

# divorce

## Parenting Through Differences

### Parent Workbook and Syllabus

### Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone

This encompasses the formation of a new group of families that consists of individuals who have participated in a Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting program.





## Summary of Training

Use this summary to keep track of your homework due dates and meeting dates, times, and location(s).

### Thrive Initiative Account and Course Registration

Due Date	
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### Intake and Introduction Meeting *(Meeting: 60 min/Homework)*

Date	
Time	
Homework	Complete Sessions 1, 2, and 3
Due Date	

### Supplemental Module Meeting 1: Discussion of Sessions 1, 2, and 3

*(Meeting: 60 minutes/Homework)*

Date	
Time	
Homework	Complete Sessions 4, 5, and 6
Due Date	

### Supplemental Module Meeting 2: Discussion of Sessions 4, 5, and 6 and the Module's Wrap-Up *(Meeting: 60 minutes/Homework: optional)*

Date	
Time	
Homework (optional)	Visit the Thrive Initiative's website for additional parenting resources: <a href="https://thrive.psu.edu">https://thrive.psu.edu</a>

## Supplemental Module Registration

Complete these steps prior to the Intake and Introduction meeting.

### Create a Thrive Initiative Account and Register for the Course

- Use this link to access the Thrive Initiative's website: <https://thrive.psu.edu/>.
- Navigate to and select "Modules."
- Select "Supplemental Modules" in the drop-down menu.
- Identify the module on Divorce, and select the "Learn More" button.
- A new web page will open. Select the blue button that reads "Get this course."
- A pop-up box will ask you to login or sign up. If you do not have an existing account, select the "Sign up" button.
- In the pop-up box, enter your first name, last name, and an email address. Next, create a username and password. Select your military affiliation, and check that you are not a robot; then, click the blue "Create account" button.



*Tip: To help you remember your username, you may want to use your email address as your username.*

- You will now be able to login and access the Thrive parent-education programs. Click "Login" at the top of the web page. In the pop-up box, enter your username and your password; then, click on the blue "Login" button.
- After you login, you will be able to view the course catalog (upper right-hand corner) and select the supplemental module you would like to participate in.
- Select the blue "Go to Course" button to start the online **Divorce** supplemental module.

**If you have any difficulty registering for an account or accessing a Thrive Initiative parent-education program or supplemental module, we would be happy to assist you!**



The Thrive Initiative Team can be emailed at [thrive@psu.edu](mailto:thrive@psu.edu).



Phone inquiries can be directed to **1.877.382.9185**.

# Intake and Introduction Meeting



**Intake and Introduction Meeting**    *60 minutes*  
**Homework**

Date	
Time	
Link/Location	





## Step 1: Attend Meeting

- Review the supplemental module welcome materials provided by your facilitator.
- At the first meeting, your facilitator will provide an overview of the program and ensure you have access to the Thrive Initiative website and supplemental module.

## Step 2: Complete Homework [For Supplemental Module Meeting 1]

Please complete the following activities in preparation for the next meeting:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 1: Welcome and Introduction
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 2: Identifying Your Emotional Readiness for Divorce
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download and review the materials mentioned from the Parent Toolkit resources in the supplemental module.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare to discuss the topics addressed in Sessions 1, 2, and 3 during the next meeting by answering the questions in *Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions*. If you have any questions you would like to ask during the discussion, note them in Step 4.

## Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions

Write your responses in the blue boxes on the next few pages as you prepare for the *next meeting*. During the *Supplemental Module Meeting 1* group discussion, record your notes in the magenta boxes.

As you complete the questions and activities, recognize that understanding and implementing the information we are learning will not happen immediately. You will need to use the strategies and skills you have learned throughout ***Divorce: Parenting Through Differences*** consistently and make them part of your everyday life in order to see desired changes in your child's or your reactions or behaviors. Keep practicing what you have learned!

Each time you meet with the other program participants as a group, share and celebrate the small, short-term, positive changes you see in your interactions with your child. Consider what the long-term benefits may be for your family as you continue to use the skills and strategies you have learned and are learning in the ***Divorce: Parenting Through Differences*** module.



## Session 1: Welcome and Introduction: Interaction and Discussion Questions

In the supplemental module's introduction, you learned that divorce is often complex, and the divorce process involves the integration of emotion, cognition, and behavior in a way that is different from what was experienced during marriage.

- A. Where are you in the divorce process (e.g., considering divorce, separated, currently going through a divorce, divorced, supporting someone going through a divorce)?
- B. What challenges or successes are you currently experiencing while you are navigating the divorce process as a parent or caregiver?
- C. What is one goal you hope to achieve by completing this supplemental module?

### *Reflection:*



### *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 2: Identifying Your Emotional Readiness for Divorce Certainty: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module described some factors that you could consider to help you understand your level of certainty about divorcing.

- A. What factors led/lead you to feel more certain about divorce?
- B. Are there factors that made/make you feel less certain that divorce was/is the best decision for you?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 2: Identifying Your Emotional Readiness for Divorce** **Acceptance: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

In the reflection, you were encouraged to think about and describe how your decision to divorce may change aspects of your life.

- A. What day-to-day changes did/do you anticipate occurring due to divorce?
- B. What changes do/did you anticipate occurring for your child?
- C. What activities or routines did/could you keep consistent for yourself and/or your child as you navigate the divorce process?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 2: Identifying Your Emotional Readiness for Divorce** **Discussion: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module provided tips for you to use as you engage in a conversation with your spouse about the state of your marriage.

- A. If you are in the process of considering a divorce,
  - o Did you use, or are you planning to use, any of the tips for having a discussion with your spouse about the state of your marriage?
- B. The module introduced a resource, *Finding Your Emotional Readiness for Divorce*, that offers strategies you can use to help you determine your emotional readiness for divorce.
  - o After reviewing the resource, did you identify any strategies you could use to help you with your emotional readiness for divorce?
  - o Did you try using any of the strategies shared in the resource? If so, how has/have the strategy/strategies worked for you?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 2: Identifying Your Emotional Readiness for Divorce** **Preparedness: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module acknowledged that divorce could be a stressful process for everyone involved and encouraged you to assess your mental and emotional well-being as you embark on this journey. Resources were also provided to help you identify your support network and strategies for managing stress.

- A. Whom in your life do you consider to be part of your circle of support?
- B. After reviewing the *Recognize and Manage Your Stress* resource, did you try any new strategies? How did they work for you?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 2: Identifying Your Emotional Readiness for Divorce Readiness for Change: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

- A. In the reflection, you were encouraged to envision your ideal day-to-day life after your divorce. What do you envision for your ideal post-divorce life?
- B. What steps could you take to help you make your ideals a reality (e.g., set a SMART goal)? Review the *Thinking About and Planning for Your Future* resource for additional strategies and suggestions.

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce

### Talking to Your Child(ren) about Divorce: Interaction and Discussion Questions

- A. What strategies for breaking the news about your decision to divorce have/did you used/use to discuss the situation with your children?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce** **Your Child(ren)'s Emotions: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

- A. In the reflection, you were encouraged to consider how you express emotions in front of your child. How do you express emotions in front of your child?
- B. What emotions do you see in your child as you navigate divorce?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce** **Anger and Resentment: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module described how parents can help their children find appropriate ways to express their anger and other emotions.

A. What coping skills has your child used to deal with his or her emotions?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce** **Anxiety and Fear: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module discussed how sharing about what will change and what will not change in your child's life can help alleviate your child's feelings of anxiety and fear.

- A. What information about your divorce-related changes have you, or can you, shared/share with your children?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce** **Guilt and Self-blame: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module discussed how children may blame themselves for their parents' breakup.

A. What conversations have you had with your child regarding the fault of your divorce?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce** **Loneliness and Isolation: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

- A. What actions have you taken to help your child combat loneliness and isolation during the divorce, such as relationships you've helped your child maintain or activities you have or can ensure your child stays involved in?
- B. Who, besides you and your child's other parent, can your child talk to about the divorce?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce** **Loss of Security and Stability: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

This session encouraged you to think about the aspects of your child's life that will change or stay the same as your family navigates the divorce process.

- A. What have you shared with your child regarding aspects of their lives that will change or stay the same?
- B. Have you communicated with your child about aspects of your child's life that may change?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: Experiencing Emotions During Divorce** **Difficulty with Transitions: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

In the module, you read about how the Williams family helps Chloe transition between the family homes. Additional strategies were provided in the *Transitioning Between Households: Tips for Parents* resource.


- A. What strategies have you used to help your child cope with transitions?
- B. Are there additional strategies you might like to try to use with your child?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## Step 4: Prepare Additional Questions for Supplemental Module Meeting 1

 Note any additional questions you may have for the group or the facilitator.

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



# Supplemental Module Meeting 1



**Discussion of Sessions 1, 2, and 3** 60 minutes

## Homework

Date	
Time	
Link/Location	





## Step 1: Attend Meeting

Return to Introduction Meeting, *Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions* to discuss the activities and questions on the previous pages as a group. If new ideas are mentioned during the group meeting, note them in the magenta boxes under your prior homework responses.



*To engage in discussion, go back to the homework you completed after the Intake and Introduction Meeting.*

## Step 2: Complete Homework [For Supplemental Module Meeting 2]

Please complete the following activities in preparation for the next meeting:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 4: Parenting During Divorce
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 5: Maintaining Child Well-Being During Divorce
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 6: Wrap-Up
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download and review materials mentioned from the Parent Toolkit resources in the supplemental module.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare to discuss the topics addressed in Sessions 4, 5, and 6 during the next meeting by answering the questions in *Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions*. If you have any questions you would like to ask during the discussion, note them in Step 4.

## Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions

Write your responses in the blue boxes on the next few pages as you prepare for the *next meeting*. During the *Supplemental Module Meeting 1* group discussion, record your notes in the magenta boxes.



## ? Session 4: Parenting During Divorce Custody Arrangements: Interaction and Discussion Questions

In the module, you read about how the Williams family maintained consistency for their son, Jack, by ensuring he was able to continue playing soccer as the family navigated the divorce process.

- A. What areas of your child's life can/did you keep stable or consistent as your family navigates/navigated divorce and custody arrangements?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 4: Parenting During Divorce** **Emotional Support and Communication: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module described strategies you can use to encourage your child to communicate with you.

- A. When does your child seem most open to talking with you?
- B. What strategies have you used to communicate with your child?
- C. Are there strategies you learned about in the module that you want to try to use with your child?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



**? Session 4: Parenting During Divorce  
Strategies for Communicating with Your Coparent:  
Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module described some positive communication strategies you can use to help you communicate with your coparent.

- A. Have you used any of the positive communication strategies in your conversations with your child's other parent? If so, how have the strategies worked for you?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 4: Parenting During Divorce** **Quality Time with Each Parent: Interaction and Discussion Questions**

In the module, you learned that children benefit from having meaningful and healthy relationships with both parents.

- A. How do/can you spend quality time with your child—individually or with siblings—as you navigate the divorce process?
- B. What new routines or family traditions might you establish after your divorce is final?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



**? Session 4: Parenting During Divorce  
Using Consistent Discipline and Parenting Styles:  
Interaction and Discussion Questions**

Maintaining similar rules, expectations, and consequences across homes can provide a sense of continuity for your child. In the reflection, you were encouraged to think about the household rules and behavioral expectations you have for your child.

- A. Which household rules and behavioral expectations are most important for you to maintain during and after your divorce?
- B. Which rules or expectations might require some adjustments?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## Session 5: Child Well-Being During Divorce

### The Divorce Experience for Children: Interaction and Discussion Questions

- A. The strategies shared at the beginning of this session (e.g., limit children’s exposure to parental conflict, manage stress and emotions) can help children of all ages navigate the divorce process.
  - o Which of these strategies have you used, or do you plan to use, to help your child?
  
- B. The module introduced the Box Breathing technique.
  - o Did you try this breathing exercise, or have you used another technique to help you manage stress and regulate your breathing? If so, how did/do breathing exercises make you feel?
  - o How might you use breathing exercises to help you calm and recenter yourself when your emotions are high?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



**? Session 5: Child Well-Being During Divorce**  
**Infants and Toddlers (0 to 3 years old): Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module provided strategies to support infants and toddlers during the divorce process.

- A. If you are the parent of an infant or toddler,
- o What, if any, challenges or new behaviors have you noticed in your child since your separation/divorce?
  - o What strategies have you used to help you and your child cope?
  - o What new strategies might you use to help your child cope?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 5: Child Well-Being During Divorce** **Preschoolers (3 to 5 years old): Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module provided strategies to support preschoolers during the divorce process.

- A. If you are the parent of a preschooler,
  - o What, if any, challenges or new behaviors have you noticed in your child since your separation/divorce?
  - o What strategies have you used to help you and your child cope?
  - o What new strategies might you use to help your child cope?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



**? Session 5: Child Well-Being During Divorce**  
**School-Age Children (6 to 12 years old): Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module provided strategies to support school-age children during the divorce process.

- A. If you are the parent of a school-age child,
- o What, if any, challenges or new behaviors have you noticed in your child since your separation/divorce?
  - o What strategies have you used to help you and your child cope?
  - o What new strategies might you use to help your child cope?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



**? Session 5: Child Well-Being During Divorce  
Adolescents and Teens (13 to 18 years old):  
Interaction and Discussion Questions**

The module provided strategies to support adolescents and teens during the divorce process.

- A. If you are the parent of a teenager,
  - o What, if any, challenges or new behaviors have you noticed in your child since your separation/divorce?
  - o What strategies have you used to help you and your child cope?
  - o What new strategies might you use to help your child cope?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## ? Session 5: Child Well-Being During Divorce Post-Divorce Considerations: Interaction and Discussion Questions

The module summarized factors and other concerns parents may want to consider as they contemplate or embark on the divorce journey.

- B. What factors most concern you as you navigate the divorce process?
- C. Are there any factors that you need additional resources or support with to help you make decisions for yourself and/or your child as you plan for your post-divorce life?
- D. Two additional resources, *Taking Care of Yourself During the Divorce Process* and *Coparenting Plan for Families Navigating Divorce*, were provided in the module's toolkit. How might these resources help you as you navigate the divorce process?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## Session 6: Wrap-Up

### Module Summary: Interaction and Discussion Questions

- A. The wrap-up session encouraged you to revisit your Reflection Journal to review your responses, add additional thoughts, and do some additional thought-work on the topics addressed.
  - o Did you download and use the Reflection Journal? If so, how has using the journal helped you work through the topics addressed in the module?
  
- B. This session also suggested that you revisit the parent toolkit resources as you consider and/or prepare for the divorce process.
  - o Which parent toolkit resources did you find the most helpful as you completed this module? Is there a topic or resource that you would have liked to learn more about?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



### ? Wrap-Up: Module Discussion Summary Questions

- A. Which topic discussed in the supplemental module was the most beneficial to you as a parent? Why?
- B. What strategies or skills did you learn about in the supplemental module that you will use to help you achieve the goals you have for your child or your family?
- C. What has changed in your interactions with your child since you began to complete the supplemental module?
- D. Have you noticed a difference in the way your child is responding to your parenting since participating in this module?


*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## Step 4: Prepare Additional Questions for Supplemental Module Meeting 2

 Note any additional questions you may have for the group or the facilitator.

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## Supplemental Module Meeting 2



**Discussion of Sessions 4, 5, and 6,  
and the Wrap-Up and Resource Sharing**

*60 minutes*

**Homework**

*(optional)*

Date	
Time	
Link/Location	





### Step 1: Attend Meeting

Return to *Supplemental Meeting 1, Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/ Discussion Questions* to discuss the activities and questions on the previous pages as a group. If new ideas are mentioned during the group meeting, note them in the magenta boxes under your prior homework responses.



*To engage in discussion, go back to the homework you completed after Meeting 1.*

### Step 2: Complete Homework [optional]

Consider registering for additional Thrive Initiative universal parenting programs or supplemental modules.

- Information about the Thrive Initiative universal parenting programs can be accessed at <https://thrive.psu.edu/>.
- Supplemental modules can be accessed at <https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental/>.

Visit the Thrive Initiative website at <https://thrive.psu.edu> to access additional resources and materials.

