



Family Meeting Tip Sheet




Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

Benefits of Family Meetings

-  Connect, regularly, as a family to help your children develop their developmental assets.
-  Stay up to date on what is going on in other family members' lives.
-  Discuss topics and concerns, in a safe environment, that may be hard to talk about at other times.
-  Teach children how to listen without judgment.
-  Help children learn to see other people's perspectives and respect those perspectives.
-  Encourage children to learn how to give time to others, even when they are busy.
-  Help children understand they are individuals, but they are also part of a unit.



Tips for Family Meetings

Create Guidelines for Family Meetings

-  **Decide when and where meetings will be held:** Make sure everyone is free to attend the meeting time.
-  **Anyone in the family is allowed to call a meeting:** Ensure parents are not the only ones who are comfortable calling these types of meetings.
-  **All family members should be invited to family meetings:** Make certain each family member is heard and has a chance to understand why decisions are made and how they are made.



Have Routine Family Meetings

-  **Family meetings should not always be about important decisions or crises:** Family meetings also provide an opportunity to plan vacations, outings, celebrations, family member's accomplishments, or discuss next week's dinner menu.
-  **Make sure there is an agenda, and everyone has seen it in advance of the meeting:** All family members should have the opportunity to know what is going to be discussed, so they may gather their thoughts, concerns, and solutions prior to the meeting.



Make Family Meetings a Positive Interaction



Start the meeting on a positive note:

Even if the meeting is being called to discuss a crisis, incorporate positivity.



Everyone gets to talk if they want to:

Everyone should be heard, even if opinions and ideas do not align with someone else's thoughts and feelings.



Everyone should practice active listening: Hearing what everyone is saying is an important part of communication.



Negative comments and put downs should not be tolerated: If the tone of the meeting starts to become negative, it should be halted to give everyone a chance to calm down.



When possible, put thoughts and concerns to a family vote: After hearing everyone's thoughts, if appropriate, let the family vote on the decision to be made.



Develop an Action Plan and follow through: A plan of action should be adopted, and there may need to be a follow-up meeting to evaluate how the action plan is going or if any changes need to be made.