
PLEDGE COLLAGE: INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS



The Keep Connected Pledge and Plan for Families



Description

Following each workshop, families create a collage. They add pictures and symbolic objects to it to after each session to highlight their family's commitments related to the workshop's topic.

How it works

Before the workshop series begins, provide each family with a *Keep Connected Pledge and Plan Kit* with all the needed supplies and the instructions. After each session, they will follow the instructions for how to take the next step in completing their collage. Each family will share something from its pledge with the other families as part of a closing ceremony in the workshop series.

Supplies for each family

Basic Supplies	Supplies to Create Reminder Symbols
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A posterboard to on which to create a collage• Old magazines, etc., for pictures to clip²• Markers (several colors)• Glue, a glue stick, or tape• Scissors to cut paper• A fine-point permanent marker(e.g., Sharpie)	<p><u>Follow up to Session 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pieces of ribbon for each family member (1 or 2 inches wide and 12 inches long); the kind used to wrap presents (express care)• Yellow construction paper (share power) <p><u>Follow up to Session 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-5 wide rubber bands (wide enough to write on) (support and challenge growth)• White construction paper (expand possibilities)• Green construction paper (commitments to grow relationships)

² When you provide magazines or other sources of images for families to use to create collages, make sure the pictures are reflective of the participating families in terms of race/ethnicity, family structure, and other aspects of their identities.



The Keep Connected Pledge and Plan for Families



Welcome!

A key to keeping strong relationships going in families is to weave shared activities or routines into our everyday lives that keep us focused on our relationships. The *Keep Connected Pledge and Plan for Families* is designed to help you do that. Doing this activity together between workshops helps your family:

- Spend a few minutes together reflecting on the session's topics.
- Create a shared memory focused on something that's important to you.
- Focus on commitments you make to keep your relationships strong.

After Session 1: Thriving Through the Teenage Years

1. Locate the posterboard in the Keep Connected Pledge and Plan for Families Kit. Find the markers or other decorating supplies. For now, **decorate only the CENTER of the posterboard.**
2. Have a young person draw a picture of the family, or attach a family photo to the CENTER of the posterboard.
3. Have everyone in the family sign the center of the posterboard, too.
4. Think back to the session when you talked about family character strengths—qualities of your family that you particularly value. (See Handout 1.2 in your workbook.) Add some of the key values you chose on that handout to the center of the posterboard. (If you want to add others that are important to you, you can do that, too.)
5. Have each family member tell a story about something that has happened in your family that reminds them of one of the strengths you've written down. If they can't think of something, they can also tell a story that makes them proud to be part of the family. It could be a recent story or a story from your ancestors.
6. When you've finished, thank each other for helping remember all the good things!

After Session 2: Staying Close While Letting Go



EXPRESS CARE

1. Get your Pledge Collage and the decorating supplies from the Pledge kit.
2. This time you'll start by decorating the TOP of the collage. Have someone in the family **write Express Care on the top of the collage**. Creative or artistic letters are great!
We put Express Care on the top because care is the starting point that opens up our relationships. Without care, relationships can stay shut.
3. Have everyone remember ways they appreciate others expressing care to them. Start by remembering some of the ideas you talked about during the session. As you remember things, write them (or draw symbols of them) around Express Care near the top of the collage. Continue until everyone has added what they want to add (or until there's no more room left).
4. Read aloud: The challenge we all face is that we usually have good intentions about expressing care to each other. But it's easy to forget when we get busy and fall back into our routines. Would you agree? Can you think of examples?
5. To help us all remember, we're going to create "reminder ribbons" for our pledge collages.
6. Think about all the ideas you've had together about expressing care. Decide as a family what you will all do to become more consistent in expressing care *in that one way* that you all agree that you'd like to do more. Write that on the ribbon using the marker.
7. You may also write it on a ribbon for each person—or on something else that will help everyone remember.
8. Tape the ribbon on the Keep Connected Pledge collage. Read it each time you look at the collage as a reminder of how you all want to keep expressing care as an important part of your family relationships.

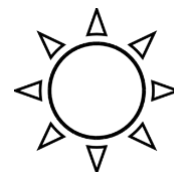


Next, turn to left side of the collate. Write Share Power on this side using artistic writing.



SHARE POWER

1. Based on the activities in the workshop, think together about 1-2 things you would like to work on together to be more intentional in how you share power in your family. They can be small things, but include ways everyone can be involved.
2. Find the yellow construction paper in your pledge kit. Cut a large sun out of it. The "sharing sun" symbolizes power.
3. Write your shared commitments on the sun, as a way of showing your commitment to following through. Talk together about how you're going to encourage each other to keep your shared commitments.
4. Paste or tape your sun to the share power portion of your collage.
5. When you've finished, thank each other for spending time together.



After Session 3: In the Zone: Challenge and Support Growth



CHALLENGE GROWTH

This session will take a longer because it includes preparing for the final session. So plan some extra time, or break it into two parts.

1. Get the Pledge Collage you have been working on, along with the markers and other decorating supplies.
2. Artistically write **Challenge Growth on the right side** of the collage.
3. Talk together about ways you challenge each other to grow in your family, remembering some of the things you talked about during the workshop. Be sure to remember the positive ways adults challenge growth with kids *and* how kids challenge growth for adults.
4. Add pictures, symbols, or words to the right side of the collage that reflect the ways your family challenges growth for each other.
5. **Then write Provide Support on the bottom right side of the collage.**



PROVIDE SUPPORT

6. Repeat the process: Talk about ways you provide support to each other, remembering ideas you talked about during the workshop. Highlight both the positive ways adults support kids and how kids support adults. Talk about any ideas that seem most doable for you. Which ones seemed most surprising?
7. Add pictures, symbols, or words near Provide Support on the collage that reflect the ways people in your family really like to support each other. If there are ways you really don't like people to provide support, write them down too, then cross them out with a big X.
8. Get the rubber bands from the session. Recall that you wrote your "hard thing"—one thing you want to work on—on them. They are a reminder of the "Growth Zone." They have to be stretched to do any good. But you don't want to stretch them too much, or they'll break. During the online session, other family members wrote things on the rubber bands that they would do to support and stretch each other—without stretching too far!
9. Have everyone read aloud what they wrote on the rubber bands for each other. Add those commitments to collage, either by putting the rubber bands in the collage between support and challenge, or writing the commitments on another rubber bands or on a note card, a piece of paper, or a sticky note.



Thinking ahead to the next session . . .

1. Write **Expand Possibilities on the bottom left side** of the collage. Expand Possibilities will be a focus of the final session, so you haven't talked about it until now.
2. Expand Possibilities is expressed in three actions:

**EXPAND
POSSIBILITIES**

- Inspire me to see possibilities for my future.
 - Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places.
 - Introduce me to more people who can help me develop and thrive.
3. What are ways your family does these three things for each other? How do adults do them for youth? And how do youth do them for adults?
 4. Once you have several ideas, pick 4-5 that fit well with your family. Write or draw them near Expand Possibilities on the collage.
 5. Then give each family member 3 notecards, sticky notes, or small pieces of paper. Without taking, each family member should write on each note card or sticky one way they would appreciate other family members helping them expand possibilities more. *One idea per note card.*
 6. Then have each person read one of their cards with a request and put it on the table. Other family members should not debate it or argue about it or say they already do it. If they don't understand, they can ask about it, but that's all. (Some requests may be heartfelt, so it's important to be sensitive.)
 7. Rotate and have each family member add their first request. Then have everyone add their second request without any discussion. Then their third so that all the requests are shared before there is any discussion.
 8. Now look at all the requests. Are there any similarities? Put them together—but only if the people who made the requests agree that they are similar. Don't try to force any requests to fit with others.
 9. Next decide which requests or groups of requests fit into the following broad categories:
 - Requests that are easy to fulfill now if we made them a priority.
 - Requests that are challenging but doable to fulfill, if we worked together on them.
 - Requests that are hard to fulfill now, even if we made them a priority.
 - Requests that we really cannot fulfill in the near future, even if we really want to.
 10. Be honest. If everyone doesn't have something in the first two categories, see if there's a first step in the other two that would fit in the first two. If something overlaps for everyone, brainstorm how you might together help to fulfill the request creatively for everyone. If they're all different, brainstorm ways they might reinforce each other. Then put the others away.
 11. Use that idea to decide on what you will do as a family to expand possibilities for each other. Find the white construction paper in the Keep Connected Pledge and Plan kit, and cut out the shape of a lightbulb to represent your family's new idea for expanding possibilities. Write your final ideas on it, and place it on your collage in the Expand Possibilities section on the bottom left.



If you can, take a break and come back to this next section on another day . . .

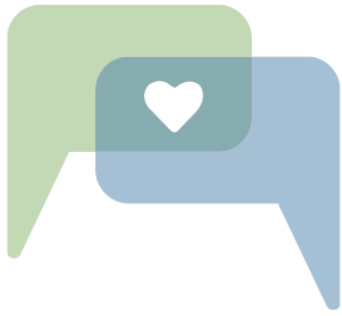
Looking Back and Looking Forward: Your Pledge and Plan

1. Gather as a family, and start by looking back at your Pledge Collage. Remember the character strengths you identified in your family. Remember each of the keys: express care, share power, challenge growth, provide support, and (coming next), expand possibilities.
2. What were some ideas and commitments you made to yourself and each other that have particularly stuck with you? Perhaps all are important in some way, but are there some that stand out more than others for the whole family?
3. As a family (being sure to listen to everyone—remember Share Power), identify three commitments or “pledges” that came up through Keep Connected that you believe would be really important for your family to focus on moving forward to maintain strong relationships and to keep connected through high school. (Your ideas don’t need to be like any other family’s; each family is different.)
4. Find the green construction paper, and cut out three trees. Write these three commitments on these three trees, and tape them onto your collage.

Build Your Family’s Plan to KEEP CONNECTED


1. Turn to the “Good Habits to Keep Connected” worksheet on the last page. And follow these steps:
 - a. Write the three commitments or pledges you came up with in box #1 at the top.
 - b. Move to box #2. Think about why these three commitments are important. How will they help you? Write down those benefits. (It’s important to remember the benefits when you are having a harder time keeping commitments.)
 - c. Think about what might get in the way of those commitments, and write some of the big things in box #3. Be honest. Time, money, emotions, habits, and many other things can get in the way of things we want. We can’t deal with those barriers unless we are conscious of them.
 - d. Look at the barriers. If those things come up, what will you do to get rid of or work around them? Write down specific plans in box #4. Seeing those specifics can be important when you’re caught in the middle of a challenge.
 - e. In box #5, put names of specific people who will keep you on track. They’ll be honest, loving, and firm. They’ll also help you deal with the barriers.
 - f. And don’t forget the rewards in #6. When you’ve made some progress and hit some milestones, how will you celebrate? Don’t wait to the end, but find some ways to celebrate pretty soon to reinforce a good start-up.
 - g. And be sure to check in with each other from time to time, being intentional about it in box #7. Maybe it’s weekly or monthly. If things aren’t going well, it’s okay to start over, to reset. You won’t know to do that unless you check.


2. Once you have a first draft, you may want to wait and come back to it after the final session, then tweak it together. And when you check in, you can always adjust it too. It's your plan.
3. Before you go to the final session, as a family, review the plan and decide what you want to share with the whole group—just a couple of things that are significant or exciting for you. It can be something you've learned or something from your plan. You might, for example, just read your three commitments.





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. _____

3. BARRIERS  What obstacles could get in the way:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. PLAN  How can we remove or get over these obstacles?
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. SUPPORTS  Who will help us stay on track?

6. REWARDS  How will we celebrate milestones?
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

7. REVIEW  When will we check in with each other?
