



# Thriving Through the Teenage Years: The Power of Family Relationships

## Contents

---

<b>Overview and Learning Objectives</b>	2
<b>Activities at a Glance</b>	3
<b>Preparation, Materials, and Supplies</b>	5
<b>Facilitator Planning Worksheet</b>	7
<b>DETAILED FACILITATOR GUIDES</b>	
<b>Shared Family Meal</b>	11
<b>Parenting Adult Session</b>	15
<b>Youth Session</b>	19
<b>Optional Youth Energizers and Activities</b>	24
<b>Family Session</b>	26
<b>Extended Parenting Adult Session</b>	32
<b>Session 1 Handouts</b>	
1.1: Overview of <i>Keep Connected</i>	
1.2: Five Keys to Strong Parent-Youth Relationships	
1.3: At-Home Activities	
a. OVERVIEW: At-Home Activities Guide	
b. POST IT: A Guide for Your Week	
c. TRY IT: A Family Relationships Checklist	
d. LEARN ABOUT IT: Research on Five Keys to Parenting Adult-Child Relationships	

## Overview

---

This session introduces the *Keep Connected* series. It invites youth and parenting adults to explore their hopes and expectations about family relationships as they prepare for the teenage years. Participants learn about five ways they can strengthen family bonds in order to help them weather challenges. They begin to get to know each other and what to expect in the workshops so that they feel comfortable with—and enthusiastic about—participating.

## Learning Objectives

---

Participants will . . .

- Be introduced to the five keys to strong parenting adult-youth relationships.
- Spend time together as a family strengthening their connections.
- Begin to build relationships and trust with each other and the facilitator.
- Gain perspective on the challenges and hopes they have as the youth approach the teenage years.
- Commit to at least one activity they will do to explore their family relationships before the next session.

## Activities at a Glance – Family Workshop (Youth and Parenting Adults)

### Session 1




### Thriving Through the Teenage Years: The Power of Family Relationships

Total Time: 120 minutes





Set-Up	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place discussion-starter question cards on the tables for families to talk about while they share the meal (if they choose).</li> <li>Sign-in and Nametags</li> </ul>	15 min prior to start
Shared Family Meal (30 minutes)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families eat and settle in</li> <li>Welcome and Introductions</li> <li>Introduction to the Workshop Series</li> </ul>	10 min 10 min 10 min

### Transition to parenting adult and youth sessions

Parenting Adult Session (45 minutes)		CONCURRENT	Youth Session (45 minutes)	
1	The Middle School Years: Then and Now  20 min		1	Bouncing Questions Name Game 10 min
2	Three Wishes for Your Relationship with Your Youth  20 min	2	What Do We Expect from Each Other?  15 min	
		3	Getting Starting with a “Family Pledge to Keep Connected” 15 min	
			Optional Energizers & Optional Activity: Connecting Points 15 min	

### Transition to family session (5 minutes)

Family Session (45 minutes) (Youth and Parenting Adults Together)	
1	Family Sharing: Catching Up from Separate Parenting Adult and Youth Sessions 10 min
2	Setting Shared Expectations 5 min
3	Relationships in Our Families  15 min
4	Take the Conversation Home  10 min
5	Wrap Up 5 min

## Activities at a Glance – Workshop for Parenting Adults Only





### Session 1

### Thriving Through the Teenage Years: The Power of Family Relationships

Total Time: 120 minutes



Key activities  
for this  
session

Set-Up		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place discussion-starter question cards on the tables for parenting adults to talk about while they share the meal (if they choose).</li> <li>Sign-in and Nametags</li> </ul>		15 min prior to start
Shared Meal (30 minutes)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parenting adults eat and settle in</li> <li>Welcome and Introductions</li> <li>Introduction to the Workshop Series</li> </ul>		10 min 10 min 10 min
Part 1 (45 minutes)		
1	The Middle-School Years: Then and Now 	20 min
2	Three Wishes for Your Relationship With Your Youth 	20 min
3	What Do We Expect From Each Other	5 min
Break		5 min
Part 2 (45 minutes)		
1	Relationships in Our Families 	10 min
2	Getting Started with a “Family Pledge to Keep Connected”	15 min
3	Take the Conversation Home 	5 min
4	Wrap Up	5 min

## Preparation, Materials, and Supplies

Shared Family Meal	
<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Order the meal and prepare plates, silverware, napkins, cups, and other items needed to serve the meal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create flip charts with the workshop’s key ideas (one chart for each room you will use)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create signs that say “Really Important;” “Not at All Important”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> OPTIONAL: Keep Connected intro video for families (from <a href="http://www.keepconnected.info/media-library/">www.keepconnected.info/media-library/</a>) and equipment to show it</li> </ul>	<p><b>Materials and Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in sheet (master list for the workshop series)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nametags for all participants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers to write on nametags</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in sheet (master list for the workshop series)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flip charts and markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Handout 1.1</li> </ul>
Parenting Adult Session	Youth Session
<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a binder for each parenting adult to use to keep handouts and worksheets</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials and Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Three index cards for each participant (any color)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A pen for each participant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A flip chart and markers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a binder for each youth to use to keep handouts and worksheets</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials and Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Colorful markers for each youth</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A light, bouncing ball, such as a rubber ball, tennis ball, or ping pong ball.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Materials for “Our Family’s Pledge to Keep Connected” (see below)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A flip chart and markers</li> </ul>
Family Session or Extended Parenting Adult Session	
<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Copy Handout 1.2 for each participant.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make copies of Handout 1.3a-d for each family.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make extra copies of the Family Relationships Checklist (Family Handout 1.3c) so all their family members have one to complete if they pick this activity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Materials and Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flipcharts and markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 15 sticky notes (such as Post-It Notes) for each family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pens or pencils for all participants.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extended parenting adult session only: Materials for “Our Family’s Pledge to Keep Connected” (see below)</li> </ul>

## Family Pledge to Keep Connected

### Preparation

- Select the project option you will use for the workshop series. For a description, see the document “Family Pledge to Keep Connected.”

### Materials and Supplies

#### Option #1: Family Relationships Pledge Box

- A plain white box for each family
- Markers and other supplies to decorate the boxes

### Materials and Supplies

#### Option #2: Family Relationships Collage

- A poster board or large paper for each family
- Old magazines, etc., for pictures to clip
- Glue sticks
- Scissors for youth
- Markers

### Materials and Supplies

#### Option #3: Family Relationships Crest



- A poster board or large paper for each family
- A stencil of a crest (cut from a poster board)
- Supplies to decorate the crest
- Glue sticks
- Markers


### Materials and Supplies



#### Option #4: Family Relationships T-Shirt Design

- A poster board or large paper for each family
- A stencil of a t-shirt shape (cut from a poster board)
- Supplies to decorate the shirt
- Glue sticks
- Markers

## Facilitator Planning Worksheet

Activity	Facilitator Notes	Materials	Time Needed/ Est. Start Time
<b>Shared Family Meal</b>			
1 <b>Sign-in and Nametags</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Set the stage for building relationships with and among participants. <u>Method:</u> Maintain a relaxed, conversational approach.		<input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Flip chart <input type="checkbox"/> Markers <input type="checkbox"/> Nametags	15 min before start
2 <b>Time for families to eat and settle in</b>			10 min
3 <b>Welcome and Introductions</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Help participants relax and begin to get to know each other. <u>Method:</u> Ice-breaker discussion.			10 min
4 <b>Introduction to the Workshop Series</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Introduce the approach, structure, and goals of Keep Connected and expectations for participation. <u>Method:</u> Vote-with-your-feet exercise.		<input type="checkbox"/> Handout 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Introductory video <input type="checkbox"/> Posted signs: "Really Important;" "Not at All Important"	10 min
<b>Parenting Adult Session</b>			
1 <b>The Middle School Years: Then and Now</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Reflect on the fun and challenges of being a young teen and how growing up has changed since parenting adults were that age. <u>Method:</u> Pair-and-share discussion		<input type="checkbox"/> Flip chart <input type="checkbox"/> Markers	20 min
2 <b>Three Wishes for Your Relationship with Your Youth</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Identify hopes for parenting adult-youth relationships that will be explored during the workshop series. <u>Method:</u> Written personal reflection.		<input type="checkbox"/> Index cards <input type="checkbox"/> Pens	20 min

3	<b>Transition to Family Session</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Clarify expectations about parenting adult-youth interactions in joint sessions. <u>Method:</u> Parenting adults move to youth space.			5 min
<b>Youth Session</b>				
1	<b>Bouncing Questions Name Game</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Have fun while learning each other's names. <u>Method:</u> Ice-breaker game		<input type="checkbox"/> Bouncing ball	10 min
2	<b>What Do We Expect from Each Other?</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Identify group norms for the sessions to use with parenting adults <u>Method:</u> Whole-group brainstorm		<input type="checkbox"/> Flip chart <input type="checkbox"/> Markers	15 min
3	<b>Getting Starting with a "Family Pledge to Keep Connected"</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Begin creating the pledge, which will be built through all the workshops. <u>Method:</u> Craft activity		<input type="checkbox"/> [See detailed list]	15 min
	<b>Optional Youth Energizers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● That's Me</li> <li>● Crazy 8s</li> </ul>			
	<b>Optional Youth Activity: Connecting Points</b>		For each youth . . . <input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Pen, pencil, or marker	15 min
4	<b>Transition to Family Session</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Prepare youth to participate in the session with parenting adults <u>Method:</u> Discussion			5 min
<b>Family Session</b>				
1	<b>Family Sharing: Catching Up from Separate Parenting Adult and Youth Sessions</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Connect parenting adults and youth by sharing light-hearted personal information <u>Method:</u> Community-building activity and sharing within families			10 min

<p>2 <b>Setting Shared Expectations</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> To begin creating shared norms for group participation and interaction  <u>Method:</u> Youth presentation and discussion</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flip chart of expectations from youth session</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Talking piece or parking lot</li> </ul>	5 min
<p>3 <b>Relationships in Our Families</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> Introduce the five keys to relationships while affirming the ways families already build relationships  <u>Method:</u> Brainstorming and idea-sharing movement activity</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 5 prepared flip charts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10-15 sticky notes for each family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Handout 1.2</li> </ul>	15 min
<p>4 <b>Take the Conversation Home</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> Set plans for completing the “At-Home Activities” to continue learning  <u>Method:</u> Family discussion with worksheet</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Handout 1.3a-d</li> </ul>	10 min
<p>5 <b>Wrap Up</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> Thank participants and remind them of the next session  <u>Method:</u> Presentation</p>			5 min
<b>Extended Parenting Adult Session</b>			
<p>1 <b>What Do We Expect from Each Other?</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> To begin creating shared norms for group participation and interaction  <u>Method:</u> Group brainstorm</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flip chart</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Talking piece or parking lot</li> </ul>	5 min
<p>2 <b>Relationships in Our Families</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> Introduce the five keys to relationships while affirming the ways families already build relationships  <u>Method:</u> Brainstorming and idea-sharing movement activity</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 5 prepared flip charts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10-15 sticky notes for each parenting adult</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Handout 1.2</li> </ul>	15 min
<p>3 <b>Getting Started with a “Family Pledge to Keep Connected”</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> Begin creating the pledge, which will be built through all the workshops.  <u>Method:</u> Craft project</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> [See detailed list]</li> </ul>	15 min

<p>4 <b>Take the Conversation Home</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Set plans for completing the “At-Home Activities” to continue learning</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Pair-and-share with worksheet</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Handout 1.3a-d	5 min
<p>5 <b>Wrap Up</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Thank participants and remind them of the next session</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Informal presentation</p>			5 min

### Follow Up to the Session

- Keep all the Pledge to Keep Connected materials together**
- Sort the cards from the parenting adults’ three wishes activity
- Gather the flipcharts and other materials
- Send a text message or an email **in a few days to participants**
- Complete the **online feedback form** about the session. Receive a \$5 gift card:  
<https://tinyurl.com/SIKeepConnectedFeedback>

## Shared Family Meal

---

### 1. Sign In and Nametags

Start 15 minutes before the session begins

- a. Set up the chairs in a circle so participants can interact easily with each other.
- b. **Write the key ideas** from the session on a flip chart or white board. (Prepare identical flip charts for each space you will use throughout the session, so the ideas are on display during all sessions.)
  - Kids do best when they have strong relationships with parenting adults\* through the teen years.
  - But those relationships change through the teenage years.
  - Five key actions help to keep these relationships strong.
  - \*Parenting Adults = adults who take a primary role in caring for a young person, including parents, grandparents, foster parents, and other family members
- c. As families arrive, greet them individually. Thank them for coming and participating. If you have time, ask them what they're looking forward to in the workshops.
- d. Have each participant **sign in**. Ask each person in the family to sign in separately.
- e. Have everyone wear a nametag with their first name.

### 2. Welcome and Introductions

10 minutes

- a. **Welcome participants** to the session. Introduce yourself and the workshop briefly. Explain that in this first session you will focus on three main goals: 1) Getting to know one another, 2) learning about the five keys to strong family relationships, and 3) getting an idea of what the whole *Keep Connected* series will be about. Mention that you'll spend more time talking about the workshop after taking a few minutes to learn who's in the room.
- b. Have participants **introduce themselves** briefly. Model it first if necessary. Ask them to each share:
  - their first name;
  - the names of other immediate family members (adults and children in the session as well as not participating); and
  - one thing they enjoy doing with their family—in one sentence.

### 3. Introduction to the Workshop Series

10 minutes

- a. Set up signs in opposite ends of your meeting room. On one, write: REALLY IMPORTANT. On the other, write: NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT. Have participants stand up in the middle of the room.
- b. Explain that the workshop series they are starting, *Keep Connected*, has some features that other parenting adults and youth have found to be enjoyable and valuable. You will read a feature that is part of *Keep Connected*. They will move to a part of the room that fits how important this feature is to them. If they're in the middle, they can stay in the middle. (Give an example.) Encourage them to move to an area that fits them personally, not just do what everyone else does. Emphasize that this is an opportunity to share opinions, and it's okay if your family has different opinions. Remind participants that their opinions may also change over time, but they should answer according to how they feel right now.

Adaptation: Depending on your space and mobility of participants, you may want to adapt this activity. If it won't work to have participants move around the room, consider doing a "Fist to Five" ranking. Participants hold up their closed fist to indicate "NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT" and five fingers to indicate "REALLY IMPORTANT." They can hold up whichever number of fingers fits how important they think each element will be. This option may also be helpful if you are concerned that participants will answer similarly to the others in the group rather than sharing their true opinion.

- c. Next, read each of the following statements, one by one, giving participants time to move toward one of the signs based on their own priorities. Pause between each statement to ask 2—3 participants to explain why they picked what they did, being intentional about calling on parenting adults and youth equally. Thank them for sharing their perspective, even if it is negative. (Some people may be nervous or skeptical about the interactive approach that requires their active participation.) Here are the statements, along with some points you can make after youth have said why they picked what they picked:

#### 1) Have a good meal together.

*Comments to make (if needed): Many families enjoy the time to relax for a few minutes after a busy day. You can catch up on things you may not have had time to talk about yet this week. During each meal time, you'll have time for informal conversations and we'll also share the key topics for the day's session.*

#### 2) Spend time in activities and learning with our peer groups.

Comments: *After the shared family meal time, we will separate into a youth group and a parenting adult group. We hope you'll get to know your peers better and learn from each other.*

**3) Spend time in activities and learning with your family and other families.**

Comments: *After we've spent time together in peer groups, we'll join together to explore the topic together. Even though it may be awkward at first, many families who participate in Keep Connected say this is one of the best parts of the workshops. Too many families live parallel lives doing different things; today's young people and parenting adults crave time they can spend together doing things that are interesting, meaningful, and fun.*

**4) Discover ways our family can become closer and have fun together.**

Comments: *The series focuses on strengthening relationships between parenting adults and youth. Every relationship has strengths as well as challenges. So you don't need to be embarrassed about what you're working on. In addition, relationships change as youth grow up. This workshop helps your family think about what you can do to make your relationships as strong as possible.*

*Positive relationships in families don't make everything easy, but they can families be happy and successful through the teen years.*

**5) Learn how our family can better communicate and make decisions together.**

Comments: *Many families who participate in Keep Connected say that they experienced improvements in these areas.*

**6) Learn ways young people can do their part to make your family stronger.**

Comments: *Strong family relationships aren't just the job of parenting adults. Both kids and parenting adults play important roles. The workshops invite parenting adults to give kids more of a voice in family life.*

**7) Discover new things we can do as a family to be stronger together.**

Comments: *The goal of Keep Connected is not to give lots of information about new things families should do. It's not about the "one right way" to be a parenting adult. Rather, it's about...*

- *celebrating what you're already doing well in your family;*
- *helping you identify other areas you want to work on by building on what you're already doing.*

*The sessions will also help you focus on parts of your relationships that are most important to you and that fit your family, your values, and your culture. Families who have participated in the past have said, “It has opened up new opportunities for us,” and that they gained new ways of talking to and relating with their kids.*

**8) Learn by participating in activities and discussion, not just listening to lectures.**

*Comments: In these workshops, you’ll spend time in activities, projects, and discussions. You’ll talk with other youth and adults, but you’ll also have time with other family members. It will be the best experience for everyone if we all participate and contribute.*

**9) Get to know youth and adults from other families.**

*Comments: Through this workshop series, you will connect with other families who have similar experiences, challenges, and successes as your family. In many places, families that participate want to keep in touch with each other after the workshops are completed.*

**10) Try things at home based on what we explore during these sessions.**

*Comments: Each week, you’ll get easy take-home family activities and tips. They are designed to help you deepen your relationships at home. Some are discussions. Others are activities and games. Your family will pick the ones that fit you best.*

d. After you’ve completed all the statements, answer any more questions parenting adults have before moving to the next activity.

e. **Remind families that Handout 1.1: “Overview of the Keep Connected Workshop Series” is in their binder. This handout provides an overview of the full series.**



**OPTIONAL:** If you have time and equipment, you may choose to show the Keep Connected introductory video for families (available at [www.keepconnected.info/media-library](http://www.keepconnected.info/media-library)). Then invite families to comment on parts of the video that are most interesting to them.

f. **Highlight the key ideas in this session** (which you posted prior to the session):

- Kids do best when they have strong relationships with parenting adults through the teen years.
- But those relationships change through the teenage years.
- Five key actions help to keep these relationships strong.

g. To conclude, let families know that they will now be transitioning to the separate youth and adult sessions. Direct each group toward the room they will be using.

## Parenting Adult Session

---

### 1. The Middle School Years: Then and Now

20 minutes

- a. Remind participants that *Keep Connected* is designed for families with kids between ages 10 to 15. This period is a time of **lots of transitions** often including changing schools, changing bodies and changing relationships. Say: *This next activity helps us remember when we were that age—between age 10 and 15.*
- b. Ask participants to **form pairs**. Encourage them to find someone they don't know well.
- c. Have people introduce themselves to each other, then **discuss in pairs this question**:
  - *What are your favorite memories of what it was like to be a young teen (about ages 10 to 15)?* (If they don't know where to start, ask them to recall favorite activities, people, or their family.)

Give people each 2 minutes each to describe their experiences to their conversation partner. Remind them to switch after 2 minutes.

- d. Ask **each pair to pick three words** that they would both use to summarize their favorite memories from those years.
- e. Have **each pair share with the whole group its three words**. Jot them on the left side of a flip chart. (Draw a line down the middle to have two columns.) If two groups say the same or similar words, just put a checkmark by the first mention.



**DON'T discuss the list yet.**

- f. Then ask people to get back in their pairs and repeat the process, this time discussing this question:
  - How would you describe **your experiences of being a parenting adult** of a 10 to 15 year old today? Why?

## Ideas to Add to the “The Middle School Years” Conversation

Depending what comes up in the group, the following comments may be helpful to add to the discussion:

Kids and parenting adults often approach these years very differently. **Kids can get excited** as they discover new things. That’s normal, but it can be **scary for parenting adults**. So we worry about things they are seeing, hearing, and doing. And that’s also normal.

Making it more complicated, kids are also forming **new relationships** with friends and other adults. Sometimes that can make us feel less important or valued. We may think they don’t need us any more—or we’re losing them.

We want to **protect our kids**, because we want the best for them. (Maybe we see ourselves in them, and we know how hard it can be.) But our need to protect them can sometimes **clash with their need** to discover how they fit in the bigger world.

**Some kids really face difficult challenges** during these times. Some make choices that trouble us. For example, some young people experiment with or use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs during the teen years. How do we know whether and how to intervene? How much do we need to let them work through it themselves?

Though bigger problems come up for some families, **most of the changes and challenges are normal**—even if they’re hard. **Relationships can also make it easier to talk** about the problems when they do come up.

The core idea of *Keep Connected* is that these years will be much better if we work together to **maintain a positive relationship through all the changes and challenges**. The ways we interact with our kids can make a big difference in whether the challenges escalate or whether we grow through them.

Part of what we hope to gain through these workshops is a **fresh perspective and some positive strategies** to work together on in our families. We also hope that, over time, you’ll feel comfortable turning to others in this group for **encouragement, ideas, and support**.

Give 2-3 minutes for pairs to discuss, reminding them to switch halfway through. Have them **identify the three words** that best capture the conversation.

- g. Have each pair report out their three words. **Jot them on the right side of flip chart**. If two groups say the same or similar words, just put a checkmark by the first mention.
- h. When all the words are listed, debrief with the following questions:
  - *What do you notice when you compare the two lists? What similarities and differences do you see?*
  - *What surprises you?*

- *What do you think is behind differences in these two lists? (This can include passage of time and also the different perspective: being a young person and being a parenting adult.)*
- *How might your kids describe what this age is like for them? How is that similar to or different from your memories?*

## 2. Three Wishes for Your Relationship with Your Youth

20 minutes

- Give each parenting adult three index cards** and a pen.
- Ask parenting adults to think for 1 or 2 minutes about their **hopes for their relationship** with their child. (Focus on children who are in the age range of 10 to 15.) Encourage them to focus on **how they interact with this young person, not on the young person's behaviors or achievements**. Remind parenting adults that these wishes should be about themselves and their child **together**, not something they want their child to change about their own behavior.
- Then ask them to complete this sentence:



**Three wishes I have for my relationship with my child in the next 5 years<sup>1</sup> are: We will \_\_\_\_; We will \_\_\_\_; We will \_\_\_\_.**

- Have parenting adults **write each wish on a separate index card**. (If they prefer, they can instead draw an image.) Let participants know that you'll collect the index cards and will share ideas without sharing participants' names, and that if they don't want one of their wishes shared they can keep the card. (They don't need to put their names on the cards.)
- Collect the cards** for use in future workshops. If you have time, you might read a few aloud, particularly if they clearly highlight themes in future sessions.
- Ask a few parenting adults to comment **on ways they hope this workshop series will help** them achieve these wishes for their relationship with their child. If ideas come up that relate directly to future sessions, highlight those connections for parenting adults.
- Thank parenting adults for sharing their wishes**. Remind them that you'll come back to these wishes throughout the workshop series. In different workshops, they'll get ideas and support for things they can do in their families to make many of these wishes come true.

**Keep the cards with the wishes together to bring back to future sessions when the wishes tie to the session topic.**

<sup>1</sup> For some families, five years may be a longer time horizon than they can imagine. If you need to adjust due to parenting adults' circumstances, do so. However, the goal is to be aspirational.

### 3. Transition to the Family Session (with youth)

5 minutes

**If you are continuing with a parenting adult-only session, skip this section. Go to the “Extended Parenting Adult Session Plan.”**


- a. Say that it is time to combine the session with the youth. Explain the logistics of how you’ll move around to integrate youth and parenting adults.
- b. Before moving, briefly highlight the purpose of the combined parenting adult-youth sessions and some ways the parenting adults can help the sessions go well. Here are some points you can highlight (in your own words):
  - *These family sessions are designed to be **enjoyable** ways for you to learn together with your kids and with other families.*
  - *The purpose is **not for you to “teach” your child**, but for everyone to learn and practice together. That may feel awkward at first, but most parenting adults end up really enjoying learning things together with their child, particularly when their kids get older.*
  - *You’ll spend time with youth from your own family so that you can practice together. You’ll also spend time with other families.*
  - *If your child isn’t with you during a session, ask another family if you may join them. Or you can connect with other parenting adults who are in the session without their children.*
  - ***One of the keys to a positive parenting adult-youth relationship is the idea of “sharing power.” We’ll talk more about that in the third week. In the meantime, the family sessions will emphasize ways we share power by ensuring that the adults don’t dominate the conversations. This means that there may be times when we’ll ask you to hold back your own thoughts so the young people have a chance to be heard.** (Consider using a Talking Piece in the combined session.)*
  - *Different youth will be more or less comfortable interacting with adults, particularly in group settings. Be sensitive to this, and use this as a chance to help them get more comfortable. This is an important role that adults play in helping young people learn to become part of the adult world as they move through the teenage years.*
  - *If you have time, invite parenting adults to add other insights about what will make the family sessions work really well.*
- c. Transition to the joint family session.

#### **Extra Idea – Talking Piece**

If you are comfortable and see a need for it, introduce the use of a Talking Piece or other mechanism for respectfully asking some people to wait while giving others a chance to contribute.

### 1. Bouncing Questions Name Game

10 minutes

- a. Welcome youth to the session. Invite them to sit in the circle of chairs.<sup>2</sup> Briefly introduce yourself. Explain that this set of workshops is **about family relationships** and that in it they'll learn about five keys to strong family bonds and what youth can do to help create them. Let them know that you hope that they get to know you and each other better as well.
- b. Introduce the **name game** as a way to help get to know one another by learning names—and a little bit more.
- c. **Explain and demonstrate the game:** The first person says their name and answers a question, which you will call out. After answering the question, that person bounces the ball to someone else in the circle. When that person gets the ball, they repeat the person's name who bounced it to them, say their own name, and answer the same question. That person then bounces the ball to another person, who repeats the process. Continue until everyone has said their name and answered the first question. Then you will call out another question. 
- d. Confirm that everyone understands and begin. Repeat the process (including repeating names), using different questions as time allows.
  - *Who are the other people in your family?*
  - *What is something your family really enjoys doing together?*
  - *What's one of your best memories from your family?*
  - *What is something you like to do when you have free time?*
  - *What's something you're looking forward to in the next week?*
- e. As the game progresses, encourage people to **try to remember each other's names**. At the end, ask participants why it's important to learn and remember names. **Ask what tips they have for remembering names.**

---

<sup>2</sup> If your group is more than 10 youth, consider breaking into two circles for this activity.

## 2. What Do We Expect from Each Other?

15 minutes

- a. Say: *One way to make these sessions most enjoyable is to be **clear about what we expect** from each other. So I'd like you to think about times you've been in groups where you learned a lot and really enjoyed being there.*
- b. Have youth think about how they are expected to act in other groups. (If they're stumped, rephrase it to ask what rules they are asked to follow.) Ask them which expectations or rules have helped **make the class or group work better**.
- c. After they have given a few examples, ask youth: **What should we expect of each other** so that we all have a good experience? Invite a volunteer to write all the group's ideas **on a flipchart**.



- d. If needed, you might ask the group to consider these kinds of ground rules if they don't come up:
  - **Participate while also allowing others to participate** so that we can hear from many people.
  - **Try to stay on topic.** The workshop topics will bring up lots of personal experiences. We won't be able to cover all the topics during sessions.
  - **Avoid using cell phones** and other digital devices. Not only does it make it harder for to participate, it distracts the facilitator and other participants. If you have to use your phone, please step out and come back as quickly as you can.
  - **Support and encourage each other.** Everyone comes to this workshop with different experiences and values. By listening to and learning from each other, all can grow, even if we don't see eye to eye.

### Extra Idea – Talking Piece

If you are comfortable and see a need for it, introduce the use of a Talking Piece or other mechanism for respectfully asking some people to wait while giving others a chance to contribute.

### Extra Idea – Parking Lot

Consider introducing the idea of a Parking Lot, where you can write down questions or topics that come up that are important but may need to be revisited at a different time or place.

- e. After 2 to 3 minutes of brainstorming, give each young person a marker. Invite them each to put a checkmark by three of the expectations on the flipchart that they think are most important to follow while together in this group.
- f. When they've all voted, circle the 4 or 5 with the most votes. Ask the youth if they can agree to this list for now. (Point out that you can refine it later if something comes up.)
- g. Then ask if they will share the list with the parenting adults to see if the they would be willing to agree to follow the same expectations during the workshop series. If they want to make changes based on this idea, make those changes.

- h. If needed, ask a volunteer to rewrite the list on a new sheet to be ready to show to the parenting adults. Ask if there is a young person (or a few) who would be willing to present the list to the adults.

### 3. Getting Started with a “Family Pledge to Keep Connected”

15 minutes

- a. Say that families also have expectations for each other. Like this group, families work best when we know what to expect from each other.
- b. Explain that throughout this workshop series, families will work on creating a “Family Pledge to Keep Connected.” It is basically an agreement about everyday things their families will work on in order to keep connected in the coming years.
- c. Each family’s pledge will be unique, since each family is unique. The youth will start this project today, and then bring it to the parenting adults. Families will add to it each week.

**NOTE:** Pick one of the following options based on the document titled “Family Pledge to Keep Connected.” (See the planning document with that name for an overall description of this activity.)

#### Option #1: Family Pledge Box

- a. Give each youth a box to decorate. Have markers and other supplies for decorating the box available.
- b. On the **top of the box**, have youth write their family’s name(s) and draw a picture that represents their family. They may include the names of all family members. They can add symbols to represent different things that make their family unique, such as activities they like to do together or special memories they have.
- c. Have them leave the sides blank for now. As they come back for the rest of the workshops, they’ll add to the sides and bottom.
- d. Have youth share their designs with the other youth as a way to introduce their families to each other.



### Option #2: Family Pledge Collage

- a. Give each young person a poster board or a large sheet of paper to create a collage.
- b. Have markers, old magazines to clip pictures from, glue sticks, and scissors available. If using magazines, make sure to provide magazines that have images of people who reflect the participating families (in terms of racial/ethnic identity and family structure).



- c. At the center of the poster (leaving plenty of room all around so they can add to it throughout the workshop series), have the youth create a collage that represents their family. They can:

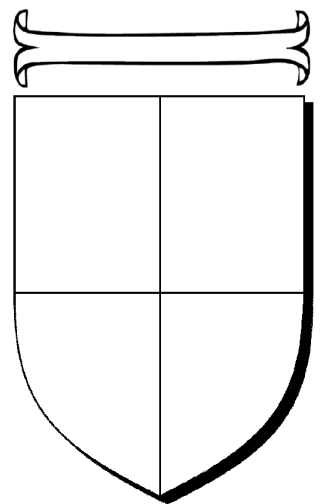


- Draw or clip and glue a picture.
- Include the names of all family members.
- Add pictures that represent things that make their family unique, such as activities they like to do together or important memories they have.

- d. Have youth share their designs with the other youth as a way to introduce their families to each other.

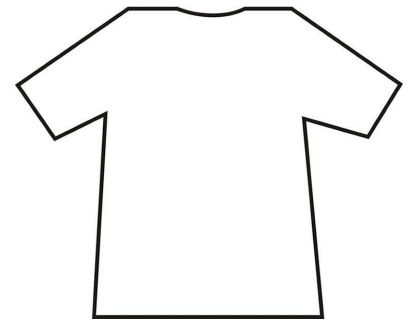
### Option #3: Family Relationships Crest

- a. Provide each youth with a poster board to create a family crest. Have a stencil of the crest available (cut from poster board). Have markers and other supplies to decorate the crest.
- b. Work with each youth to draw the outline of a crest on their poster board.
- c. Then have youth write their family name across the top of the crest. Around the outside, have them write, draw, or add clipped pictures or other objects that represent things that make their family unique. This could include activities they like to do together or important memories they have.
- d. Have youth share their design with the other youth as a way to introduce their families to each other.



### Option #4: Family T-Shirt Design

- a. Provide each youth with a poster board cut out into the shape of a t-shirt outline drawn on it (or have youth draw the outline and cut it out). Make sure both sides of the poster board are blank and can be drawn on. Have markers and other supplies to decorate the design.



- b. Then have youth write their family name across the top of the shirt or on the back (similar to a sports jersey). On the center of the back, have them write, draw, or add clipped pictures or other objects that represent things that make their family unique. This could include activities they like to do together or important memories they have.
- c. Have youth share their design with the other youth as a way to introduce their families to each other.

Adaptation: Depending on their interests, youth may have more fun designing a jersey, sneaker, or other item of clothing.

If you have extra time, add an **optional youth energizer or activity**. (See next section.)

#### 4. Transition to the Family Session (with parenting adults)

5 minutes

- a. Say that it is time to combine the session with the parenting adults. Explain the logistics of how you'll move around to integrate youth and parenting adults.
- b. Remind youth that they are going to be sharing their group expectations agreement as well as their Family Pledge designs. **Have youth take their Family Pledge designs with them to the joint family session.** Address any questions or concerns they have.
- c. Explain that they will be doing activities with their families and other families as well. Encourage them to participate fully and to speak up when they have something to contribute. Let them know that even though they will be with their parenting adults, they will all be learning together, not just learning from their parenting adults. Remind young people that they are encouraged to speak up – they can be great teachers for their other family members!
- d. Transition to the joint family session.

## Optional Youth Energizers and Activities

---

If energy lags, restlessness rises, you have some extra time, or you want something different, try these optional energizers and activities. (They do not parallel parenting adult activities.) You may also use the longer activities in other youth meetings to tie them thematically to *Keep Connected*.

### Optional Energizers

---

Use one of these energizers (or borrow one from another session) if young people's focus or energy seems to be drifting. These 3- to 5-minute activities to get them re-energized and re-engaged. Their primary purpose is to take a break and give folks a chance to refocus.

#### That's Me

1. Have youth spread out and sit down on the floor.
2. Say: When I name something that describes you, jump up and shout, "That's me!" and sit down. (Pay close attention when youth jump up so you can learn more about them.)
3. Name some descriptors such as these (or others that you know fit your group):
  - Likes to paint
  - Has a pet
  - Lives in an apartment
  - Likes to eat at Chipotle
  - Has a brother
  - Likes to ride a bike
  - Likes winter best
  - Knows more than one language

#### Crazy 8s

Watch this energizer from *Right to Play Canada* in action at: <https://youtu.be/HEhDWpAyOSI>

1. Have all the youth stand with their hands in the air.
2. Starting with their right arm, shake it eight times.
3. Then have them shake their left arm eight times.
4. Then their right leg eight times, followed by their left leg eight times.
5. Next, follow the same pattern, doing each limb four times.
6. Then, do it again, but two times.
7. Finally, go through again, doing each limb one time. Finish with everyone clapping.

## Optional Youth Activity: Connecting Points

---

Use this activity to go a little deeper in helping find shared interests in a low-risk way. The activity also gets youth up and moving around the room.

### Planning and Preparation

**Recommended Number of Participants:** 8 -20      **Time:** 15 minutes

**Materials**      **Set-up:** None

- A sheet of paper for each youth
- A pen, pencil, or marker for each youth

NOTE: You can also use this activity with families. They'll discover new connections between youth and adults across families.

### Facilitator Instructions

1. Give each young person a piece of paper and a pen, pencil, or marker. Ask them to write their names at the top of the paper and to number their paper from 1 to 10 down the left side.  
(If you have less time, you could limit the list to 5.)
2. Then ask everyone to make a list of 10 things they enjoy doing. Examples could include playing soccer, reading, playing video games, eating, playing a musical instrument, or talking on the phone. Encourage them to write down things that they are comfortable having others know about, since they'll be sharing this with others in this group.
3. Once everyone has finished, have them form pairs to compare lists. Tell them they should sign their name next to every common item on their partner's paper.
4. Then yell, "Switch!" Have young people find another partner to compare their lists with and to repeat the activity. Switch a number of times.

### 4. Reflect

- What are some new connections you discovered?
- Were there some really interesting things people do that you'd like to know more about?
- What was it like to tell other people about the things you're interested in? What was it like to listen to what interests other people?

Conclude by encouraging them to be open and to ask questions throughout the Keep Connected series.

**BONUS:** Ask the youth if you may keep their paper (with their names on them) so you can also get to know them and their interests a little better.

## Family Session

---

### 1. Family Sharing: Catching Up from Separate Parenting Adult and Youth Sessions 10 minutes

While people are getting settled, post the five prepared flipcharts for Activity #3 (one with each key to a parenting adult-youth relationship) around the room.

- a. Have youth and parenting adults sit together in their families.
- b. Explain that, in many cases, the whole family isn't participating in the session, but for simplicity, you'll use the term "family" when they're spending time with their own parenting adult/child during the workshop. Also acknowledge that sometimes the parenting adult involved is actually a grandparent or other relative, foster guardian, or in some other way in the role of parenting adult, and that's what you mean when you say, "parenting adult." (If you know that there are non-parent caregivers/guardians participating, be sure to use the term "Parenting Adults" to be more inclusive. On the other hand, if you know definitively that all the adult participants refer to themselves as parents (or something else), feel free to use that term.)
- c. Introduce yourself and other facilitators who are part of the parenting adult, youth, and family sessions. Then say that the next activity will welcome all who are there as a way of getting further getting to know one another.
- d. Ask that they stand whenever something you say applies to them. Then repeat the sentence "We'd like to welcome \_\_\_\_\_ to Keep Connected," insert the following characteristics or others more relevant to your group:
  1. *everyone under the age of 18*
  2. *everyone who is currently in school (including elementary/middle/high school, college of any type, trade school, certificate programs, graduate school, or any other form of education)*
  3. *everyone who has a birthday this month*
  4. *everyone who likes pizza*
  5. *everyone who has some sort of pet*
  6. *everyone who has checked their email today*
  7. *everyone who has checked social media today*
  8. *everyone who's excited to learn more about building strong family relationships*

- e. Thank everyone for participating and invite them to all sit down. Explain that parenting adults and youth did different activities in the first half of this week's session and that you're going to spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Ask family groups to do the following:
- Have youth show and describe to their parenting adults the design they created as part of the activity, "Getting Started with a 'Family Pledge to Keep Connected.'" Encourage parenting adults to say something specific they really like about it.
  - Have parenting adults talk with their kids about one or more of their wishes for their family relationships over the coming years.
  - Ask each family to decide who will introduce the family to others when you get into small groups later in the session. They will do this by showing the Family Pledge design, saying who is in the family (names only), and sharing one wish the parenting adults have for relationships in the coming years. (If youth are comfortable sharing, encourage them to take the lead.)

## **2. Setting Shared Expectations**

5 minutes

- a. Before starting the introduction activity, explain to the parenting adults that the youth spent time in their session identifying expectations that they have for each other to make the sessions go well. They would like to share their list with the families and see if the adults will agree to follow this list for the family sessions too.
- b. Have the youth who volunteered to read the expectations they set aloud. (If no youth volunteered already, invite them one more time to see if any of them would like to share. If no one volunteers, you may read them.)
- c. Encourage the parenting adults to clap for the youth for their work in putting together the list.
- d. Point out that there may be other things that are also important, and parenting adults might word some differently. Ask if they are willing to try out these expectations for a couple of sessions so see how they work before revisiting and renegotiating them, if needed.
- e. Note that, in the same way that expectations help groups function better, expectations are an important part of family life. We all expect things from others in our families, even if we don't always say them.
- f. Explain that, over the coming weeks, we will give each family time to think about its hopes and expectations for how to "keep connected" as kids grow up based on what we learn together. By the time families graduate from this program, they will have created "Our

Family's Pledge to Keep Connected" that fits their own goals and strengths. The family pictures/boxes the youth created today will be used for these pledges.

- g. If in the youth session you have introduced the ideas of a **Talking Piece** to ensure all voices get a chance to be heard and/or a **Parking Lot** for ideas and discussions that need to be addressed at a another time, explain those briefly as well.

### 3. Relationships in Our Families (brainstorming and idea-sharing movement activity)

15 minutes

- a. **Post the five prepared "In Our Family" flipcharts** around the room, each with one of the following statements at the top of the sheet:

- 1) IN OUR FAMILY, we show each other that we matter when we...
- 2) IN OUR FAMILY, we treat each other with respect and give each other a say when we...
- 3) IN OUR FAMILY, we encourage each other to keep getting better when we...
- 4) IN OUR FAMILY, we help each other complete tasks and achieve goals when we...
- 5) IN OUR FAMILY, we connect each other with people and places that broaden our world when we...

- b. Give each family 10 to 15 sticky notes (such as Post-It Notes) and a marker. Have them brainstorm up to two or three things they do in their own families to complete each of the posted statements. Write each one on a sticky note. (If they don't have ideas for one of the statement, that's okay. Just think of the things that come to mind right away.)



- c. When families have used all their sticky notes, have them post the notes somewhere on the relevant flip chart. When all the families are done, read some of the comments aloud. Thank everyone for their insights and ideas, and ask if there are any questions.
- d. Explain that the five statements on the flip charts are based on the five keys to strong relationships that are behind this workshop series, Keep Connected. Write each key on the appropriate sheet, as follows:

On the flip chart that says . . .

Write:

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| 1) Show each that we matter              | EXPRESS CARE         |
| 2) Treat each other with respect         | SHARE POWER          |
| 3) Encourage each to keep getting better | CHALLENGE GROWTH     |
| 4) Complete tasks and achieve goals      | PROVIDE SUPPORT      |
| 5) Connect each other with people        | EXPAND POSSIBILITIES |



- e. Invite people to comment on what they see, but avoid getting into a long discussion. (They don't need to discuss them in depth, since you'll be spending the next few sessions exploring each of these topics in greater depth.)
- f. Highlight that families have shown that they're already doing many things that fit with these five keys to parenting adult-youth relationships. Over the coming sessions, we'll build on these strengths to find ways to strengthen our relationships even more.

- g. Distribute Handout 1.2: "Five Keys to Strong Parenting Adult-Youth Relationships." Have families read through it together. In addition, the at-home activities for this session give them a chance to think about these five keys:



- There is a quiz they can take together based on the keys
  - There is a summary of the research about the keys they can read
- h. Remind participants that the coming weeks will focus on these different keys to strong parenting adult-youth relationships. They will learn more about them, get ideas from other families, and try some activities together to help strengthen these different parts of their relationships. They'll also have a chance to share their ideas with other families who can learn from what they're already doing.

**NOTE:** Leave the flip charts hanging in the room or bring them back for each of the sessions so you can refer to them. It helps families refresh their memories when they return.

#### 4. Take the Conversation Home (family discussion)

10 minutes

- a. Say the following in your own words: *I hope you are **intrigued to learn more** about these five keys to parenting adult-youth relationships. In coming sessions, we will look at each of these five keys and **practice ways we can strengthen them together**. After the six workshops, we'll **celebrate what we've** discovered together with a graduation party.*

- b. We also encourage you to explore these five keys in **your everyday lives as families**. So as part of each session, you'll get two or three activities you can try together. Please do at least one of them. It will help you make the most of the workshop experience. At each session, we'll check on what you tried and how it went. The overview of activities includes how long each activity takes and a brief description so you can identify which ones will work best for your family.

### Extra Idea - Selfie

Encourage families to take selfies during their at-home activities and show them to the group next time. You may even want to give prizes to those who do.

- c. Give each person (youth and parenting adult) a copy of the "At-Home Activities" handout (Handout 1.3). Briefly describe each option for at-home activities:



- **POST IT:** Handout 1.3b is designed to post on your refrigerator door or some other prominent place in your home. It highlights the key ideas from this session, discussion starters, parenting tips, and information on [KeepConnected.info](http://KeepConnected.info), a website where you can take quizzes and try activities to strengthen family relationships.
- **TRY IT:** Handout 1.3c is a family relationships checklist. Each family member will need a copy. Family members complete the checklist on their own and then discuss their responses at a time when you can relax and learn together. Everyone will have different responses, so the goal is to understand each person's own experiences and perspectives, not to try to agree to an answer.
- **THINK ABOUT IT:** Handout 1.3d offers background reading about the research behind Keep Connected. Families can talk about what parts of the study really fit with them—and if there are any findings that don't make sense to them.

Turn back to the first page of the at-home activities. Have families talk together about what they want to do together between now and the next session. Have them checkmark their choice(s) and write down when they plan to do them.

- d. If there's time, invite each family to share their plan with one other family. (Telling others about our commitments makes it more likely that we'll follow through.)

## 5. Wrap Up

5 minutes

- a. Thank participants for coming to the workshop. Encourage them to try the at-home activities they've chosen in the next few days.

- b. Remind them of the next session, which will focus on the key “Express Care.” This session will introduce some new, creative ways to express care to each other as kids grow up—including ideas they’ll each have from their own experience.

## 6. Follow-Up to the Session

- a. Keep all the **Pledge to Keep Connected materials** together so that they are available for the upcoming workshops.
- b. **Sort the cards from the parenting adults’ three wishes activity**, organizing them by the five keys to relationships (where possible). You’ll use the cards at the start of each of the following sessions to remind parenting adults of the connections between the sessions and their wishes.
- c. **Gather the flipcharts and other materials** that you want to save for future sessions. This will include the ideas for each of the five keys as well as the expectations that were set for the group.
- d. **Send a text message or an email** in a few days to participants to remind them to follow up on their at-home activities. You can also send them the next session’s video to preview, available at: [www.keepconnected.info/media-library](http://www.keepconnected.info/media-library).
- e. Within a day or two of completing the session, **give Search Institute feedback** on what worked, what didn’t, and how the session could be improved. As a thank you, you will receive a \$5 gift card for each feedback survey you complete. Facilitators can earn up to \$35 in gift cards for giving feedback on all seven sessions. Here’s the link: <https://tinyurl.com/SIKeepConnectedFeedback>

## Extended Parenting Adult Session (if youth are not participating)

### 1. What Do We Expect from Each Other? (group brainstorm)

5 minutes

a. Say: *One way to make these sessions most enjoyable is to be **clear about what we expect** from each other. So I'd like you to think about times you've been in groups or classes where you learned a lot and really enjoyed being there.*

b. Have parenting adults think about how they are expected to act in other groups or classes. (If they're stumped, rephrase it to ask what rules they are asked to follow.) Ask them which expectations or rules have helped **make the class or group work better**.

c. After they have given a few examples, ask: **What should we expect of each other** so that we all have a good experience? Write all their ideas **on a flipchart**.



d. If needed, you might ask the group to consider these kinds of ground rules if they don't come up:

- **Participate while also allowing others to participate** so that we can hear from many people.
- **Try to stay on topic.** The workshop topics will bring up lots of personal experiences. We won't be able to cover all the topics during sessions.
- **Avoid using cell phones** and other digital devices. Not only does it make it harder for to participate, it distracts the facilitator and other participants. If you need to use your phone, please step out and come back as quickly as possible.
- **Support and encourage each other.** Everyone comes to this workshop with different experiences and values. By listening to and learning from each other, all can grow, even if we don't see eye to eye.

#### Extra Idea – Talking Piece

If you are comfortable and see a need for it, introduce the use of a Talking Piece or other mechanism for respectfully asking some people to wait while giving others a chance to contribute.

#### Extra Idea – Parking Lot

Consider introducing the idea of a Parking Lot, where you can write down questions or topics that come up that are important but may need to be revisited at a different time or place.

e. If the list is long, ask them to come to a consensus on 4-5 they believe are most important. Circle these priorities. If needed you can ask them to each vote for three and circle the ones that get the most votes.

f. Say that you'll be referring to these expectations as reminders when needed and that you'll also revisit them from time to time to see if they might need to be adjusted.

- g. Note that, in the same way that expectations help groups function better, expectations are an important part of family life. We all expect things from others in our families, even if we don't always say them.

**2. Relationships in Our Families** (brainstorming and idea-sharing activity)

15 minutes

- a. **Post the five prepared “In Our Family” flipcharts** around the room, each with one of the following statements at the top of the sheet:

- 1) IN OUR FAMILY, we show each that we matter when we...
- 2) IN OUR FAMILY, we treat each other with respect and give each other a say when we...
- 3) IN OUR FAMILY, we encourage each to keep getting better when we...
- 4) IN OUR FAMILY, we help each other complete tasks and achieve goals when we...
- 5) IN OUR FAMILY, we connect each other with people and places that expand our world when we...

- b. Give each parenting adult 10 to 15 sticky notes (such as Post-It Notes) and a marker. Have them each work alone and think of up to two or three things they do in their own families to complete each of the posted statements. Write each one on a sticky note. (If they don't have ideas for one of the statement, that's okay. Just think of the things that come to mind right away.)



- c. When families have used all their sticky notes, have them post the notes somewhere on the relevant flip chart. When all the families are done, read some of the comments aloud. Thank everyone for their insights and ideas, and ask if there are any questions.

- d. Explain that the five statements on the flip charts are based on the five keys to strong relationships that are behind this workshop series, Keep Connected. Write each key on the appropriate sheet, as follows:

On the flip chart that says . . .

Write:

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| 1) Show each that we matter              | EXPRESS CARE         |
| 2) Treat each other with respect         | SHARE POWER          |
| 3) Encourage each to keep getting better | CHALLENGE GROWTH     |
| 4) Complete tasks and achieve goals      | PROVIDE SUPPORT      |
| 5) Connect each other with people        | EXPAND POSSIBILITIES |



- e. Invite parenting adults to comment on what they see, but avoid getting into a long discussion. (They don't need to discuss them in depth, since you'll be spending the next few sessions exploring each of these topics in greater depth.)
- f. Highlight that these responses show that families are already doing many things that fit with these five keys to strong parenting adult-youth relationships. Over the coming sessions, we'll build on these strengths to find ways to strengthen our relationships even more.
- g. Distribute Handout 1.2: "Five Keys to Strong Parenting Adult-Youth Relationships." Have parenting adults read through it. In addition, the at-home activities give them a chance to think about these five keys:
  - There is a quiz they can take with their family members based on the keys.
  - There is a summary of the research about the keys they can read.
- h. Remind parenting adults that the coming weeks will focus on these different keys to strong parenting adult-youth relationships. They will learn more about them, get ideas from other parenting adults, and try some activities to help strengthen these different parts of their relationships. They'll also have a chance to share their ideas with other parenting adults who can learn from what they're already doing.



**NOTE:** Leave the flip charts hanging in the room or bring them back for each of the sessions so you can refer to them. It helps parenting adults refresh their memories when they return.

### 3. Getting Started with a "Family Pledge to Keep Connected"

15 minutes

- a. Say that families also have expectations for each other. Like this group, families work best when we know what to expect from each other.
- b. Explain that throughout this workshop series, families will work on creating a "Family Pledge to Keep Connected." It is basically an agreement about everyday things their families will work on in order to keep connected in the coming years.
- c. Each family's pledge will be unique, since each family is unique. Parenting adults will add to it each week. Each family should have their own project, so if there are two parenting adults from the same household attending together, they should work together.

**NOTE:** Pick one of the following options based on the document titled "Family Pledge to Keep Connected." (See the planning document with that name for an overall description of this activity.)

### Option #1: Family Pledge Box

- a. Give each family a box to decorate. Have markers and other supplies for decorating the box available.
- b. On the **top of the box**, have parenting adults write their family's name(s) and draw a picture that represents their family. They may include the names of all family members. They can add symbols to represent different things that make their family unique, such as activities they like to do together or special memories they have.
- c. Have them leave the sides blank for now. As they come back for the rest of the workshops, they'll add to the sides and bottom.
- d. Have parenting adults share their designs with the others as a way to further introduce their families to each other.



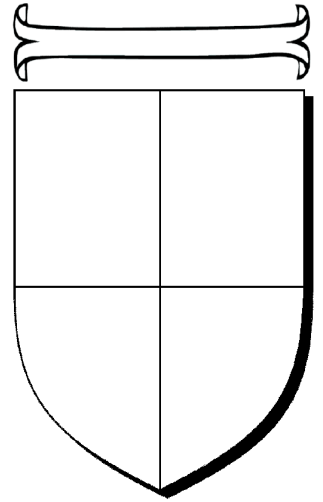
### Option #2: Family Pledge Collage

- a. Give each parenting adult a poster board or a large sheet of paper to create a collage.
- b. Have markers, old magazines to clip pictures from, glue sticks, and scissors available. If using magazines, make sure to provide magazines that have images of people who reflect the participating families (in terms of racial/ethnic identity and family structure).
- c. At the center of the poster (leaving plenty of room all around so they can add to it throughout the workshop series), have the parenting adults create a collage that represents their family. They can:
  - i. Draw or clip and glue a picture.
  - ii. Include the names of all family members.
  - iii. Add pictures that represent things that make their family unique, such as activities they like to do together or important memories they have.
- d. Have parenting adults share their designs with the others as a way to further introduce their families to each other.



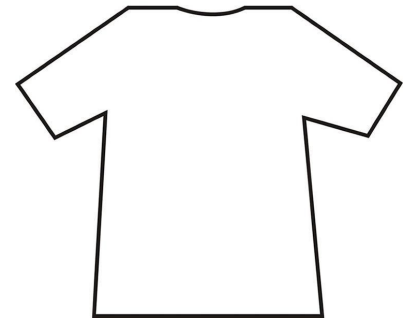
### Option #3: Family Relationships Crest

- a. Provide each parenting adult with a poster board to create a family crest. Have a stencil of the crest available (cut from poster board). Have markers and other supplies to decorate the crest.
- b. Work with each parenting adult to draw the outline of a crest on their poster board.
- c. Then have parenting adults write their family name across the top of the crest. Around the outside, have them write, draw, or add clipped pictures or other objects that represent things that make their family unique. This could include activities they like to do together or important memories they have.
- d. Have parenting adults share their designs with the others as a way to further introduce their families to each other.



### Option #4: Family T-Shirt Design

- a. Provide each youth with a poster board cut out into the shape of a t-shirt outline drawn on it (or have youth draw the outline and cut it out). Make sure both sides of the poster board are blank and can be drawn on. Have markers and other supplies to decorate the design.
  - b. Then have youth write their family name across the top of the shirt or on the back (similar to a sports jersey). On the center of the back, have them write, draw, or add clipped pictures or other objects that represent things that make their family unique. This could include activities they like to do together or important memories they have.
- Have parenting adults share their designs with the others as a way to further introduce their families to each other.



**Adaptation:** Depending on their interests, families may have more fun designing a jersey, sneaker, or other item of clothing.

#### **4. Take the Conversation Home** (pair-and-share with worksheet)

5 minutes

- a. Say the following in your own words: *I hope you are **intrigued to learn more** about the five keys to parenting adult-youth relationships. In coming sessions, we will look at each of these five keys and **practice ways we can strengthen them together**. After the six workshops, we'll **celebrate what we've discovered together with a graduation party**.*

b. We also encourage you to explore these five keys in **your everyday lives as families**. So as part of each session, you'll get two or three activities you can try at home with your family. Please do at least one of them. It will help you make the most of the workshop experience. At each session, we'll check on what you tried and how it went.

### Extra Idea - Selfie

Encourage families to take selfies during their at-home activities and show them to the group next time. You may even want to give prizes to those who do.

c. Give each parenting adult a copy of the four-page "At-Home Activities" handout (Handout 1.3). Briefly describe each option for at-home activities:



- **POST IT:** Handout 1.3b is designed to post on your refrigerator door or some other prominent place in your home. It highlights the key ideas from this session, discussion starters, parenting tips, and information on [KeepConnected.info](http://KeepConnected.info), a website where you can take quizzes and try activities to strengthen family relationships.
- **TRY IT:** Handout 1.3c is a family relationships checklist. Each family member will need a copy. Family members complete the checklist on their own and then discuss their responses at a mealtime or another time when you can relax and learn together. Everyone will have different responses, so the goal is to understand each person's own experiences and perspectives, not to try to agree to an answer.
- **LEARN ABOUT IT:** Handout 1.3d offers background reading about the research behind *Keep Connected*. Families can talk about what parts of the study really fit with them—and if there are any findings that don't make sense to them.

d. Turn back to the first page of the at-home activities. Have parenting adults pair up to talk together about what they want to try. Have them each checkmark their choice(s) and write down when they plan to do them.

e. If there's time, invite parenting adults each to share their plan with one other family. (Telling others about our commitments makes it more likely that we'll follow through.)

## 5. Wrap Up

5 minutes

- a. Thank participants for coming to the workshop. Encourage them to try the at-home activities they've chosen in the next few days.
- b. Remind them of the next session, which will focus on the key "Express Care." This session will introduce some new, creative ways to express care to each other as kids grow up—including ideas they'll each have from their own experience.

## 6. Follow-Up to the Session

- a. Keep all the **Pledge to Keep Connected materials** together so that they are available for the upcoming workshops.
- b. **Sort the cards from the parenting adults' three wishes activity**, organizing them by the five keys to relationships (where possible). You'll use the cards at the start of each of the following sessions to remind parenting adults of the connections between the sessions and their wishes.
- c. **Gather the flipcharts and other materials** that you want to save for future sessions. This will include the ideas for each of the five keys as well as the expectations that were set for the group.
- d. **Send a text message or an email** in a few days to participants to remind them to follow up on their at-home activities. You can also send them the next session's video to preview, available at: [www.keepconnected.info/media-library](http://www.keepconnected.info/media-library).
- e. Within a day or two of completing the session, **give Search Institute feedback** on what worked, what didn't, and how the session could be improved. As a thank you, you will receive a \$5 gift card for each feedback survey you complete. Facilitators can earn up to \$35 in gift cards for giving feedback on all seven sessions. Here's the link: <https://tinyurl.com/SIKeepConnectedFeedback>