Plan	Decide as a family one way you want to be more intentional about challenging growth and one new way to provide support, adding your rubber bands to the pledge. IMPORTANT: You'll also think ahead to the last session, Expand Possibilities, to complete your Pledge and Plan, which you will be asked to share with the whole group during the final session. See the <i>Keep Connected Pledge and Plan Guidebook</i> .	
5 minutes	Talk About It	Choose one question to discuss any time you have down time – in the car, waiting in line, over a meal.	
10 minutes	Try It: Feedback That Motivates Growth	A big part of challenging growth and providing support is to give feedback that is motivating and helpful. Learn about four keys to positive feedback. Identify areas of feedback that you want to work on in your family.	
30 minutes	Try It: How Do You Think About Failures & Setbacks?	Use a checklist together to reflect on how you view failure. Learn how to rethink failures and setbacks as opportunities for growth and learning.	
15 minutes	Try It: Set Up Your Lifelines Beyond the Family	Think about the people outside of your household who can provide support to your family.	
10 minutes	Online Exploration	Visit https://www.KeepConnected.info to explore extra resources on express care and share power.	

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POST IT

A Guide For Your Week

Display this page where you will notice it through the week (such as on a refrigerator).

Think about it

Key ideas to remember

PROVIDING SUPPORT involves practical ways of helping each other complete tasks and achieve goals.

CHALLENGING GROWTH involves encouraging each other to keep getting better and to be our best.

- In positive relationships, we push each other to grow in different parts of life so that we can each be and become our best selves.
- Challenge growth is best when it focuses on someone's own goals or priorities, not on things other people wish they would do.
- We grow most in the "Growth Zone," where we are stretched to grow, but also guided and supported so we can succeed.

Talk about it

Discussion starters

1. Who is someone you admire who really encourages you to go after things that matter to you? How do they motivate you?
2. Think about a time you were facing a challenge. How did family members advocate for you? How did their response affect you?
3. How can challenging other people to grow either help or hurt your relationship with them?
4. How does having a strong relationship make it easier to push people to grow and support them?

Try it

Tips for families

1. Expect each other to do their best.
2. Shift levels of support. Give more support when people are struggling, and less when they are making progress.
3. Remind each other that making mistakes is part of learning. Praise each other for hard work, whether those efforts succeed or fail.
4. Highlight future goals. Talk with each other about the things you look forward to or dream about, and support each other in going after those goals and dreams.



Visit www.KeepConnected.info

Find ideas, quizzes, activities, discussion starters, and more to strengthen family relationships.

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TRY IT

Feedback That Motivates Growth

When you want to challenge someone to grow, the way you give feedback can make a big difference. Here are four steps you can use.

HOW TO USE: As a family, talk through these ideas together. Think of examples when these have worked for you. Identify one or two areas where you all want to practice giving feedback.

Why?



Goal: Focus on what will help the person make progress toward goals.

Confidence: Be clear that you believe they can do it.

Care: Show that you care about their growth and success.

What?



When: Give feedback that's timely—but not before they are ready.

Specific: Describe specific actions that can be changed and practiced.

Strengths and Gaps: What were they doing that helped? What was getting in the way? Knowing both increases learning.

So What?



Listen, Then Share: Listen first to ideas. Then offer more, if needed.

Connect to Goals: Talk about connections to the goals that motivate.

Build Confidence: Reinforce self-feedback and ideas for growth.

Now What?



Reaction: Pay attention to reactions. Do they understand the feedback? Does it make sense? Is it overwhelming?

Doable: Identify one or two changes that can make a difference now.

Repeat: Keep giving feedback that helps. Celebrate progress.

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TRY IT

How Do You Think About Failures & Setbacks?

Sometimes when we challenge ourselves and each other to grow, we fall short. We make mistakes. It happens to everyone.

The question is not whether we will sometimes fail. We will. The real question is: How do we respond to failure? This activity invites your family to think about that question together.

Have all family members complete this checklist on their own, then discuss the questions that follow.

1. Here are seven pairs of statements. Pick the one in each pair that best matches your views.

_____ Successes and failures are rewards and punishments.

_____ Successes and failures are information to learn from.

_____ When you complete a task, you focus on what didn't work or go as planned.

_____ When you finish a task, you focus on what you achieved.

_____ When you don't meet expectations, you give up.

_____ When you don't meet expectations, you come up with a plan for next time.

_____ There's something wrong with you when you fail.

_____ There can be lots of reasons we fail, and some are beyond our control.

_____ When you fail, you conclude: "I'm no good at this. Why bother?"

_____ When you fail, you conclude: "That didn't work. I want to figure out why."

_____ Even when I do something carefully, I worry that it isn't right.

_____ When I do something carefully, I am usually satisfied with my effort.

- Did you mostly check statements in one column or the other?
- Where did you make the same and different choices from each other?
- Do the differences between family members reflect how you see each other?

2. The two columns represent two mindsets about failures:

Fixed Mindsets

People with fixed mindsets tend to . . .

- See failures or mistakes as signs that they aren't good enough.
- Be perfectionists, or set low expectations for themselves.
- Be self-critical and overly concerned about what others think.

Growth Mindsets

People with growth mindsets tend to . . .

- See failures or mistakes as opportunities to grow and learn.
- Have high standards, but keep a positive outlook when they don't reach them.
- Be self-motivated and have strong decision-making abilities.

3. Reflect on your own choices on the checklist. Discuss:

- Do you think choices reflect the mindset that you really have? Why or why not? Give some examples of how you see your mindset.
- What do we do in our family that reinforces one mindset or the other?

4. What are ways we can do more in our family to focus on having a Growth Mindset, using our mistakes and failures as opportunities to grow and learn?

Pick one of these strategies to try:

- ✓ Praise each other for effort and for challenging yourselves.
- ✓ Give each other a chance to correct mistakes and improve.
- ✓ Model learning from mistakes. Step back and highlight the mistake without alarm or embarrassment.
- ✓ When you give feedback to each other, focus on the process used, not just the final result. Say something like: "Maybe you could think of another way to do it," which encourages them to keep working on it.



Set Up Your Lifelines Beyond the Family

A plot-thickening feature of ABC's long-running TV show, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, is a series of "lifelines" to help contestants when they get stumped. The lifelines have changed over time, but they have included the opportunity to ask other people for answers or hints to questions.

This activity uses the idea of lifelines to think about who family members can turn to when they get "stumped" while working toward a goal. These people also become allies or advocates who also provide support beyond the family.

1. Start the activity by imagining that a family member has been selected to be on the TV show, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*. But this time, the prize is not money. Instead, it's a goal the person has. For example, a young person may aspire to attend a particular university, to excel in a sport, or play an instrument. An adult may aspire to get a new job or become a master gardener.
2. Think about who you would want to be your "lifelines"—people who provide support to you if you get stumped on this quest.
 - **Phone a friend:** Who would you call? Why? (For example, a particular friend might be really good at motivating you.)
 - **Text a family member:** Which family member would you reach out to? (One might be particularly helpful in thinking through solutions; another might play devil's advocate well.)
 - **Ask an expert:** What professional would you turn to for advice? (This probably depends a lot on your area of focus!)
 - **Poll your family:** Which relatives would you seek input from when making a decision?
3. Have each family member identify a goal or challenge they're working on now (large or small). Identify one way others in the family can be a "lifeline" right now to help them stay focused, motivated, and moving forward toward that goal.
4. Decide as a family when you want to check back in to see how each person is doing on their goal and which "lifelines" they've checked in with.

New Possibilities for Our Family and the Future



KEY IDEAS

- Expanding possibilities is an important way to **keep minds fresh and growing.**
- Parents open doors for their children to:
 - **Discover more about themselves**
 - **Find new opportunities**
 - **Play meaningful, responsible roles**
 - Expand the **web of supports**
- Teens’ **relationships with their parents usually improve** when they also form relationships with other trustworthy adults.
- When exposed to other ideas, teens are **more likely to learn and grow.**
- The graduation celebration reinforces and celebrates the family’s progress and its commitments for the future.

Use During the Workshop

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EXPAND
POSSIBILITIES

Some Key Ideas

We help each other grow when we encourage each other to try new things, go to new places, and meet new people. It expands opportunities when we . . .

“Connect each other with people and places that broaden our world.”

38%
of US parents
believe expanding
possibilities is strong
in their family.

What Does Expand Possibilities Involve?

Three actions expand possibilities through our relationships:

Inspire: Inspire me to see possibilities for my future.

Enlarge: Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places.

Connect: Introduce me to people who can help me grow.

Why Is It Important for Families to Expand Possibilities for Each Other?

Expanding possibilities is an important way to keep our minds fresh and growing. By connecting with the people, places, and experiences, we:

- Discover more about themselves and what matters.
- Find new opportunities, including careers, education, art, and recreation;
- Get experience playing meaningful, responsible roles in society.
- Connect with people who will look out for them. These connections can be really important if kids face crises, prejudice, or other challenges.

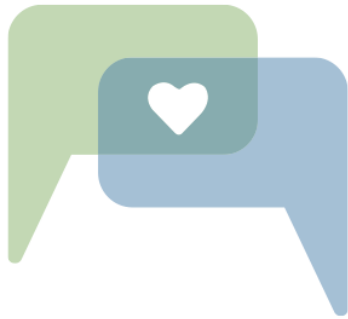
Are You Uneasy about Expanding Possibilities?

As children become teens, they spend more time with other people and ideas.

That can be worrisome. We want to protect our kids. What will they pick up from other adults, ideas, and experiences? Will our kids turn to them instead of to us?

But there’s good news:

1. Relationships with other adults usually **improve teens’ relationships with their parenting adults.**
2. When kids are exposed to other ideas, **they are more likely to learn and grow**—particularly when they talk about what they’re learning at home.



Your Relationship

When it's time to graduate.

Think about what you've learned and experienced during Keep Connected...

...then think about what you'd like your relationship to be like when _____ is graduating from high school.

High School Graduate



Proud Parent

When your child graduates from high school, how do you hope you will:

EXPRESS CARE with each other:

SHARE POWER with each other:

CHALLENGE GROWTH with each other:

PROVIDE SUPPORT with each other:

EXPAND POSSIBILITIES with each other:

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Main Ideas

Check two or three ideas that have stuck with you the most from Keep Connected.



- Kids do best when they have **strong relationships with parenting adults** through the teen years.
- But **those relationships change** through the teenage years.
- Five key actions help to keep these relationships strong.**



EXPRESS CARE

- All of us care** about each other in our families.
- It can be harder to express care as kids grow up. So we have to **find ways to adjust** so it works for everyone.
- Expressing care begins with **really listening to each other.**



SHARE POWER

- Sharing power can be hard** in family relationships. But it's important, particularly during the teen years.
- We **share power in different ways** for different issues.
- You can **turn power struggles into power sharing.**



PROVIDE SUPPORT



CHALLENGE GROWTH

- In positive relationships, we **encourage each other** to grow in different parts of life so that we can each **be and become our best selves.**
- Challenge growth is best when it **focuses on someone's own goals or priorities**, not on things other people wish they would do.
- We grow most in the "Growth Zone."** That is we are stretched to grow, but also guided and supported so we can succeed.



EXPAND POSSIBILITIES

- As we grow up, **we discover new things about ourselves and each other.** We explore new ideas, have new experiences, and get to know people and cultures that are different from us.
- A great way to expand possibilities with each other is to **explore things you're curious about.**
- Having a **specific plan** to try new things can be a fun way to expand possibilities for each other.

PLANNER: What Will Our Family Do Together?

If You Have . . .	Activity	Description	Plan When You'll Do It
1 minute	Post It: A Guide for Your Week	Display this guide where all family members will see it. The refrigerator is usually a great spot!	
10 minutes per week	Keep Connected Pledge and Plan	Follow up on your pledge to each other. Check progress and gaps. Decided together how to stay on track—or get back on track. Check in with others, and celebrate milestones together.	
5 minutes	Talk About It	Choose one question to discuss any time you have down time – in the car, waiting in line, over a meal.	
5 -15 minutes per conversation	Talk About It: Reflecting on Your Keep Connected Experience	Follow up on the conversations in Keep Connected with additional conversations in your family. Decide together when and how you want to follow up with other types of experiences. Who else might you want to involve in those experiences?	
20 minutes each time	Try It: Good Habits to Keep Connected	Use this guide to tackle a new goal for a new issue that come up in your relationships or family dynamics. Check back to see how you're doing.	
xx minutes	Try It: Get Back on Track After Setbacks	Don't expect everything to go perfectly the first time. But don't assume that it's over when it's over the first time either. Use this tool as a family to figure out what happened and how you might approach it more effectively the next time.	
10 minutes	Online Exploration	Visit https://www.KeepConnected.info to explore extra resources on express care and share power.	

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A Guide for Your Week

Display this page where you will notice it through the week (such as on a refrigerator).

Think about it

Key ideas to remember

EXPANDING POSSIBILITIES involves connecting each other with people, ideas, and places that broaden our worlds.

- As we grow up, we discover new things about ourselves and each other when we explore new ideas, have new experiences, and get to know people and cultures that are different from us.
- A great way to expand possibilities with each other is to explore things you're curious about.
- Having a specific plan to try new things can be a fun way to expand possibilities for each other.

Talk about it

Discussion starters

1. What is one thing you really enjoy (such as music, hobbies, ideas) that someone in your family introduced you to? Tell about how they introduced you to it.
2. Who have been significant people beyond our immediate family who have had a big influence on you? How did they influence you?

Try it

Tips for families

1. Introduce each other people, places, ideas, cultures, and vocations that are not familiar to you. Start with ones they're curious about. Investigate those that come up in the news.
2. Encourage each other to try things different family members might be interested in. Try them together.
3. Find ways for your family to spend time with people who are different from you. For example, attend movies, concerts, or festivals from cultures other than your own.



Visit www.KeepConnected.info

Find ideas, quizzes, activities, discussion starters, and more to strengthen family relationships.



Reflecting on Your Keep Connected Experience

These questions are designed to help you reflect back on the five keys to parent-youth relationships that you've discussed through the Keep Connected workshop series. As a family, talk about them as a way to solidify and build on your experience.



EXPRESS
CARE



SHARE
POWER



CHALLENGE
GROWTH



PROVIDE
SUPPORT



EXPAND
POSSIBILITIES

Pick questions that everyone is interested in. If one question doesn't grab you, try a different one.

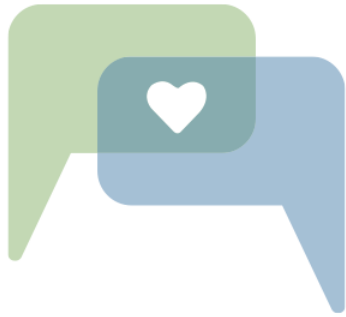
ANOTHER IDEA

If you've gotten to know other families through Keep Connected, plan to get together soon to talk about these questions and share other ideas and stories.

1. Read through the descriptions of all five keys above. What is **one thing that most resonated with you about each key?**
2. What did you learn during these workshops that made you **really appreciate something about your family** that you hadn't thought about before?
3. Is there something you learned about during the workshop series that you would **like to learn more** about? How might you explore it further?
4. What are some things you hope we can **keep doing together** as a family to keep connected during middle school and high school?
5. Were there **other families** in the workshop that you'd like to stay connected to when the series is over? What could you do to make sure you stay connected?
6. Some of the best ways to keep connected are to **set some habits or routines that you do together**. These might include family meals, a family meeting, regular family outings, or regular get-togethers with friends. If you tried some of these things, which ones do you think would work best for your family?

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Good Habits to Keep Connected

Use this storyboard to think through what you'll do together to keep connected. Focus on strategies you can use and people who will encourage you to stick with it.

1. COMMITMENT

What will we do to keep connected?

1. 2. 3.

2. BENEFITS

How will this keep us connected?

1.

2.

3.

4. PLAN

How can we remove or get over these obstacles?

1.

2.

3.

3. BARRIERS

What obstacles could get in the way:

1.

2.

3.

5. SUPPORTS

Who will help us stay on track?

7. REVIEW

When will we check in with each other?

6. REWARDS

How will we celebrate milestones?

1. 2. 3.



Get Back on Track After Setbacks

Common Obstacles to Maintaining Good Habits:

- Distractions
- Other priorities
- No time
- Too hard
- Forgetting
- Conflicts

You're going to have setbacks in your efforts to keep connected as a family. Other things will distract you. Conflicts will make it less fun to be together. You might just get bored or lose interest.

Bring your family together for a family meeting. Check in with highs and lows. Then use this worksheet to "diagnose" where you are and what you might do to reconnect and get back on track.

Steps:

1. Write on a sheet of plain paper your commitment to keep connected (from Session 4). Confirm that the commitment is something that people still believe is important and valuable to them. (If it's not, that may be the issue. You'd want to come up with a different focus then.)
2. Give each person 2-3 objects (pebbles, checkers, dominoes, buttons, or wooden blocks) that can symbolize obstacles to maintaining your commitment to keep connected.
3. Say that we're not going to point fingers or blame people for losing the focus on our commitment. Rather, we're going to figure out what obstacles got in the way. Then we'll figure out new ways to overcome them.
4. Have people brainstorm some of the barriers that came up. As people identify these barriers, have them place an object on top of the sheet of paper. Decide if they fit one of the common categories of barriers (box on right) to maintaining good habits.
5. When people run out of obstacles they can think of, notice how much harder it is to keep the commitment (written on the paper) in front of you.
6. Decide together which are the main 2-3 obstacles that get in the way. Identify specific things you'll try to overcome these obstacles. Write them down, and build a plan for doing them. In particular, focus on things you can do this time that you haven't tried before.
7. Set a time to come back (in about a week or two) to see how it's going.

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DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Framework

Developmental relationships are the roots of thriving and resilience for young people, regardless of their background or circumstances. Through these relationships, young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them. Just as trees rely on a system of roots to support and nourish them, young people need to experience developmental relationships in their families, schools, programs, and communities. However, too many young people miss these opportunities due to bias, prejudice, and systemic exclusion based on their race, ethnicity, income, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, or other differences. Ensuring that every young person experiences the developmental relationships they need is a vital challenge for the 21st century.

The Developmental Relationships Framework was developed by Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN; 800-888-7828; www.searchinstitute.org.

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EXPRESS CARE

Show me that I matter to you.

Be dependable
Be someone I can trust

Be warm
Show me you enjoy being with me

Listen
Really pay attention when we are together

Encourage
Praise me for my efforts and achievements

Believe in me
Make me feel known and valued



CHALLENGE GROWTH

Push me to keep getting better.

Expect my best
Expect me to live up to my potential

Hold me accountable
Insist I take responsibility for my actions

Stretch
Push me to go further

Reflect on failures
Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks



PROVIDE SUPPORT

Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.

Navigate
Guide me through hard situations and systems

Advocate
Stand up for me when I need it

Empower
Build my confidence to take charge of my life

Set boundaries
Put limits in place that keep me on track



SHARE POWER

Treat me with respect and give me a say.

Respect me
Take me seriously and treat me fairly

Collaborate
Work with me to solve problems and reach goals

Include me
Involve me in decisions that affect me

Let me lead
Create opportunities for me to take action and lead



EXPAND POSSIBILITIES

Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

Inspire
Inspire me to see possibilities for my future

Connect
Introduce me to people who can help me grow

Broaden horizons
Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places