

STRENGTHENING FAMILY COPING RESOURCES

Module Three: Session Thirteen – *Marking the Trauma*

Date:

Facilitators Present:

1. Family Meal – Facilitators encourage and model appropriate conversation, sharing, and supervision of children. Remember to be sensitive to and empowering of the parent(s).

*Include conversation prompts for those families who are not being video recorded

2. Opening activities (Lead Facilitator)

- Welcome
- Rules (Facilitator)
- Give thanks for those who helped prepare the food and get the room ready
- Check in with each family
- Review schedule for the evening
- Opening ritual:

3. Processing the Trauma (Facilitator; 50 minutes) (Facilitator-Family Assignments)

- Inform the family that they will finish telling their family's trauma story today. They should remember all the things they have learned about talking together as a family, about sharing feelings, and about dealing with scary and anxious feelings. As a family, they should tell their story again about the bad thing(s) that happened. [Name the trauma or traumas that the family is dealing with using the words the family uses to talk about it.]
- Facilitators should monitor the level of family members' stress and anxiety closely. Facilitators should cue family members to use SIT skills if needed during the narrative.
- Young children in the family may want to draw the story as it is being told. Having some toys available for them to play quietly is also helpful.
- Facilitators should help the family identify any false or unhelpful beliefs that have arisen due to the trauma(s). These may include thoughts of guilt, responsibility, blame, retribution or thoughts about their family and the world. Using cognitive processing techniques, help the family identify these thoughts and understand the impact of these thoughts on their family. Help them work through these thoughts to replace them with more helpful ones.
- After the family finishes their trauma story, facilitators ask the family to think about ways in which the trauma(s) has changed their family; how their family is different now from when the traumatic events started. Ask the family about what they have learned about themselves individually and as a family. Perhaps they have learned things that they think would be helpful for other families who experience trauma.
- Ask the family if they want to make any changes to their narrative as a result of their processing it.

***This guideline is not intended to replace the comprehensive instructions provided in the manual**

- After about 40 minutes, assess where the family is in their conversation about the trauma(s). If the family is close to the end of the story, the facilitator should do nothing. If the family is nowhere near the end, the facilitator should help the family reach a stopping point and regain emotional balance before ending the session. It is important that the session ends with the family able to rejoin the group, continue to participate in the closing activities, and leave the group to go home in a healthy manner.
- Families who have not had time to finish the work on their trauma story should be encouraged to come in for additional sessions.

4. Enduring Traditions (Facilitator; 30 minutes)

- Hand out “Enduring Traditions”.
- We have spent lots of time talking our how families deal with bad things, and how these bad things changed your family. We have also talked about how traditions connect families to the past no matter how many changes occur.
- Talk about how you are the same and make a list of the rituals or routines that you still do regardless of the changes.
- Is there a tradition that you would like to start to help you get through or mark these changes and still feel connected to your past?

5. Closing Activities (10 minutes)

- Thank everyone for taking part in tonight’s group (Lead Facilitator)
- Check that everything was covered/summary of session (Lead Facilitator)
- Share a good thing about each family (Team)
- Introduce topic for next week (Facilitator) – Next week, we will talk about planning celebrations and the good things that families experience.
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – To get ready for this session we would like your family to have a meeting during the week. At this meeting, talk about things that your family has to feel good about and to celebrate. Think about special times that are coming up. Think about things you have done either as a family or individually. Think about any big changes that might be happening in your family that you would like to mark. It doesn’t have to be anything big; many small things are worth celebrating. While you are talking, fill out this handout listing all of the things, both big and small, that you can come up with.
- Planning contacts for the week – **Continue system for families to contact one another**
- Closing ritual (Facilitator):