



# Strengthening Family Coping Resources: Family Trauma Therapy

## Intervention Manual

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With Steven Berkowitz, MD, who co-authored the first three sessions.

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# **STRENGTHENING FAMILY COPING RESOURCES**

## **Family Trauma Therapy**

### Introduction

#### **Core principles**

SFCR-FTT is designed for families living in traumatic contexts with the goal of reducing the symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other trauma-related disorders in children and adult caregivers.

SFCR-FTT is a family trauma treatment created by combining the core principles of SFCR with the beginning framework of CFTSI. It is delivered to families raising children of all ages (with an identified child aged 4-18).

#### Key features

- 1) Build an understanding of the systemic nature of traumatic distress and commitment to building family protection
- 2) Reduce concrete external stressors and prevent further exposure
- 3) Reduce traumatic stress symptoms in multiple family members
- 4) Increase communication among family members about traumatic stress reactions
- 5) Improve constructive coping skills (safety, stable functioning, emotion and behavior regulation, and resource use) within the family to support recovery and resilience
- 6) Process specific traumatic events, reconnect, and move beyond the trauma

#### **Delivery**

SFCR-FTT is manualized family therapy delivered in weekly 1-hour sessions. It is a phased approach.

The first module comprises six sessions focused on assessment, information exchange about trauma and its impact, building motivation for creating systemic change, setting goals related to the coping strategies needed by the family, and introducing some basic skills. In the first session, treatment providers meet with the parent or caregiver alone. The second session occurs as close as possible to the first one and involves the provider working with the identified child and the caregiver. Providers use a psycho-educational approach when explaining typical reactions to potentially traumatic events and the importance of familial support. Questionnaires are completed/reviewed to assess psychological status throughout the module. The third session involves the whole family meeting with the provider. During this session, the provider conducts a family interview to build a shared understanding of the impact of trauma on the family and the adaptations that the family has made to cope with their experiences. This is also a planning session and involves helping the family develop a plan for how to “get better”. The family chooses both short-term goals to deal with the most immediate problems/symptoms (e.g., safety concerns,

sleep disturbance, depressive withdrawal, tantrums, intrusive thoughts, and anxiety) that they are dealing with and longer-term goals to build the coping resources necessary to work through their traumatic past. The family prioritizes which healing resources will be most helpful in reaching their goals. Sessions four through six provide some foundational skills that all families need.

Module two includes 9 sessions. Sessions 4-12 are designed as family skill-building and are selected to target the needs of each family. Based on the assessment of family distress and current coping strategies, sessions are chosen to build adaptive and protective family coping skills. Sessions target core healing resources, safety, deliberateness, structure, problem-solving, family relations, communication, sources of support, regulation, and positive affect/memories. Some of the sessions build skills across multiple categories and are listed accordingly (See table). These skill-building sessions provide a foundation for the next phase of this intervention. These sessions introduce the skills necessary for the family to co-construct a trauma narrative in a safe and regulated fashion leading to meaning making and resolution. If more than 9 sessions are needed, this phase of the treatment can be extended.

Module III involves co-construction of a family trauma narrative. Sessions 13-20 allow the family to use their coping skills to tell their trauma story safely and to move to meaning making and resolution. Final sessions allow the family to express positivity and celebrate the family's accomplishments.

### **Clinician Competencies**

Clinician competencies are closely tied to the primary aims of SFCR-FTT. Related to the aim of providing trauma treatment, clinicians have the core education, training, experience, and licensure recommended to implement trauma-specific evidence-based or promising interventions. SFCR-FTT clinicians must also maintain a focus on specific issues related to constructive family coping. As such, clinicians need to have education in and understanding of family systems, and training and experience conducting family therapy.

Training is necessary for all clinicians using SFCR-FTT.

### **Admission/Eligibility Criteria**

Families are selected for SFCR-FTT following an assessment of their exposure to trauma(s) and their trauma-related distress. Selection criteria include degree of exposure and impact of trauma, risk level for additional exposure, and severity of distress. At least one member of the family needs to be experiencing a stress or trauma-related disorder.

Parental and family functioning also need to be considered. Families selected for participation need to have a relatively stable caregiving system identified. We suggest that the family includes an identified caregiving system that has been involved with the family for the past six months and is committed to providing care for the family for the next six months.

The primary goals of SFCR-FTT are to decrease the impact of chronic trauma on identified family members and to increase the protective function of the family by improving constructive coping. To understand whether SFCR is accomplishing its objectives, it is necessary to measure both traumatic distress and family coping before the groups begin and at the end of the groups. Initial assessment for SFCR-FTT includes measures of exposure and traumatic distress in one (or more, if appropriate) child and in the parent/caregiver. Measures of parenting, family functioning and coping are also utilized. This assessment using standardized instruments is built into the structure of the intervention and the information is presented and discussed with the family as they establish their goals for treatment.

### **Structure of the Sessions**

Each module of the intervention is divided into sessions. Each session is family focused with everyone in the family encouraged to attend. An established routine is followed for each session, including a schedule of activities with a set beginning and ending practice, use of the same office, and each session starting and ending on time.

#### Session Outline

##### Opening Activities (5 minutes)

- Welcome and opening ritual/practice
- Rules
- Check in with the family
- Overview of the session
- Review homework, if assigned

##### Session Content (40-50 minutes)

- Module I: Assessment Discussions and Planning
- Module II: Healing Resources – Core and Selected
- Module III: Narrative and Healing

##### Closing Activities (5-10 minutes)

- Thank everyone in the family for taking part in the session.
- Check that everything was covered/summarize the session.
- Share a good thing about each family member.
- Introduce the topic for next week.
- Review tasks/homework for the following week.
- Closing ritual/practice.

## Module I: Laying the Groundwork

The first phase comprises three sessions focused on assessment, information exchange about trauma and its impact, building motivation for creating systemic change, setting goals related to the coping strategies needed by the family, and introducing some basic skills.

In the first session, treatment providers meet with the parent or caregiver alone.

The second session occurs as close as possible to the first one and involves the provider working with the identified child and the caregiver. Providers use a psycho-educational approach when explaining typical reactions to potentially traumatic events and the importance of familial support. Questionnaires are completed/reviewed to assess psychological status throughout the intervention.

The third session involves the whole family meeting with the provider. During this session, the provider conducts a family interview to build a shared understanding of the impact of trauma on the family and the adaptations that the family has made to cope with their experiences. This is also a planning session and involves helping the family develop a plan for how to “get better”. The family chooses both short-term goals to deal with the most immediate problems/symptoms (e.g., safety concerns, sleep disturbance, depressive withdrawal, tantrums, intrusive thoughts, and anxiety) that they are dealing with and longer-term goals to build the coping resources necessary to work through their traumatic past. The family prioritizes which healing resources will be most helpful in reaching their goals.

## Session 1 – Parent/Caregiver Orientation

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None

Clinician Preparation: Review assessment findings from clinical or research intake



### Objectives:

- To orient the parents/caregivers to this treatment modality.
- To provide education about trauma and the impact of trauma on the family.
- To move the parents/caregivers from focusing on their child's trauma to seeing trauma as a relational/family issue.
- To motivate the parents to be involved in the treatment.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Trauma and Your Family Tip Sheet, ACEs Survey  
Assessment results  
Paper for Genogram



### Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. Trauma and Its Impact
  - Have the parents/caregivers start by telling you why they are here. What is going on now? What are the current stressors that the family is struggling with?
  - Start with psychoeducation about PTSS/D in general and developmental per IP's age. Start by asking: *Has anyone talked with you or have you ever heard about how very upsetting and overwhelming experiences like the one that (child's name) had can change the way a person feels and thinks?* If they answer yes, ask them to explain their understanding. If they answer no, this introduction is useful:

*When a bad experience or when several bad experiences add up, these experiences can cause the brain to become injured, which is what we mean by Trauma. This isn't as complicated as it sounds, so let me explain a bit. Since, the brain controls the body, it is in charge of dealing with the outside world (A good example is learning new information or math, etc. Each time you learn something, your brain changes a bit) and so it's built to be sensitive to both good and bad things outside of us. This is what helps us survive, but sometimes things get so out of control that people have lots of trouble in all sorts of ways because their brain has been injured. Now, one question lots of people ask, is how come not everybody needs therapy when they experienced the bad events. There are lots of reasons, but we know that some people are born with the ability to cope better and we also know that people that have grown up with lots of stress or trauma do worse after a new traumatic event. Also, like any injury most people recover with little or no help. One way to think about it is like hurting an ankle. Say you twist your ankle, most of*



*the time it hurts for a bit, you might put some ice on it, take aspirin and after a while, it feels fine; or you might twist it to the point of a sprain or a break and need a splint or a cast; or worse it could be a bad enough break that you need surgery (sort of like needing therapy). And then there is the type of trauma that's caused by lots of things adding up and causing an injury. This kind of trauma is worst when it starts when you're a child. Some people compare these to slow acting poisons, like arsenic or mercury. Your body can handle a certain amount, but if you take enough over time, they can make you sick and can even kill you.*

*We can talk about some of the things we've learned that happen to people that have had these traumatic experiences by looking at what you reported as concerns for your child and for you. Many people exposed to trauma, have very similar reactions.*

- Spend some time discussing the ACE study. Make the connection between trauma/adverse experiences during childhood with health and mental health outcomes. Emphasize that many of the ACEs are related to things that happen in families and thus, ACEs run in families and between generations.

### 3. Explaining the Process/Moving to a Family Focus

- Explain the rationale for a family treatment approach. *One of things that we know is essential to kids getting better from PTSS/D is help and support from parent/s, caregivers and other family members. So, the better your family can work together, the better Child's name is likely do.*
- Educate the parent/caregiver about how child's trauma can impact the parent and how they feel and function. Introduce the notion of contagion and that the closer people are like parent-child or husband-wife, the more likely they are to catch it. One parent put it this way, "If my child hurts, I hurt".
- Explain basis for family-based treatment, process and general flow of sessions. Ask for any questions and clarifications along the way. Also, let the caregivers know that anything they want to discuss is OK.
- Family Genogram - *So if you think that this makes sense, the first thing we want do is to get to know more about your family. All families have stories of good and bad things that happened to different family members. So, if it's ok with you, we'd like to start with a family tree. The interesting thing about families is that what happens to our parents and grandparents can change how we handle both the good and bad things that happen to us and to our children. Our family traditions, beliefs, values and ways of doing things are passed on in various ways to the generations that come after.*
- *Note to providers: The investigation of family patterns, rather than being a trip down "dysfunctional memory lane," is about understanding what has been, so one can influence what will be.*
- *Let's start with your family. Who is in your family? (Name all family members; remember to include the fathers of all of the children.) OK, let's stop here for a minute and talk about how Child's name experience (name it if you can) is affecting different family*

members. Review common PTSS/D symptoms and ask who is exhibiting those symptoms. You can reference the parent's report of their child's symptoms and their own symptoms from the assessment findings at this point but indicate that you will discuss the child's assessment in greater detail in the next session. Ask the parent/caregiver to provide some examples of the symptoms or problems that they are most concerned about as you go through the nuclear family genogram. Review ACEs in the nuclear family. You can refer to the parent's ACE survey and expand to others.

- *Now, let's add your parents and sisters and brothers. Let's go back to your grandparents and great grandparents (if you know much about them. Now let's think about some ways that your family has dealt with both good and bad things that have happened. Consider questions like:*
  - *With which family members do you spend time?*
  - *Which family members provide concrete support and assistance when needed. Or in other words who can you turn to in your family?*
  - *Has this changed over time? Or after traumatic events?*
  - *How would you describe the quality of communication among family members? How about communication between different generations?*
  - *How has trauma affected relationships within your family? Between you and your partner? Between you and your children? Between your children? Between you and your parents or siblings? Have any of these relationships become closer or more supportive or more distant or conflictual?*
  - *Talk about sometimes that your family has solved difficult issues. What have you done to be successful during those difficult times? Do members of the family feel confident that they can work together to solve problems?*
  - *How has your family's cultural and/or spiritual perspective, values and beliefs shaped your family life? To what extent does your family's religious or spiritual orientation help your family cope when bad things happen?*
- Before you stop work on the genogram, add the ACEs score (total number of ACEs endorsed) of several other family members to the diagram. Using a list of ACEs, ask the parent/caregiver to quickly go through the list and put a "+" or a "-" by each ACE that the person experienced. They can quickly add the number of "+" events to get a total.
- Indicate to the parent/caregiver that we will be coming back to their family tree and continuing to talk about it.

#### 4. One Helpful Strategy

- Remind the parent/caregiver of the stressors and most concerning symptoms. Offer the parents/caregivers at least one practical strategy for handling this issue. Refer for appropriate additional services if necessary, give out appropriate, helpful materials, etc.
- Problem-solve barriers to engagement in treatment.

#### 5. Closing Activities

- Thank the parent/caregiver taking part in the session.
- Check that everything was covered/summarize the session.

- Remind caregivers that we are going to meet next with them and IP and go over genogram and assessment responses.

## Session 2 – Caregiver-Child Orientation

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None

Clinician Preparation: Before meeting review the instruments that were administered to both child and caregiver/s about child



### Objectives:

- To orient the IP to this treatment modality.
- To provide education about trauma and the impact of trauma on the family.
- To review the results of the trauma evaluation to help the IP and parents/caregivers gain a better understanding of their level of distress.
- To motivate the IP to be involved in the treatment and to understand the need for other family members to be involved.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: ACEs Survey

Assessment results

Genogram

*A Terrible Thing Happened or Healing Days: A Guide to Children Who Have Experienced Trauma*



### Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. Explaining the Process
  - Start with a review of the treatment process and its rationale. Explain basis for family-based treatment, process and general flow of sessions. It will be important to frame both in a developmentally appropriate way. Have parents/caregivers help if they can (both in using language the child understands and to set tone as experts and family leaders).
3. Trauma and Its Impact
  - Read or have a family member read *A Terrible Thing Happened or Healing Days: A Guide to Children Who Have Experienced Trauma* (for older children and young adolescents) and just talk about how trauma makes children feel. Use this discussion to provide psychoeducation about trauma and reactions and to lead into a discussion of how they feel.
  - Next, we are going to review your responses to some of the questionnaires that we asked you a few weeks ago. There is no right or wrong answer and some of your responses may have changed since the last time we did them. You can let us know if they have changed (this is for both responders). Have parents/caregivers help if they

can (both in using language the child understands and to explain trauma as much as possible.).

- Start with trauma history - This is an opportunity to do a number of things at once: 1. Normalize that kids don't tell parents/caregivers everything. The items are in the past and so should have less emotional valence. If parents/caregivers get upset, ask them if they told their parents everything (this usually helps them put themselves in their child's shoes).
- Then begin a discussion of symptoms and problems by comparing responses on the UCLA and Mood Questionnaire. If the child no longer feels the same, ask how they would rate it now, then check in with the parents/caregivers and ask the similar questions. If there is a discrepancy of 2 or more on the scale, help them discuss their response and try to come to some agreement.
- Cover any symptoms or problems that were not reported but are common (considering the age of the IP, the caregiver's current situation, type of trauma experienced).
- Based on the items and their clustering, consider providing some skills teaching such as breathing retraining, sleep hygiene etc. (would limit to one area).

#### 4. Including the family

- *It sounds like you have been having a hard time and often we can feel better by working with the whole family instead of just one person, because when a bad thing happens to one person in the family, it can affect everyone.*
- Bring back the genogram and have the parent/caregiver talk about it with the IP. If it was not completed or they want to add some more people, they can do that.
- Based on the trauma history, expand on child and family histories of trauma and adverse experiences. Also ask if they did things to help or overcome the trauma/s. For instance: go back to the child's trauma history, identify a trauma that they endorsed and can ask if that (item) ever happened to anybody else in the family, such as parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents etc.
- *This is more of an overview and we will come back to the genogram next week when we meet with your whole family.* This is meant to let the child know that others in their family have also had bad things happen, that they are not alone, and that the family is going to support their recovery. It is not meant to start the family process since the rest of the family is not present.

#### 5. Closing Activities

- Thank the parent/caregiver for taking part in the session.
- Check that everything was covered/summarize the session.
- Schedule next visit with entire family, as many as can come. Don't force teens.
- Remind them that they are going to review the genogram that they completed last time with the whole family.

## Session 3 – Family Interview (90-minute session)

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To get to know the family.
- To set treatment goals and decide about what healing resources will be the focus of their skill building.
- To motivate the whole family to be involved in the treatment.



**Materials needed:** Do You Know Scale, Rating Family Healing Resources, and Family Diary

Handouts:

- Gears
- Genogram
- ACE Surveys



### Session Content

#### 1. Opening Activities:

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Explaining the Process/Gears

- Review with new family members what you've done so far. Review the process and rationale for family treatment is. *We will be spending the next 4 months or so together working as a family to help things at home and with IP get better, although how long exactly will depend on what you and your family want and need. We will talk about the ways that families spend time together; celebrate the good things that happen to them and help each other get through the bad times. We will talk about big family events and things that happen every day in families. We will make things, play games, and share things about your families and yourselves. We have worked with lots of families who have experienced trauma and struggled with coping in a healthy way. They learned new ways of coping, and they are now able to deal with things that happened to them in the past and also better able to handle new experiences. I am confident that you will also find this approach helpful.*
- Use gears to illustrate. Observe family interactions and problem-solving style as they work together. Brief trauma psychoeducation for entire family (have parents/caregivers and child IP assist).
- Hand out gear set. Ask the family to work together to build something with the gears. They should build something so that when they turn the handle, all of the gears work together.
- Then, ask them to take out one of the gears. Have them turn the handle – what happens? Do all the gears turn? Take out another gear. Do all the gears turn? Now add a gear some place and see what happens. Do all the gears turn?

- Talk about how their family works something like the gears. When something happens, no matter if it is something good or bad, it affects everyone.
- *Something really bad, like a trauma, could happen to any one member of the family, sending ripples throughout the family. This is called indirect trauma when the trauma experienced by only one family member creates distress or a traumatic stress reaction in other family members. "Family trauma" also happens when trauma is experienced directly by the whole family. A traumatized family reacts as a unit even though not everyone in the family will have the same reaction.*
- *Also, reactions to bad things that happen change over time. The way a family responds right after the event may not be the same as the way a family responds after some time has passed. Whole families can develop trauma-related symptoms and these symptoms can last for a year or longer. Even after that, trauma-related symptoms may re-occur or get worse when the family is under a lot of stress or when things in the family are changing.*

### 3. Including the Family

- Next review genogram with family. Have parents/caregivers lead. Support questions, elaborations, and additions from other family members. When there are clear intergenerational similar events, ask about them and try to help family think about why traumas can be passed down?
- Using the *Do You Know Scale*, ask the family about their knowledge of family stories. Have them share some stories. Do not go over every question; just pick several to start the storytelling. Don't be satisfied with a "yes" or "no" answer, have the family elaborate. Observe family interactions and ask follow-up questions as necessary.
- Use a strength-based approach by emphasizing successes and the overcoming of difficult situations.

### 4. Planning our Treatment

- Discuss and clarify the family's goals for treatment.
- Introduce the notion of Family Healing Resources and discuss the menu of options for skill-building sessions in Module II. *Family Healing Resources are things like effective coping methods that are useful in recovering from a crisis or the aftermath of traumatic events. Families use these resources to help each other. You already have many of these resources in your family. Sometimes, however, when really upsetting and frightening things happen, families are not able to use these resources successfully. They are just overwhelmed. By strengthening some of the resources that you already have and learning some new ones that are really helpful in the most difficult situations, you will be able to help each other recover.*
- Review each Healing Resource (see handout). Have each member rate the family on the presence of that resource in their family. Share the ratings and fill in the rating form. Have the family give some examples of how their family uses or does not use these resources.

- Use the rating to help the family prioritize which Healing Resources that they would like to focus on. Clinicians can and should have input here. You could say something like, “As I have reviewed your assessments and met with you several times, it seems to me that... Give some concrete observations of family interactions to support your position.
- Practice coping skills. Choose one coping skill to introduce to the family. Chose that skill to address a symptom or behavior problem that they are currently having difficulty handling. It is important, in this instance, to choose an issue that can be framed as a family problem, not a problem that the family is having with the IP.

## 5. Closing Activities

- *I want to thank everyone in the family for taking part in today’s session. It is now time to finish this session and at the end of every session, we will do a few things to end and to get ready for the next session. In other words, we will have a routine for ending each session. Trauma and stress can get in the way of the routines and rituals that help families feel safe, makes life more predictable, and give us strength. We are going to work hard to stick to certain routines and rituals in our sessions together as a way to practice helping your family reconnect with routines and rituals that fit your family. Every week we will open with a ritual and close with a ritual. Let's spend a few minutes brainstorming to decide what will work for your family.* Provide examples if the family is struggling to identify ideas, such as share a highlight from your week; prayer for families that have already identified spirituality as important to their family; or share something you are grateful for about your family.
- Thank the parent/caregiver taking part in the session.
- Check that everything was covered/summarize the session.
- Remind caregivers that we are going to meet next with the whole family to start building their healing resources. Assign the Family Diary; *I want you to keep a diary of your family’s activities. You don’t have to write in it every day but try to write in it about 3 times during the week. We just want you to think about how you start your day, what you do in the middle of the day, how you do your evening meal, and how you end your day.*
- Closing ritual/practice.



Healing Resources	Safety	Deliberateness	Structure	Problem Solving	Family relations	Communication	Sources of support	Regulation	Positive affect & memories
Core Resources									
Family Diary									
Feeling Safe – Relaxation									
Feeling Safe – Knowing the Limits									
Selected Resources									
Telling Family Stories					X	X			X
Ritual Family Tree		X			X	X			
Managing Stressors and Crises			X	X				X	
Feeling Safe - Mapping Safety	X		X	X		X		X	
People Resources					X		X		
Life Choices I – Family Timeline		X				X			
Life Choices II – Path to our Future		X			X	X			
Spirituality					X	X	X		
Family Values					X	X			
Things Get in the Way		X		X				X	
More Things Get in the Way		X		X					
The Elephant in the Room	X	X		X		X		X	
Turning Toward the Positive Resources									
Good Things Happen, Too!		X		X	X	X			X
Feeling Good		X			X	X			X
Laughing Together					X	X			X
Celebrating Successes					X				X

## Module II: Strengthening Family Coping

Sessions 4-12 are designed as family skill-building. There are three core healing resources that all families should have or build: *Family Diary*, *Feeling Safe – Relaxation*, *Feeling Safe – Knowing the Limits*. These resources provide some foundational skills that are needed by all families. They are important to recovery, but they are also critical to providing families with the resources they will need to co-construct the trauma narrative in Module III. In *Family Diary*, families learn the value of predictable and effective daily routines. They learn about developing effective routines and about problem-solving when routines do not go as planned. This process is used again in multiple sessions in Module II. *Feeling Safe – Relaxation* teaches the family stress inoculation skills and reinforces consistent practice of these essential coping strategies. *Feeling Safe – Knowing the Limits* focuses on setting limits and the relationship between limits and safety for the family.

The remaining healing resources are selected to target the needs of each family. Based on the assessment of family distress and current coping strategies, healing resources are chosen to build adaptive and protective family coping skills. Sessions are built to target safety, deliberateness and structure, problem-solving, family relations, communication, sources of support, regulation, and positive affect/memories. Some of the healing resources build skills across multiple categories and are listed accordingly (See Table).

These skill-building sessions provide a foundation for the next phase of this intervention. These sessions introduce the skills necessary for the family to co-construct a trauma narrative in a safe and regulated fashion leading to meaning making and resolution.

Using a shared decision-making process as outlined in Session Three, the clinician works with the family to identify the healing resources needed by the family to boost their ability to cope with trauma and adversity, to prioritize which skills are needed most, and to determine the order that the family would like to work on the skills needed.

The healing resources that you picked in Session Three can be modified if you learn new information about the family's strengths and needs during sessions you focus on core healing resources.

As the family progresses through Module II use the *Healing Resources Star Chart* to reinforce their capacity building.

If more than 9 sessions are necessary, this phase of the treatment can be extended.

## Core Healing Resource – Family Diary

Family Assignment in preparation for this session: Family Diary; *I want you to keep a diary of your family's activities. You don't have to write in it every day but try to write in it about 3 times during the week. We just want you to think about how you start your day, what you do in the middle of the day, how you do your evening meal, and how you end your day.*



### Objectives:

- To review the importance of routines and structure in daily family life.
- To discuss aspects of routines that support healthy individual and family functioning.
- To identify family routines that are and are not working and modify ones that are not.
- To create a family culture where everyone takes part, and everyone has a role in making sure that the family's daily life runs smoothly.
- To remind the family to pay attention when members follow through with their responsibilities.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Daily Routines, Routine Change Worksheet, Family Job Chart  
Daily Schedule poster  
Post-it notes  
Sequencing cards



### Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. Sharing Diaries
  - Sharing diaries/filling in post-its. Using their homework diaries as a base, have the family fill out a post-it for each activity they do. EX: brush their teeth in the morning, get dressed – each would be a post-it. *I asked you to fill out diaries for several days during the past week and bring them back with you. Please, look through your diaries and write some of your daily activities on post-its. If you start the day by having breakfast, then you would write that on one post-it.* Family posts these on a daily schedule poster. Ask family members as they share their schedule how they feel at that time of day, if the time goes smoothly, etc. Try to point out routines, look for conflict, and give lots of praise to families as they share.
3. Routines
  - Introduce the sequencing cards and let the family put a couple of sets in order and tell the related stories. Review “Daily Routines” handout. Then, hand out the “Routine Change Worksheet” for family to complete. Guide them in focusing on one or two problem areas. Use the homework dairies to talk about times during the day that routines are not working. Help construct new routines; look at the number of tasks

involved, consider the timing and ordering of the tasks, and look for an organizing action for establishing the routine. Focusing on evening and bedtime routines is often productive to help with regulation and encourage good sleep hygiene. Remember to also focus on problem-solving if the routine doesn't work as planned.

#### 4. Family Chore Chart

- *Our last activity for this session is to help everyone in your family take part in making sure that the things that need to get done get done.* Hand out the "Family Chore Chart" and make sure each member of the family has a task. Give the family stickers to take home and use during the week, as jobs are completed as planned.

#### 5. Notes for Closing:

- Introduce the topic for next week – Help the family make the connection between building their healing resources skills and feeling better. Also, remind the family that they will be making use of these skills in Module III as they talk together about their trauma.
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – *Put your new routine in place and see how it works. Remember to bring back your job charts covered in stickers so that we can see how everyone worked together.*

## Core Healing Resource – Feeling Safe - Relaxation

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To increase each individual family members' sense of safety.
- To improve the parents' ability to help their children feel safe and the children's ability to look to parents for protection.
- To introduce relaxation skills.
- To increase the family's skills for coping with stress, threat, and trauma.
- To tie relaxation and sense of safety together.
- To reinforce family storytelling.
- To start the family talking about mildly negative events.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Stress, Relaxation, My Safe Place, Relaxation Routine Development Worksheet, Relaxation Routine Log  
Relaxation props needed  
Digital recorder



### Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. Sit Back, Relax
  - This session focuses on safety. Let's get started.
    - Introduce topic of relaxation, and plan to develop a relaxation routine that the family can use.
    - Handout the "Stress" and "Relaxation Handout" and discuss importance/benefits of relaxation for about 5 minutes with family.
    - After discussion, shift to teaching family specific relaxation strategies they can use. Teach them several relaxation strategies including deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation. Use techniques appropriate for the children in the family. *Let's start with an exercise that I use with lots of families. First, let's set the mood. Can everyone find a comfortable seat? I am going to turn off some of the lights if that's okay with you.* Introduce simple Deep Breathing activity and have the family practice for 5-10 minutes. A good breathing activity for families with young children is "Blowing out birthday candles". Now introduce simple progressive relaxation activity and have the family practice for 5-10 minutes. A good relaxation activity for families with young children is "Cooking spaghetti".
    - Discuss with the family which type of relaxation activity they like the best.

- Introduce the idea of guided imagery using “My Safe Place” handout as a guide. Have family members shut their eyes and imagine a place where they feel safe. Have them go to that place. Ask them to spend some time in that place. Have them look around. Have them identify sights, sounds, smells, feel, etc of their safe place.
- Discuss how the family can relax at home. Work with the family to complete the “Relaxation Routine Development Worksheet”. Ask the family to complete the “Relaxation Routine Log” as homework and to bring it back the following session.

### 3. Telling Family Stories

- Spend a few minutes thinking about a time that something a **little bit** scary or **somewhat** stressful happened to your family over the past 2-3 years. Once you have decided on something to talk about, just pretend you were sitting around, and someone brought it up. Add some details to your story about what you did to cope, what worked, and what didn't. Provide digital recorder. Facilitate collaborative storytelling (see table).

### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – *I know you will all feel relaxed after practicing relaxation all week.* Also, hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers so you can keep working together to get everything done.

## Core Healing Resource – Feeling Safe - Knowing the Limits

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To increase each individual family members' sense of safety.
- To improve the parents' ability to help their children feel safe and the children's ability to look to parents for protection.
- To increase awareness of the benefits of predictability and limits on sense of safety.
- To communicate family limits and rules publicly.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Setting Limits, Family Limits Worksheet  
Toy fence  
Blank business cards



### Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. Knowing the Limits
  - Handout "Setting Limits" and spend about 5 minutes discussing the importance of clear expectations and limits for family safety. Talk about predictability and knowing what to expect. Also discuss guilt and problems keeping high expectations when you are feeling bad about things that have happened.
  - Hand out fences. Have the family build their fence. Explain that fences are for setting boundaries and so are limits.
  - Handout cards. Have the family brainstorm and write limits on the cards. Teach the family the rules for brainstorming: 1) one person talks at a time; 2) all ideas are good ideas; and 3) all ideas are recorded. Let the family know that this is a good collaborative problem-solving technique.
  - From these cards, have the family decide on the 3 most important limits for their family and put these inside their fence.
  - Handout "Family Limits Worksheet" and have the family write their three limits inside the fence. On the other side, have the family list behaviors that fall outside the limit and the consequences for these behaviors.
3. Notes for Closing:
  - Review tasks/homework for the following week – *Continue practicing relaxation all week*. Also, hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers so you can keep working together to get everything done.

# Healing Resource – Telling Family Stories

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



## Objectives:

- To introduce the family to the concepts of traditions, routines, and rituals.
- To encourage sharing about the family between parents and children.
- To reinforce the sense of identity and belonging to the family by repeating family stories.
- To help the family create a shared history.



## Materials needed:

Handouts: Introduction to Family Traditions and Routines  
Digital recorder



## Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. What is a Family Tradition?
  - Talk about family traditions; discuss how their family celebrates bigger events and practices day-to-day routines. Handout “Introduction to Family Traditions and Routines”. Ask parent(s) to reminisce about the way things were done in their families when they were growing up. Addressing the parent(s): *Think for a minute about being 5 years old. Think about what it was like to be a part of your family when you were little. Think about what it meant to be part of your family as you were growing up. Share memories about special events, birthdays, holidays, bedtime, etc.* To the parent(s): *Now ask your children to talk some about the special events, birthdays, holidays, bedtime routines that you share as a family now.* Use these descriptions to teach about the important characteristics of ritual and routine. Refer to the Facilitator’s discussion guide for this activity. The most important points to be covered are highlighted.
3. Telling Family Stories
  - Families tell their own stories - *I bet your family here has some good stories to tell. Think about a happy event your whole family experienced together. Once you have decided, discuss the event. Just pretend you were sitting around, and someone brought it up.* Provide digital recorder. Facilitate collaborative storytelling (see table on Module III, Narrative Guide).
4. Notes for Closing:



- Review tasks/homework for the following week. *Continue practicing your relaxation, and, remember to bring back your chore charts covered in stickers so that we can see how everyone worked together.*

## Healing Resource – Ritual Family Tree

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: Relative Interview; choose one or a few people who can tell you about your family’s history. Call or visit that person and find out what traditions have been important to your family over the years.



### Objectives:

- To help families discover the richness and uniqueness of their traditions from the past and present.
- To facilitate discussion of family heritage and identity between parent(s) and children.
- To encourage expression about current rituals important to each family member.
- To seek a commitment within the family to uphold and further develop this heritage.
- To encourage cooperation and active participation by all family members.
- To encourage deliberate planning in each family.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Ritual Family Tree, Family Ritual Tree Care  
Poster board and craft supplies



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Growing your tree

- Review homework
- Provide “Ritual Family Tree Handout” for the family to complete.
- Ritual Family Trees - *You have seen other family trees that list the people in each generation, well, we are going to make family ritual trees that trace the rituals, traditions, and routines that are special to your family. Your Relative Interview may give you some good ideas about what to include.* Provide craft supplies. Allow 30 minutes to complete.

#### 3. Caring for your tree

- Handout “Family Ritual Tree Care”. Ask the family to think about traditions or routines they put on their tree. Have them consider which ones are really important to them, which ones they want to keep doing, which they would like to change some, whether there are some that they stopped and want to start again, and whether there are some new ones they would like to add. Encourage them to talk as a family and write down what they decide.

#### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week. *Continue practicing your relaxation, and, remember to bring back your chore charts covered in stickers so that we can see how everyone worked together.*

# Healing Resource – Managing Stressors and Crises

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session:



## Objectives:



## Materials needed:

Handouts: Family Crisis Management Plan  
Crisis Management Facilitator Discussion Guide



## Session Content:

### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

### 2. Exploring the problem

- Help the family name and define the problem by exploring dimensions and context of the current situation. “Crisis” means different things to every family. The family’s own definition of the problem and the level of associated risk/chaos are important to helping the family develop a management plan they will own and want to use.
- Determine how big the crisis is. Help the family to scale the crisis. Use the triangle to help the family evaluate the extent of the crisis – What factors do they use to decide? How can they use these factors to put their experiences into perspective? Scaling the crisis is important for helping the family determine how many resources to put into managing the crisis. Many families invest lots of time, energy, resources, and worry into situations that they see as bigger problems or more serious than they really are. *How about we make a plan where you can invest just the right amount of energy into actions that are most likely to work? Then you can have more time for other more pleasant things in your family life.*
- Look at how the family has coped with similar situations in the past.

### 3. Solution-focused problem-solving

- Work with the family to determine the best outcome for the crisis. Focus first on short-term solutions that will have immediate impacts at de-escalating the situation or ensuring safety. Pay attention to what is meaningful for the family now.
- Examine many possible solutions.

### 4. Planning for action

- Handout “Family Crisis Management Plan”. Work with the family to develop a plan (see discussion guide included with the handout). Make sure that the plan is concrete, doable, and likely to succeed.

- Help the family understand the importance of maintaining structure, routine, and limits during the crisis.
- Have the family evaluate the plan's usability. If it doesn't seem usable, make modifications to the plan. Obtain a commitment from the family to put the plan in place.
- Plan follow-up contact to monitor how the plan is working.
- Encourage the family to think about how they could use this process again when another crisis happens. Hand out some blank copies of the Family Crisis Management Plan.

5. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – *Stick to your Crisis Management Plan. Reach out for support when you need it.*

Adapted from:

Crisis intervention strategy (James et al. 2012); Solution focused therapy (Hopson et al. 2004); CRISIS PLANNING TOOLS FOR FAMILIES: A Companion Guide for Providers FINAL VERSION: March 29, 2011 [http://www.masspartnership.com/Provider/pdf/Crisis-Planning-Tools\\_Guide\\_for\\_ProvidersFinal.pdf](http://www.masspartnership.com/Provider/pdf/Crisis-Planning-Tools_Guide_for_ProvidersFinal.pdf)

## Healing Resource – Feeling Safe - Mapping Safety

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: Observation; Take some time this week to observe ways that your children express feeling scared. Handout “Observations”.



### Objectives:

- To increase each individual family members’ sense of safety.
- To improve the parents’ ability to help their children feel safe and the children’s ability to look to parents for protection.
- To increase awareness of safety concerns by identifying threats.
- To increase the family’s ability to stay safe.
- To diminish the risk of further exposure to trauma.
- To reinforce the use of routines by building safety routines.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Safety Mapping Stickers, Safety Routine Worksheet  
Poster board, rulers, pencils, stickers, and other craft supplies



### Session Content:

4. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
4. Mapping Safety
  - Start out with a brief discussion of the role of parents/caregivers/families in maintaining safety, especially for children in the family. Focus on the things that parents do now to help their children feel safe. Suggest that there might be additional ways that the family can work together to make everyone feel safer.
  - Hand out poster board, rulers, pencils, stickers, and other craft supplies as needed (e.g., markers, crayons).
  - Invite the family to draw a map of their neighborhood. Have them draw their house and street first. Then, identify houses, schools, stores, hospitals, churches, relatives, and friend’s homes, etc. Include the places where violence has occurred and places the child considers safe with its accompanying details. They can use the provided stickers to indicate who is with them at those places, how much time they are there, and how they feel when they are there. *Let’s use this large piece of paper to draw a map of your neighborhood. First, draw your street and then place your house on it. Fill in the street with other houses and stores and traffic signals and street signs. Let’s draw the roads you walk to get to school, church, etc. Now let’s work with your maps to figure out where you feel there is danger and where you feel safe. Show the places that feel dangerous or that are reminders of or triggers for the traumatic event(s). Also pick out places that feel safe. If people in your family feel differently about some places, that’s*

*okay. Use the stickers to identify “Who is with you when you are in these places and how much time are you there?” “How you feel when you are at those places.*

- Remind them that it’s ok for different people in the family to feel differently about the same places.

#### 4. Safety Routines

- Have the family review their map and select one time/place where they would like to change the way they feel so that they feel safer.
- Have them use the “Safety Routine Worksheet” to figure out a way to make that happen. Make sure they work as a family to develop a routine to help them feel safer at the time or place chosen. *Now, we are going to use your map as a tool. Please review your map and decide on one time/place that you would like to change the way you feel. Pick a time or place that you would like to feel safer. Let’s use the “Safety Routine Worksheet” to figure out a way to make that happen. Remember the things we learned about routines. Work together as a family to develop a routine that would help you feel safer at the time or place that you chose.*

#### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Have the family try out their new safety routine and report back on how it worked. Also, hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers so you can keep working together to get everything done.

## Healing Resource – People Resources

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To help the family realize that social networks constitute important coping resources.
- To help the family become aware (on both cognitive and emotional levels) of their existing networks, including their strengths and weaknesses.
- To provide skills for identifying, accessing, and managing relationships, supports, and community links.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Sociograms, Family Sculpture Outline and Action Plan  
Dolls



### Session Content:

4. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
4. Talking about who matters
  - Handout “Sociograms”. Assist the family in completing the sociogram with people who are important to them. *We are going to talk some about people who are important to you. On this handout, I want you to put the first names of everyone who you think belongs in each circle. Let’s do the first group together. Write the names of everyone in your immediate family in this circle. Your immediate family includes your children and your partner, if you have one. Now, let’s think about your extended family. Your extended family includes those people who you consider family, like your parents, sisters and brothers, aunt and uncles, and maybe others like Godparents or really close family friends.* Complete the rest of the sociogram. Make sure that every family member gets to include their supports on the sociogram.
  - Have the family pick someone not in their immediate family who has helped them out or kept them safe and tell the story of that person and how they helped. Provide digital recorder.
4. Family Sculpture
  - Introduce the idea of sculptures. Facilitate the family in building a sculpture that represents both their family and outside resources/supports that are important to them. The family can use dolls to represent other people in their sculpture. Take a picture of the completed sculpture.
  - Hand out “Family Sculpture Outline and Action Plan” to assist the family in deciding on a way to seek support during the next week. Have each family decide on a way to seek support during the next week. *Wow, we learned a lot about the people who are part of*



*your family rituals and routines and who support your family. Please talk together and decide on one thing to do during the week to increase your social support.*

4. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – For next week, remember to seek support as discussed at end of family sculpture activity. Continue practicing your relaxation, and, remember to bring back your chore charts covered in stickers so that we can see how everyone worked together.
- Next session provide family with a minute or two to discuss their success at seeking support. Have them discuss what they did and how it worked.

# Healing Resource – Life Choices I – Family Timeline<sup>1</sup>

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



## Objectives:

- To reinforce the notion of deliberate planning.
- To encourage the family to model deliberate planning of life choices and to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for deliberate planning.
- To increase parents' knowledge of normal changes throughout the family life cycle.
- To improve understanding of how families adapt to the normal process of change.
- To improve understanding of transitions and loss.
- To help the family track both normative and non-normative events that have affected their family.
- To get each family member to conceptualize long-term planning about life choices.
- To understand the path between life scripts and what actually happens.



## Materials needed:

Handouts: *The More Things Change*, *Family Timeline Example*, *Family Timeline Worksheet*, *Life Choices*

Poster board, markers, crayons, labels

Relaxation activity



## Session Content:

3. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. Family Timeline
  - Give the family “The More Things Change.” Show the Family Timeline Example to let the family know what a timeline looks like.
  - Direct the family to construct their own family timeline, starting with the birth of the first child or when the parents started planning a family. They can use the “Family Timeline Worksheet” to list the events that they want to include.
  - To begin, the family makes a list of important events on labels or postcards. Family members make a small sign using the labels/postcards to represent each event. The family puts these events on the poster board in the order of their occurrence.
  - Have the family place “today” about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way across the poster leaving room for the future (don't allow them to start this portion yet, it will be completed later).
3. Life Choices
  - Handout “Life Choices.” Help family members recognize the importance of deliberate planning by discussing their own life choices.

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<sup>1</sup> This session is best done in conjunction with “Path to our Future”

- To encourage participation, you might ask each family member to tell what their life plans were/are at various stages of development. Start with the parent/caregiver. Turn the discussion over to the parent/caregiver as soon as it gets started.

#### 4. Relaxation Practice

- Before we end for today, let's take a moment to practice our relaxation. Lead the family in a 2-minute relaxation activity.

#### 5. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week - To get ready for next week, daydream about what you would like the future to be for your family. *Continue practicing your relaxation, and, remember to bring back your chore charts covered in stickers so that we can see how everyone worked together.*

## Healing Resource – Life Choices II – Path to our Future<sup>2</sup>

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: *To get ready for next week, daydream about what you would like the future to be for your family.*



### Objectives:

- To illustrate the deliberate planning for the family's future.
- To share goals and steps for follow-through.



### Materials needed:

Handout: Path to my Future  
Chutes & Ladders  
Post It Notes  
Timeline from last session  
Digital recorder



### Session Content:

#### 5. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 5. Path to our Future

- Hand out a “Path to my Future” worksheet to each family member over the age of 10 years. Have family members each complete the worksheet while playing the game.
- Introduce “Chutes & Ladders” and explain the modified rules. Each family member picks a goal that is relevant to them. This is the goal that represents the end of the game. Family members write their goal on a postcard/post-it note that is placed at the top of the game board. While the children are playing, they focus on the supports and obstacles to reaching their goal. For example, when they take a turn, they can talk about a step that they would need to take in order to reach their goal. When they land on a ladder, they talk about a challenge that they might face in reaching their goal. When they land on a chute, they identify something that would make it harder to or delay reaching their goal. The game ends when all family members reach their goal.

#### 5. Into the Future (Future Portion of Timeline):

- Give the family their timeline from the week prior.
- Inform the family that you want them to add their family's future to their timeline using ideas from tonight's activities. Each person in the family should draw or write about something they imagine will take place in their family's future. They can also write in the steps that each child will need to go through to get to that imagined future. *Using ideas from tonight's activities, I want you to add your family's future to your timeline. Each person in the family should draw/create something to represent something you imagine*

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<sup>2</sup> This session is best done in conjunction with “Family Timeline”

*will take place in your family's future. Add to your timeline the things you want for your family in the future. You can write in the steps that each child will need to go through to get to that imagined future.*

- *To end today's session, let's tell another story. Tell a story that represents a "Vision Statement" for your family. Remember, this is what you imagine and can plan for yourselves in the future. Hand out the digital recorder.*

5. Notes for Closing:

- *Review tasks/homework for the following week. Continue practicing your relaxation, and, remember to bring back your chore charts covered in stickers so that we can see how everyone worked together.*

## Healing Resource – Spirituality

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: Sources of Spiritual Support & Spiritual Assessment; *To get ready for next week, think about if and how your sense of spirituality gives you and your family comfort or support.* Hand out “Sources of Spiritual Support” & “Spiritual Assessment” to each family member. Also, hand out extra copies of the job chart and stickers so the family can keep working together to get everything done.



### Objectives:

- To consider spirituality in a broader context - a philosophy of life, source of hope, self-actualization.
- To help the family increase their awareness of a spiritual meaning to their lives.
- To aid the family in evaluating their spirituality and looking at means for enriching their family experience.
- To increase awareness of spirituality as a coping resource and source of meaning.
- To understand what individual family members need for support.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Sources of Spiritual Support, Spiritual Assessment  
Heavy stock paper  
6 Petals



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Spirituality Word Flower

- *Remember for your homework assignment, I asked you to think about if and how your sense of spirituality gives you and your family comfort or support.*
- *We are going to spend the session on spirituality. What I mean is “personal beliefs or values that give us a sense of being close to nature and the universe and that help us find meaning in things that happen. Maybe for you, spirituality includes a higher power or force that gives you strength and helps to guide you”. Everyone has different ideas about what spirituality means. Think a minute about your sense of spirituality. Talk together as a family about it.*
- Have the family make a “Spirituality Word Flower.” Have the family brainstorm words that they associate with spirituality. The family is given 6 flower petals. They are asked to agree on six words that signify the meaning of spirituality for their family. Each of these words is written on a petal and put on a piece of hard stock paper to make a flower.

#### 3. Spirituality in Everyday Practice

- Have family members share about the spiritual supports that they each use and find helpful (referring back to the homework for this session. If the handouts were not completed, use them to guide the discussion.). Help the family evaluate whether their spiritual supports are meeting their needs and, if not, talk about how to build additional supports.
- Guided imagery exercise: *We have been talking about the ways that you connect with your spirituality, and each of you have found different ways of finding quiet, peace, hope and a sense of connection. Let's focus for a few moments on that place or activity. So, everyone just find a comfortable relaxed position, take a few calming breaths, and close your eyes. Focus your mind on that place or activity when you find quiet, peace, hope, and connection. Imagine yourself in that place or doing that activity that connects you to your spiritual self. Pay attention to how your body feels when you are in that place or doing that activity. Pay attention to your senses...what do you see?, what sounds are you aware of?, what do you smell?, what are you touching?, and how does it feel? Stay in that place or doing that activity with a focused mind. If your mind starts to wander, just gently redirect your thoughts back to finding your spiritual place or doing your spiritual activity. Look around again. Use all of your senses to connect you to this place or activity and this feeling. Remember that the idea of this spiritual place or activity in your mind can provide you with support whenever you need it. Come back as often as you like.*

5. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers as needed. Continue relaxation practice.

# Healing Resource – Family Values

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



## **Objectives:**

- To aid family discussion and adoption of shared values.
- To help the family put their shared values into action.
- To develop family traditions or routines that support their shared values.



## **Materials needed:**

Handouts: Our Family Values, Family Values and Family Life  
Banner materials (felt, fabric glue, wooden dowels, yarn or rope, decorative materials)



## **Session Content:**

### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

### 2. Value Assessment

- Handout “Our Family Values.” Use the handout to facilitate a discussion of family values.
- Have the family decide on a list of values they all believe in and can share.

### 3. Communicating our Values/Family Banner

- Handout “Our Family Values.” Use the handout to facilitate a discussion of family values. Have the family decide on a list of values they all believe in and can share.
- Have the family make a banner to communicate and celebrate their family values. Prompt them to discuss and decide on a message and design for their banner. They don’t have to focus on one theme.
- Lastly, handout “Family Values and Family Life.” Lead the family in developing a ritual or routine around the message on their banner.

### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the job chart and stickers as needed. Continue relaxation practice.



## Healing Resource – Things Get in the Way<sup>3</sup>

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To facilitate discussion among family members around things that get in the way of planned activities.
- To identify situations in which activities have not been carried out in the family.
- To identify common factors that get in the way of carrying out activities for the family.
- To allow parents and children to identify and express emotions resulting from not carrying out planned family activities.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Things that Get in the Way

*I Wish Daddy Didn't Drink So Much*

*A Boy and a Bear* or other appropriate mindfulness activity



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. SIT Reinforcement

- *I know you have been practicing your relaxation routines. I would like to give you another idea about a way to relax.* Introduce “*A Boy and a Bear*” relaxation activity or another appropriate mindfulness activity. Remind the family of the benefits of relaxation.

#### 3. Things Get in the Way

- Handout and review “Things that Get in the Way.” Family members are asked to consider situations in which a variety of factors (parents, children, and/or external factors) may have gotten in the way of successfully carrying out family activities. Family members are then asked to identify situations when their family has not carried out planned activities, and to identify what usually gets in the way. An alternative is to read the story “*I Wish Daddy Didn't Drink So Much*” and ask family members to identify the main character’s feelings when she didn’t get to go sledding, an activity that had been planned with her father. Family members are then asked to identify situations when their family has not carried out planned activities and to identify what usually gets in the way.
- Ask the family to discuss their feelings about these situations when things do not go as planned. Parents should identify their own feelings and then help their children identify and express their feelings about not carrying out planned activities.

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<sup>3</sup> This session is best done in conjunction with “More Things Get in the Way”

#### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Introduce the topic for next week – Next week, we will talk more about things that get in the way of planned activities.
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers as needed. Continue relaxation practice.

## Healing Resource – More Things Get in the Way<sup>4</sup>

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To facilitate discussion among family members around things that get in the way of planned activities.
- To encourage the family to carry out one family activity in upcoming week.
- To encourage family problem solving around potential obstacles to family activities.
- To increase each family's self-efficacy related to carrying out family activities.
- To build problem-solving skills relevant to carrying out planned family activities.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: FLIP the Problem, Harold, Carry it Out this Week  
*Harold and the Purple Crayon*  
Paper and purple crayons



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Problem-solving

- Remind the family about their discussion from last week. Have them list some of things that get in the way of carrying out family activities. Introduce problem solving as a way to handle situations that don't work out the way they planned.
- *Everyone faces problems in life, whether with family, friends, teachers, or co-workers. Problems can include when things don't go as planned, as we were just talking about, and other situations as well. It is important to have a general way to solve these problems, so that they don't lead you to feel discouraged, hopeless, or even depressed. Today I wanted us to talk about problem-solving, and how this skill might help you solve future problems, such as when things don't go as planned. First let's define a problem. What is a problem? A problem is a source of stress. Basically, a problem is any situation that causes you to be anxious, worried, or stressed out. Hand out FLIP the Problem. Let's learn about FLIP. When you encounter a problem, FLIP the problem to look at all sides of the situation.*

***F: Figure out what the problem is and what you want to happen.*** Sometimes when people are overwhelmed, everything becomes part of the problem. This often leads to more stress! In order to solve the problem, you need to figure out what the problem is.

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<sup>4</sup> This session is best done in conjunction with “Things Get in the Way”

**L: List all possible solutions.** Even adults often overlook this step in problem-solving. Most problems have many possible solutions. The trick is to brainstorm all of these possibilities before choosing one.

**I: Identify the best solution.** Once you have listed all possible options, you can fill in the positive consequences (“plusses”) and negative consequences (“minuses”) for each. After looking at the positives and negatives to each option, it often is easy to choose a solution-- -the one with the most “plusses”! If it is not obvious which solution is the best, then continue to brainstorm any “plusses” or “minuses” that you might have left off of the list.

**P: Plan what to do next.** After choosing a solution, it is important to plan how to carry out this solution. Once you have acted on this solution, evaluate the effectiveness of your choice and learn from it!

- Have the family apply FLIP to one of the problems raised, such as when things do not go as planned.
- Introduce *Harold* and talk about how he solves problems with his purple crayon. Read excerpts from *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, have family members draw or discuss possible solutions to the *Harold's* problems. Then have family members draw or discuss possible solutions to the problems they might face in carrying out family activities.

### 3. Carry It Out This Week!

- Hand out “Carry it Out this Week!” Have the family identify a family activity that they would like to carry out in the upcoming week. Activities should be “doable,” and should include all family members.
- Have the family complete the handout, identifying potential obstacles to carrying out their activity & ways to overcome obstacles by using their new problem-solving skills.

### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers as needed. Continue relaxation practice.

# Healing Resource – The Elephant in the Room

Family Assignment in preparation for this session: None



## Objectives:

- To encourage families to talk about difficult topics in safe and healthy ways.
- To develop a list of communication rules for having safe and healthy conversations.
- To practice safe and healthy conversations.



## Materials needed:

Handouts: The Elephant in the Room



## Session Content:

3. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
4. Family Secrets and Other Tabooed Topics
  - Start by discussing why families should talk directly about difficult things.
  - Making a list of difficult conversation topics that families (not necessarily this family) might discuss is a good way to get family members to share.
3. Communication Rules
  - Have family members recall difficult conversations their family has had in the past. Have them think about conversations that were safe and healthy, and ones that were not that way.
  - Discuss what the family did to make conversations safe and healthy. It is important to remind parents that young children can take part in difficult conversations, but parents/older children need to limit the information shared and use simple appropriate explanations to protect their emotional security.
  - Make a list of tips for having safe and healthy difficult conversations.
4. Practice with Difficult Conversations
  - Have the family pick a difficult conversation topic from the list made at the beginning of the session. It is not necessary for the family to pick a topic that is relevant to them unless they are ready to do so.
  - Role play having a difficult conversation using the tips listed.
  - Have family members share about their experiences in the conversation including what they think will work at home and where they feel they might get stuck, derailed or fall back on old communication patterns.
5. Notes for Closing:

- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Have a family meeting and practice talking about a problem that your family is facing. Before you start, talk about some rules that you will follow during the conversation.

## Module III: Trauma Resolution and Consolidation

Sessions 13-20 involve co-construction of a family trauma narrative. These sessions allow the family to use their coping skills to tell their trauma story safely and to move to meaning making and resolution. Specific areas for trauma work with families included in this module are working through the trauma, developing a shared sense of meaning, and using problem solving techniques for minimizing additional stresses.

Between Modules II and III, the clinician should spend some time thinking through the process that they will use with the family to co-construct their narrative. This is important for planning the family work involved in Module III, including timing of the narrative, strategies for working with the family and with each individual family member, and determination of potential issues that might arise as the family moves through creation of a shared family trauma story. The clinician should complete the Narrative Guide to direct their thinking.

These sessions are completed in the order presented.

If more than 8 sessions are needed, this module can be extended. The goal of this module, though, is for families to develop experience in talking about bad things that happen to them in a safe and regulated manner that results in a shared understanding and sense of meaning. It is not for the family to talk in detail about every trauma that they have experienced.

After sharing their trauma story, assist the family in turning towards the positive things that happen to them and in expressing gratitude, joy, and laughter.

Introduction to be provided to the family in the session immediately preceding the beginning of this module:

*Next week, we will start talking about the traumatic events that you have experienced. Talk with the family about how they have been preparing themselves for this process through previous sessions by learning new skills as a family. Share the *Healing Resources Star Chart* to reinforce their capacity building. Also, review why the narrative process is important (it helps them feel better, cope with what happened). Talk about avoidance and how avoidance makes it hard to talk about what happened but is a common reaction. Anticipate their avoidance by letting the family know that they may not want to come back the next few sessions. Problem solve by asking the family to come up with ways that they will work together to overcome their avoidance.*

## Session – Starting the Narrative

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To help the family track non-normative events that have affected their family.
- To assist the family in the co-construction of their trauma story.
- To allow the family to share the pain of the trauma under safe conditions.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Using Your Coping Resources  
Dowels  
Postcards/Envelope  
Digital recorder



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Communicating without Words\*

- Hand out dowels (one for each family member). Let the family know that this activity will be done in silence.
- Demonstrate how to use the dowels with one family member. Use fingertips or palms of hands (with young children) to hold the dowels between the two of you. Demonstrate moving your hands around, watching each other to see how you move together. Add another family member to show how multiple people can do it together.
- Next, have the family try. Have them try in pairs first, and then with everyone all together. While they are working ask them questions such as “How are they letting each other know what they are going to do next?”, “How are they working together to keep the sticks from falling?”, “Who is taking the lead, and can everyone be a leader?” Let the family know that communicating is an important skill for a family.

*\*This activity was presented by The Cirque Du Monde in a workshop at the All Network Meeting of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network in March 2007 in Anaheim, CA.*

#### 3. Planning the Narrative Process

- Talk with the family about how they have been preparing themselves for this process through previous sessions by learning new skills as a family. Also, review why the narrative process is important (helps them to feel better, cope with what happened).
- Remind the family about safety procedures, including use of safety plans, confidentiality, and reporting responsibilities. Use stress management during the session as needed.



- Talk about avoidance and how avoidance makes it hard to talk about what happened but is a common reaction. Anticipate their avoidance by letting the family know that they may not want to come back the next few sessions. Problem solve by asking the family to come up with ways that they will work together to overcome their avoidance.
- Help the family develop a plan regarding their narrative. Work with the family to set some ground rules, such as who gets to talk, what the family is prepared to talk about, what the family is willing to talk about first, etc.
- Explain the process of developing the trauma story. First, they will make a list of all of the bad things that have happened. They can list which things to talk about, when things happened, which things were the least scary, and which were the scariest. Then, as a family, they will tell their story about the bad thing(s) that happened. They will decide how to start their story, what bad things they want to talk about in what order, how much detail to include, how to record their story, and how they will know when to end their story. Remind the family that everyone in their family has different experiences when bad things happen and every one of them may remember what happened differently, and that's ok.

*First, you are going to make a list of all of the bad things that have happened. You can then use this list to talk about when things happened, and which things were the least scary and which were the scariest. Second, as a family, you will tell your story about the bad thing(s) that happened. You will decide how you want to start your story, what bad things you want to talk about in what order, how much detail you want to include, how you want to record your story, and how you will know when to end your story.*

*Remember that I am here to help you decide these things and make sure that you can tell your story in a way that everyone continues to feel safe. One thing to think about as you are telling your story is that everyone in your family has different experiences when bad things happen and every one of you may remember what happened differently.*

*That's fine. It's just fine for each member of the family to have their own piece of the story.*

#### 4. Trauma Timeline

- Turn on the recorder.
- Guide family through constructing a family trauma timeline. Each family member writes the traumatic event(s) that have occurred on a blank postcard. They can put the cards in chronological order after all the traumas are listed. At the end of the activity, put the cards in an envelope for safe keeping until the family returns.
- Make sure to allow the family time to reach an appropriate stopping point and regain emotional balance before ending. End the narrative session by telling the family: *Talking about trauma is very difficult. Many times, when families start to share about bad things that have happened, stress goes up. When stress levels go up, both children and adults can feel angry, irritable, sad, or can feel bad physically. We have worked a lot on things that you can do when this happens. Here is a sheet to help remind you of all the skills you have learned. You know that you can also always reach out to me if you are having trouble during the week. Because telling your trauma story is hard work, you may not*

*want to come back every week. Remember that not wanting to talk about or think about what happened is a symptom of PTSD. But it is important that you do come back each week and that you work together as a family to make sure that happens.*

5. Notes for Closing:

- Introduce the topic for next week – *Next week, we will continue talking about the traumatic events that you have experienced.* Remind the family about avoidance and problem solve by asking the family to come up with ways that they will work together to overcome their avoidance. Remind the family of the following: *Remember that this is hard work that you are doing. Use your coping skills during the week to take care of yourselves.* Hand out “*Using Your Coping Resources.*” *Reach out for support if it gets too hard.*
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers as needed.

## Session – Telling about What Happened I

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To increase the family's ability to share trauma stories.
- To co-construct a shared trauma narrative.
- To express and share trauma pain in a safe and modulated manner.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Using Your Coping Resources  
*Calm Cat, Cool Kids* or other appropriate relaxation activity  
Digital recorder



### Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. SIT Reinforcement
  - *I know you have been practicing your relaxation routines. I would like to give you another idea about a way to relax.* Introduce *Cool Cats, Calm Kids* relaxation activity or another appropriate activity. Have family members either sit or stand and stretch like a cat. Remind the family of the benefits of relaxation.
3. Telling the Family Trauma Story
  - Avoidance Check-in [Ask the family: *“Did you feel reluctant to come today like I talked about last week?”* Have them rate reluctance on a scale from 1-10. Ask them, *“Why did you feel reluctant?”* and *“What did you do to overcome it?”* Praise the family for their ability to overcome their reluctance. –From PPT Scheeringa (2003)]
  - Turn on the recorder.
  - Guide the family through telling their story about the bad thing(s) that happened. Name the trauma or traumas that the family is dealing with using the words that the family uses to talk about it. Remember to help the family choose a trauma to start talking about that they are prepared to discuss without getting overly distressed. Remind them to consider that everyone in their family has different experiences when bad things happen, and every one of them may remember what happened differently. That's fine. It's just fine for each member of the family to have their own piece of the story.
  - Ask if someone in the family would like to write down the story as it is being told. 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.
  - Monitor the level of family members' stress and anxiety closely. Cue family members to use SIT skills if needed during the narrative.

- After about 30 minutes, assess where the family is in their conversation about the trauma(s). If the family is close to the end of the story, do nothing. If the family is nowhere near the end, help the family reach a stopping point and regain emotional balance before ending the session.
- End the narrative portion of the session by telling the family how impressed you are with their work: *Wow, what an incredible story you are sharing with each other. Even though it is sometimes hard to talk about bad things that happen, you did a great job. You listened, heard each other, and learned something important about how you, as a family, experience hard things that happen.*

#### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Praise the family for their progress with such a difficult task and being able to share with one another. Describe the family's process and reflect on what the family learned, not content, but the process of telling the family story.
- Introduce the topic for next week – *Next week, we will continue talking about the traumatic events that you have experienced.* Remind the family about avoidance, and problem solve by asking the family to come up with ways that they will work together to overcome their avoidance. Tell the family that talking about trauma can be difficult. *When families share about trauma, stress levels go up.* Remind the family about all the skills they have been working on to cope with stress and hand out *Using your Coping Resources* worksheet.
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers as needed.

## Session – Telling about What Happened II (can be repeated as needed)

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To increase the family's ability to share trauma stories.
- To co-construct a shared trauma narrative.
- To express and share trauma pain in a safe and modulated manner.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Using Your Coping Resources  
Jenga  
Digital recorder



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Jenga

- Hand out *Jenga*. Ask the family to play a game of *Jenga*. After a few turns, stop and have them look at their Jenga structures. What will happen if they keep taking pieces away? The whole thing will collapse. Make a connection between Jenga and the effects of chronic trauma and what families need to keep from collapsing.

#### 3. Telling the Family Trauma Story

- Check about their avoidance in coming to session. Can ask them “Did you feel reluctant to come today like I talked about last week?” Have them rate reluctance on a scale from 1-10. Ask them why they felt reluctant and what they did to overcome it?
- Turn on the recorder.
- Guide the family through telling their story about the bad thing(s) that happened. Name the trauma or traumas that the family is dealing with using the words that the family uses to talk about it.
- Monitor the level of family members' stress and anxiety closely. Cue family members to use SIT skills if needed during the narrative. Homework review: Coping Resources Worksheet
- *Remember, talking together about the bad things that have happened to your family is an important and necessary step towards feeling better and coping. Remember all of things that you have learned about talking together as a family, about sharing feelings, and about dealing with scared and anxious feelings. You can use all of these skills as you continue to tell your trauma story today. As a family, tell your story again about the bad thing(s) that happened. [Name the trauma or traumas that the family is dealing with using the words that the family uses to talk about it.]*

- If the family decided the narrative was to be used as an exposure technique, at some point in the telling of the trauma story, ask the family to talk together about the worst moment/memory/part of the traumatic event. Encourage the family to tell about this including as much detail as possible. Each family member will probably have a different worst moment, and this is fine. Encourage the family to hear each person's recollections.
- 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.
- After about 30 minutes, assess where the family is in their conversation about the trauma(s). If the family is close to the end of the story, do nothing. If the family is nowhere near the end, the therapist should help the family reach a stopping point and regain emotional balance before ending the session.

#### 4. Notes for Closing:

- Praise the family for their progress with such a difficult task and being able to share with one another. Describe the family's process and reflect on what the family learned, not content, but the process of telling the family story.
- Introduce the topic for next week – *Next week, we will start talking about the traumatic events that you have experienced in a different way by looking at how you think that what happened and how understand it and make sense of it.* Remind the family about avoidance, and problem solve by asking the family to come up with ways that they will work together to overcome their avoidance. Tell the family that talking about trauma can be difficult. *When families share about trauma, stress levels go up.* Remind the family about all the skills they have been working on to cope with stress and hand out *Using your Coping Resources* worksheet.
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers as needed.

## Session – Processing the Trauma (can be repeated as needed)

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To complete a shared, coherent co-constructed family trauma narrative.
- To increase the family's ability to see some positive meaning to their experience.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Using Your Coping Resources  
Digital recorder



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Processing the Trauma

- Turn on the recorder.
- Inform the family that they will start working on their story in a different way 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.
- Therapists should monitor the level of family members' stress and anxiety closely. Therapists 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.
- Therapists 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, ask them 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.

- 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, do nothing. If the family is nowhere near the end, the therapist should help the family reach a stopping point and regain emotional balance before ending the session.

3. Notes for Closing:

- Praise the family for their progress with such a difficult task and being able to share with one another. Describe the family's process and reflect on what the family learned, not content, but the process of telling the family story.
- Introduce topic for next week – Next week, we will focus on ways that you can move forward. Remind the family about avoidance, and problem solve by asking the family to come up with ways that they will work together to overcome their avoidance. Tell the family that talking about trauma can be difficult. *When families share about trauma, stress levels go up.* Remind the family about all the skills they have been working on to cope with stress and hand out *Using your Coping Resources* worksheet.
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Hand out extra copies of the chore chart and stickers as needed.



## Session – Marking the Trauma

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To complete a shared, coherent co-constructed family trauma narrative.
- To increase the family's ability to see some positive meaning to their experience.
- To reinforce the role of ritual in creating stability for family members during times of trauma.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Enduring Traditions, Using Your Coping Resources  
Digital recorder  
Poster board cut-out of shield/crest



### Session Content:

3. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
3. Enduring Traditions
  - Hand out “Enduring Traditions”. Turn on the recorder.
  - *We have spent lots of time talking about how your family dealt 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.*
  - Provide families with a poster board cutout of a shield/crest. Discuss how a crest is often a symbol to represent your family and engage the family in a discussion of the function of a shield. Prompt families to think about how their family may have changed since the trauma and learned ways to cope and find strength in each other and in their community. Discuss how traditions can endure through trauma and help families identify their traditions that have endured. Note that these strengths and ways of coping can continue to protect their family in the face of stress moving forward and serve as a kind of shield for their family. Encourage families to identify words/images/symbols to represent their family's strengths and coping skills in the face of trauma and loss and use those to create their shield.
  - Once the family has begun work on their shield and brainstormed existing strengths and traditions, ask: *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?*
  - *In a playful manner, encourage the family to hold the shield up to protect all family members and lightly toss a paper ball at the shield. Reflect on how we cannot always prevent or predict new stress that may come at us, but with the strengths and skills you identified on your shield, you will be ready to protect your family.*

3. Notes for Closing:

- Praise the family for their progress with such a difficult task and being able to share with one another. Describe the family's process and reflect on what the family learned, not content, but the process of telling the family story.
- Introduce the topic for next week – *Next week we will turn our attention to the positive things happening in your family.*
- Review tasks/homework for the following week – Preparation for fun, laughter, celebration sessions.

## Session – Good Things Happen, Too!

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: Things to Celebrate; *Meet together as a family and make a list of some of the good things that happen to your family. Remember the small things that are worthy of recognition and celebration! 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.*



### Objectives:

- To encourage deliberate planning of fun family activities and celebrations.
- To help the family explore ways they can have fun together as a family.
- To encourage a positive focus and valuing of family accomplishments.
- To teach the skills involved in planning and carrying out a successful family celebration.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Things to Celebrate, Planning to Celebrate, Making It Special, In Case of Problems



### Session Content

#### 1. Opening activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. What to Celebrate? And How?

- Ask if they completed the homework, “Things to Celebrate.” If not, hand out it out again. Ask the family to list some of the things they have to celebrate. If the list is completed, have the family select one thing to plan and carry out an actual celebration.
- Handout “Planning to Celebrate.” Encourage the family to make plans for celebrating their selected event.
- Hand out “Making It Special”. Encourage the family to look over the list of ways to make it special. Pick some ways they would like to make their celebration special. They can use their own ideas, too.
- For the last part of the activity, spend time problem solving so that you can think about what might go wrong with the celebration and how to fix it. Hand out “In Case of Problems” worksheet. Then have the family come up with solutions.

#### 3. Notes for Closing:

- Introduce the topic for next week: Next week will *be our last session. We will spend time reviewing what you have accomplished, deciding whether you have reached your goals, and thinking about next steps for your family. We will also spend some time celebrating your success!*

## Session – Feeling Good

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To help the family explore ways they can have fun together as a family.
- To encourage a positive focus and valuing of sharing positive time together.



### Materials needed:

Handouts:  
*The FEEL GOOD Book*  
Construction paper  
Craft supplies



### Session Content

#### 1. Opening Activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Our Own Feel Good Book

- *I have a book to share with you.* Read “*The FEEL GOOD Book*”.
- Encourage the family to share experiences that make them feel good. Have them brainstorm activities or experiences that make them all feel good.
- Hand out scrapbook pages and materials. The family creates their own “*The FEEL GOOD Book,*” including activities and experiences that make each family member and the entire family feel good. They should also be encouraged to include activities that could make them feel good in the future.

#### 3. Notes for Closing:

- Introduce the topic for next week: Next week will *be our last session. We will spend time reviewing what you have accomplished, deciding whether you have reached your goals, and thinking about next steps for your family. We will also spend some time celebrating your success!*

## Session – Laughing Together

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: None



### Objectives:

- To highlight the role of positive affect (humor, laughter) in family interaction and in stress reduction.
- To help family members understand why laughter is important and identify what makes them laugh.
- To encourage positive and fun interactions.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: *Laughter is Important, Laughing Through Life, Fun and Silly Songs*  
*I Love to Laugh! A Book of Fun and Giggles*



### Session Content:

#### 1. Opening activities

- See page 6 for activities

#### 2. Laughing Together

- Hand out “Laughter is Important” and “Laughing Through Life.”
- Discuss why they think laughter is important. Discuss the importance of balancing positive experiences for families who have experienced trauma. Encourage parents to share examples of funny things their children have done or said. Ask what types of fun, laughter-promoting activities they do as a family now. What types of activities would they like to do more of?
- Structure an activity that will promote the family laughing together. Some ideas include laughing yoga, a game, telling silly jokes, singing silly songs together or playing “Sound and the Fury” game. See “Fun and Silly Songs” for suggestions. To play “Sound and the Fury,” the therapist and the family all stand in a circle. Therapist starts by modeling a funny gesture with their whole body paired with a silly sound. Everyone else in the family has to imitate the movement and sound. The family member standing to the right of the therapist then models their own gesture paired with a silly sound. The family then imitates the first gesture and sound, followed by the new gesture and sound. The circle continues clockwise until all family members have had a turn. Each round the family will imitate all of the previous gestures and add the newly exhibited gesture and sound at the end. For families with toddlers and babies you can read “I Love to Laugh! A Book of Fun and Giggles.” Encourage the family to play the included games and activities as you read the book.

#### 3. Notes for Closing:

- Introduce the topic for next week: Next week will *be our last session. We will spend time reviewing what you have accomplished, deciding whether you have reached your goals, and thinking about next steps for your family. We will also spend some time celebrating your success!*

## Session – Saying Goodbye

Family Assignment in Preparation for this session: – Next week, we will be finished, and we will talk about how this process has been for your family and how you would like to continue with some of the skills that you learned.



### Objectives:

- To review therapeutic concepts, activities, skills, and ideas, making explicit links to family life and experience.
- To review each family's goals and evaluate the treatment with respect to meeting those goals.
- To encourage deliberate planning of the family's traditions and routines and endings (goodbyes).
- To encourage the family to make long-term commitments to maintaining family traditions and routines.
- To predict how their family will have changed in six-months.
- To reach closure, to model showing appropriate recognition and to engage in a rewarding good-bye.



### Materials needed:

Handouts: Family Ritual Tree Care, Closure Questionnaire, Certificate  
Construction paper and markers/crayons



### Session Content:

1. Opening Activities
  - See page 6 for activities
2. Getting Closure
  - Review the family's experience in treatment using the "Closure Questionnaire". After reviewing the questionnaire together, have the family talk about what they learned and what has changed. Review the family's initial goals and ask the family to discuss how well they met them. Provide feedback for the family about your observations about what they accomplished.
  - Handout "Family Ritual Tree Care". Ask the family to think about traditions or routines discussed over the course of treatment that they would like to keep doing. Encourage them to talk as a family and write down what they decide. This may include traditions or routines they want to continue to work on in the future. This may be a review and updating of the Family Ritual Tree Care if the family completed it in a previous session.
3. Who We Are Now and In Six Months

- Handout construction paper and markers/crayons/etc. Ask the family to work together to draw a picture of their family doing something together 6 months from now that reflects what they have learned from therapy.

4. Discuss treatment planning with the family if additional concerns or needs have been identified.

5. Celebrate the end of this treatment.

- Thank everyone in the family for taking part in the session.
- Share a good thing about each family member.
- Congratulate the family for completing treatment and for working so hard.
- Offer certificate or other award signifying their accomplishment.



## **Session Materials**

### **Module I: Laying the Groundwork**

Trauma & Your Family Tip Sheet  
ACES Survey  
The Do You Know Scale  
Rating Family Healing Resources

### **Module II: Strengthening Family Coping**

Healing Resources Star Chart  
Family Diary  
Daily Routines  
Routine Change Worksheet  
Family Job Chart  
Stress  
Relaxation  
My Safe Place  
Relaxation Routine Development Worksheet  
Relaxation Routine Log  
Setting Limits  
Family Limits Worksheet  
Introduction to Family Traditions & Routines  
Ritual Family Tree  
Ritual Family Tree Care  
Crisis Management Facilitator Discussion Guide  
Family Crisis Management Plan  
Safety Mapping Stickers  
Developing Safety Routines Worksheet  
Sociogram  
Family Sculpture Outline and Action Plan  
The More Things Change  
Family Timeline Example  
Family Timeline Worksheet  
Life Choices  
Path to My Future  
Your Spiritual Resources  
Sources of Spiritual Support for Our Family  
Our Family Values  
Things Get in the Way  
FLIP the Problem  
Carry it out this Week!  
Problem Solving with Harold and the Purple Crayon  
The Elephant in the Room

### **Module III: Trauma Resolution and Consolidation**

Using Your Coping Resources

Enduring Traditions

Ritual Family Tree Care

Things to Celebrate

Celebration Planner

Celebration Job Chart

In Case of Problems

Making it Special

Laughter is Important

Laughing through Life

Silly Songs

Closure Questionnaire

Certificate of Completion