



# In the Zone: Challenge and Support Growth

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### Session 4 Worksheets and Handouts

Mini-posters of “growth topics” for Parenting Adult Session

- 4.1a Some Key Ideas about Challenging Growth
- 4.1b Some Key Ideas about Providing Support
- 4.2 Understanding the “Growth Zone”
- 4.3 At-Home Activities for “Challenge Growth” and “Provide Support”
  - a. OVERVIEW: What Will Our Family Do?
  - b. POST IT: A Guide for Your Week
  - c. LEARN ABOUT IT: Feedback that Motivates Growth
  - d. TRY IT: How Do You Think About Failures and Setbacks? (2 pages)
  - e. TRY IT: Set Up your Lifelines Beyond the Family

## Overview

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This *Keep Connected* workshop focuses on **challenging growth and providing support in families** (the third and fourth of the five keys to strong parenting adult-youth relationships). Both youth and parenting adults explore the areas in which they challenge each other to grow, where they need support from—and give support to—each other. They will learn about practical ways to work in the “Growth Zone” that can motivate them to stretch and learn in order to achieve goals together.

## Learning Objectives

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Participants will . . .

- Examine where it is **easy and hard to balance challenging each other to grow and providing support**.
- Understand challenge growth works best when it **focuses on someone’s own goals or priorities**, not on things other people wish they would do.
- **Learn about the Growth Zone**, the intersection of Challenge Growth and Provide Support where youth and parenting adults are challenged enough to be motivated and also guided and supported to succeed.
- Explore how they can **challenge and support each other around a “hard thing”** that each person wants to work on.
- **Commit to at least one activity** they will do together to practice Challenging Growth before the next workshop.

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

### Session 4

### In the Zone: Challenge and Support Growth





Total Time: 120 minutes





Key activities  
for this  
session

Set-Up	
Place discussion-starter question cards on the tables for families to talk about while they share the meal (if they choose).	15 min prior to start
Sign-in and Nametags	
Shared Family Meal (30 minutes)	
• Families eat and settle in	10 min
• Welcome and Introductions	5 min
• Check-In on At-Home Activities, Introduce Topics	15 min

#### Transition to parenting adult and youth sessions

Parenting Adult Session (40 minutes)			CONCURRENT	Youth Session (40 minutes)		
1	Introductions, Highs and Lows	10 min		1	Introductions, Highs and Lows	10 min
2	Challenging Growth and Providing Support: What's Hard? What's Not? 	15 min	2	Building a Tower: What Motivates Us to Be and Do Our Best? 	10 min	
3	The Challenge of Challenging Growth and Providing Support 	15 min	3	How Family Members Challenge Us to Grow and Support Us 	10 min	
4	Transition to Family Session	5 min	4	Adding to the Family Pledge to Keep Connected	10 min	
			5	Transition to Family Session	5 min	
				Optional Energizers & Activities		
				• Unfair Challenges	10 min	
				• Blindfold Adventure	30 min	

#### Transition to family session (5 minutes)

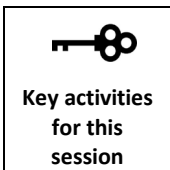
Family Session (45 minutes) (Youth and Parenting Adults Together)		
1	Families Reconnecting	5 min
2	Exploring the Growth Zone 	15 min
3	Challenging Growth Around a "Hard Thing" 	10 min
4	Pledge to Challenge Growth and Provide Support	5 min
5	Take the Conversation Home	5 min
6	Wrap Up	5 min

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

### Session 4

## In the Zone: Challenging and Supporting Growth?

Total Time: 120 minutes



Set-Up		
Place discussion-starter question cards on the tables for parenting adults to talk about while they share the meal (if they choose).		15 min prior to start
Sign-in and Nametags		
Shared Meal (30 minutes)		
• Parenting adults eat and settle in		10 min
• Welcome and Introductions		10 min
• Check-in on At-Home Activities		10 min
Part 1 (45 minutes)		
1 Introductions, Highs and Lows		10 min
2 Challenging Growth and Providing Support: What's Hard? What's Not?		15 min
3 The Challenge of Challenging Growth and Providing Support		15 min
Break		
		5 min
Part 2 (45 minutes)		
1 Exploring the Growth Zone		15 min
2 Challenging Growth Around a "Hard Thing"		10 min
3 Pledge to Challenge Growth		10 min
4 Take the Conversation Home		5 min
5 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"/> Create flip charts with the workshop’s key ideas (one chart for each room you will use)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Prepare “Challenge Growth” and “Provide Support” videos for showing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Post these materials from previous sessions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Five flipcharts on relationship keys</li> <li>✓ A copy of group expectations</li> <li>✓ Pledge projects</li> </ul> </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> </ul>
Parenting Adult Session	Youth Session
<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organize the “three wishes” from the first session to relate, as much as possible, to the five keys. Bring those tied to “Challenge Growth” and “Provide Support” to this session.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A copy of each of the 9 mini-posters of “growth topics” (at the end of these materials). Add more sheets for growth areas from parenting adults’ “three wishes” from the first session, if they are not covered by the prepared topics. Or you may add sheets focused on specific program goals.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 5 sticky dots (about 1”) for each participant (can use markers instead)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bring and post these materials from session 1:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Five flipcharts on relationship keys.</li> <li>✓ A copy of group expectations</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Copy handout 4.1a-b</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials and Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tape to hang up the mini-posters</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A pen or pencil for each participant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Talking piece</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Flip chart paper labeled “Parking Lot”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bring these materials from session 1:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A copy of group expectations</li> <li>✓ Family pledge projects</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Materials and Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A set of blocks or objects youth can use to build a tower. (These might be toy wooden blocks, dominoes, a Jenga set, cardboard blocks, or lumber scraps. They should be unbreakable and not too heavy. They should not lock together, like Legos.) You’ll need a set for each group of 3-4 youth.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sheets of paper and markers for each youth</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Materials for “Our Family’s Pledge to Keep Connected” (see next page)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Talking piece</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Flip chart paper labeled “Parking Lot”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Music for quiet work times</li> </ul>
Family Session or Extended Parenting Adult Session	
<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make copies of Handout 4.2 and 4.3a-e</li> </ul>	<p><b>Materials and Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pens, pencils, or markers for all participants.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Glue or tape to attach the rubber bands to the pledge</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Materials for “Our Family’s Pledge to Keep Connected” (extended parenting adult session only)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> OPTIONAL: Symbolic reminders of providing support and challenging growth for each family. Examples: Rubik’s cubes, erasers, toy compasses, or whistles</li> </ul>

## Family Pledge to Keep Connected

### Preparation

- Bring the work from the previous session. Provide supplies for any families that missed the previous session.

### Materials and Supplies

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

- A sample pledge box that illustrates this session's assignment
- Markers and other supplies to decorate the boxes

#### Option #2: Family Relationships Collage

- Families' collages from the first session
- Old magazines, etc., for pictures to clip
- Glue sticks
- Scissors for youth
- Markers


#### Option #3: Family Relationships Crest




- Families' crests from the first session
- Supplies to decorate the crest
- Glue sticks
- Markers



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

- Families' shirts from the first session
- Supplies to decorate the shirts
- Glue sticks
- Markers

## Facilitator Planning Worksheets

Activity	Facilitator Notes	Materials	Time Needed/ Est. Start Time
<b>Shared Family Meal</b>			
<p><b>Sign-in and Nametags</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Set the stage for building relationships with and among participants.</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Maintain a relaxed, conversational approach.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in sheet</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flip chart</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nametags</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Materials from previous session: Family Pledge projects, flip charts on relationship keys, and group expectations</li> </ul>	15 min before start
1 <b>Time for families to eat and settle in</b>			10 min
2 <b>Welcome and Introductions</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Expectations flip chart from #1</li> </ul>	5 min
3 <b>Check-In on At-Home Activities, Introduce Topics</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flip chart with key ideas for the session</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers</li> </ul>	15 min
<b>Parenting Adult Session</b>			
1 <b>Introductions and Highs and Lows</b>			10 min
2 <b>Challenging Growth and Providing Support: What's Hard? What's Not?</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sticky dots in three different colors (enough for each participant to have some of each color)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mini-posters of "growth topics"</li> </ul>	15 min

Activity	Facilitator Notes	Materials	Time Needed/ Est. Start Time
3 <b>The Challenge of Challenging Growth and Providing Support</b> <u>Purpose:</u> To integrate with youth <u>Method:</u> Brief presentation and whole-group discussion		<input type="checkbox"/> Handout 4.1a-b	15 min
4 <b>Transition to the Family Session</b> <u>Purpose:</u> To integrate with youth <u>Method:</u> Informal			5 min
<b>Youth Session</b>			
1 <b>Introductions and Highs and Lows</b> <u>Purpose:</u> To connect their experiences of the week with each other and the session topic (through self-disclosure) <u>Method:</u> Individual sharing			10 min
2 <b>Building a Tower: What Motivates Us to Be and Do Our Best?</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Simulate the kinds of support that does and doesn't motivate youth <u>Method:</u> Game with stacking blocks and debriefing questions		<input type="checkbox"/> Stacking blocks to build towers	10 min
3 <b>How Family Members Challenge Us to Grow and Support Us</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Youth articulate the ways their parenting adults push them to learn and grow <u>Method:</u> Think, pair, share activity		<input type="checkbox"/> Sheets of paper <input type="checkbox"/> Markers	10 min
4 <b>Adding to the Family Pledge to Keep Connected</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Have youth articulate a commitment related to sharing power <u>Method:</u> Craft activity		[See detailed list]	10 min
5 <b>Transition to Family Session</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Integrate youth and parenting adults <u>Method:</u> Informal discussion			5 min
<b>Optional Energizers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chain of Events</li> <li>• Elbow-Toe Touch</li> </ul>			2 – 3 min each

Activity	Facilitator Notes	Materials	Time Needed/ Est. Start Time
<b>Brief Optional Activity: Unfair Challenges</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> 150 toothpicks <input type="checkbox"/> 150 gumdrops	10 min
<b>Extended Optional Activity: Blindfold Adventure</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Something to use as blindfolds for half the group	15 – 30 min
<b>Family Session</b>			
<b>1 Family Reconnecting</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Share insights from the separate sessions (especially youth posters) <u>Method:</u> Post youth signs; discussion		<input type="checkbox"/> Signs from youth activity <input type="checkbox"/> Tape to hang signs	5 min
<b>2 Exploring the Growth Zone</b> <u>Purpose:</u> To introduce the “growth zone” concept to families <u>Method:</u> Brief presentation, discussion, and family worksheet		<input type="checkbox"/> Handout 4.2	15 min
<b>3 Challenging Growth Around a “Hard Thing”</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Focus on one area where each family needs others to challenge growth <u>Method:</u> Craft activity to support personal sharing and commitments		<input type="checkbox"/> Rubber bands <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent markers	10 min
<b>4 Pledge to Challenge Growth and Provide Support</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Document key learning and commit to each other about ways to challenge growth and provide support together <u>Method:</u> Family discussion and craft		<input type="checkbox"/> Pledge crafts <input type="checkbox"/> Rubber bands <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent markers <input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Rubik’s cubes, erasers, toy compasses, or whistles	5 min
<b>5 Take the Conversation Home</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Commit to what the family will do to practice sharing power at home <u>Method:</u> Family discussion with worksheets		<input type="checkbox"/> Handout 4.3a-e	5 min

Activity	Facilitator Notes	Materials	Time Needed/ Est. Start Time
6 <b>Wrap-Up</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Thank participants and foreshadow the next topic: Expand Possibilities <u>Method:</u> Brief presentation			5 min
<b>Extended Parenting Adult Session</b>			
1 <b>Exploring the Growth Zone</b> <u>Purpose:</u> To introduce the “growth zone” concept to families <u>Method:</u> Brief presentation, discussion, and family worksheet		<input type="checkbox"/> Handout 4.2	15 min
2 <b>Challenging Growth Around a “Hard Thing”</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Focus on one area where each family needs others to challenge growth <u>Method:</u> Pair-and-share craft activity		<input type="checkbox"/> Rubber bands <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent markers	10 min
3 <b>Pledge to Challenge Growth</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Document key learning and commit to each other about ways to challenge growth together <u>Method:</u> Craft and discussion		<input type="checkbox"/> [See detailed list]	10 min
4 <b>Take the Conversation Home</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Commit to what the family will do to practice sharing power at home <u>Method:</u> Family discussion with worksheets		<input type="checkbox"/> Handout 4.3a-e	5 min
5 <b>Wrap Up</b> <u>Purpose:</u> Thank participants and foreshadow the next topic: Expand Possibilities <u>Method:</u> Brief presentation			5 min

### Follow Up to the Session

- Keep all the Pledge to Keep Connected materials together
- 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

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### Sign In and Nametags

Start 15 minutes before the session begins

- a. Set up the chairs in a circle so participants can interact easily.
- b. **Write the key ideas** from the session on a flip chart or white board:
  - In positive relationships, we **challenge each other** to grow in different parts of life so that we can each **be and become our best selves**.
  - When we push each other to grow, it's also important to provide support in different ways. We support or help each other **in different ways as we grow up**.
  - Challenge growth is best when it **focuses on our own goals or priorities**, not on things other people wish they would do. (This isn't about "fixing" other people.)
  - Provide support focuses on how we give practical help to each other in solving problems and achieving goals.
  - **We improve the most in the "Growth Zone,"** where we are stretched to learn and try new things, but are **also guided and supported** so we can succeed. The Growth Zone is the intersection between Challenge Growth and Provide Support.
- c. Post the posters for activity #4 ("Challenging Growth and Providing Support: What's Hard? What's Not?") around the room.
- d. **Display materials** that you carry forward from the previous session:
  - The five flipcharts on the relationship keys from the first session as a reminder of the whole framework and series. Place the "Challenge Growth" and "Provide Support" flipcharts most prominently in the room.
  - Group expectations from the first session, which may have been revised in session 3.
- e. As participants arrive, **greet them individually**. Thank them for coming and participating.
- f. Have each participant **sign in on the prepared sign-in sheet**. Ask each person in the family to sign in separately.
- g. Have people each wear a nametag with their first name.

#### Still Need Nametags?

Some families may not feel like they still need nametags. However, some people may have trouble remembering names. So we recommend continuing to use nametags in every session to reduce potential embarrassment.

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

5 minutes

- a. **Welcome participants** to the session. Introduce yourself briefly. Thank everyone for coming to the session, which focuses on ways we challenge each other to grow in our families.
- b. Have participants **introduce themselves** by sharing their first name and then adding something they are really good at doing as the second name. (If they can alliterate, even better!) For example:  
  
Marie “Matchmaking”  
Bert “Baking”  
Sandra “Soccer”
- c. We may find that some of the things we’re really good at will help us learn to challenge growth in others (and ourselves).

## 2. Check-In on the At-Home Activities, Introduction to Topics

15 minutes

- a. Refresh participants’ memories that the Keep Connected workshop series focuses on five keys to youth-parenting adult relationships. The first two were express care and share power, which were talked about in earlier workshops. Today the focus is on challenging growth, the third key, and on provide support, the fourth key. The reason we focus on these two together is that they often show up hand-in-hand. Next time, we’ll focus on the last one: expand possibilities. These five keys are important for us to remember as our kids enter adolescence. These are ways we “Keep Connected.”
- b. Remind participants **what you discussed in the previous session** (which focused on sharing power). First ask participants what they remember. Then quickly fill in the following highlights:
  - *reflected on areas of life where we are **comfortable—and not comfortable**—sharing power in our families*
  - *explored how we can shift **from power struggles to sharing power** in ways that help our relationships and help our kids grow*
  - *identified **specific strategies** we can use to share power in our families*
  - *each family picked something **to try at home**:*
    - *Planning a family meeting time together*
    - *Trying out a process for negotiating differences in our families*

- c. Ask participants to recall things they've done since the last session to work on sharing power. Be sure to invite both parenting adults and youth to share. (Have them share examples. If none say anything, just move on.)

**Optional:** If anyone took pictures of activities in their family, encourage them to show their pictures with others. Encourage them to capture family moments during activities in the coming weeks.

- d. Then ask participants to call out things they had hoped to do, but didn't get to. (Give an example from your own life to encourage openness.) Talk about the things that got in the way. (Some were probably practical issues, such as time. Others may be more complicated, such as not understanding an activity or getting resistance from others.)
- e. Say that this session really focuses on this kind of issue. It asks the question: **How do we push each other to achieve goals and overcome obstacles that get in the way**, whether those goals are small or large? And, how do we provide support to each other so we can grow?
- f. Introduce the themes for this session: **Challenge Growth and Provide Support**. Explain that these two elements often go hand-in-hand, so we'll explore them together. Highlight the key ideas:
- In positive relationships, we **push each other** to grow in different parts of life so that we can each **be and become our best selves**.
  - When we push each other to grow, it's also important to provide support in different ways. We support or help each other **in different ways as we grow up**.
  - Challenge growth is best when it **focuses on our own goals or priorities**, not on things other people wish they would do. (This isn't about "fixing" other people.)
  - Providing support focuses on how we give practical help to each other in solving problems and achieving goals.
  - **We improve the most in the "Growth Zone,"** where we are stretched to learn and try new things, but are **also guided and supported** so we can succeed. The Growth Zone is the intersection between Challenge Growth and Provide Support.

Transition to the separate youth and parenting adult sessions.

## Parenting Adult Session

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### 1. Introductions, Highs and Lows

10 minutes

- a. Have each parenting adult introduce themselves by name.
- b. Remind parenting adults of the “Highs and Lows” activity from the previous sessions. Ask if anyone tried this activity at home since the last session. How did it go?
- c. Remind them that each person is invited to share in one or two sentences a “**high**” and a “**low**” from the past week. But this week is going to be a bit different. Instead of a general “high” or “low,” we’ll each share the following:
  - **High**—A goal (or something else you’re proud of) you met or made progress toward in the past week. It could be something serious, fun, or something you do every day. It could be personal, professional, or in parenting. For example, you might have made progress in being patient with your child.
  - **Low**—An area of life where you’re trying to improve, but where you aren’t making the progress you’d like. It might be, for example, cleaning or organizing something in their home, a fitness goal, or finishing a big project at work.
- d. Explain that each person will share, but you’re **not going to problem-solve or get into a long discussion**. If there’s something that needs to be talked about, you can make a note in the Parking Lot if you’re using one, or just ask people to hold it until after the session so that everyone can participate fully during this time.

**This “Highs and Lows” activity is different from the others.**

NOTE: If you have more than 10 to 12 participants, break into groups of 6-8 people for this activity.

- e. After clarifying that everyone understands the process, give them time to **share these highs and lows with each other**. Model by going first. If any parenting adults want to pass, they can do that. But let them know you hope this group becomes a safe place to share their experiences.
- f. After each person shares, thank them and allow the group to briefly celebrate or offer support. Then move to the next person.
  - If **serious issues** came up, offer to follow up after the session.
  - If **someone starts to problem-solve or tell other stories**, say that these are really important conversations, and you hope people will support each other

following the session. However, we're going to keep hearing from others and honor the spirit of the activity, which is to all share and learn together.

- g. When everyone who wants to share has done so, thank them for opening up. Remind them that the highs and lows can be a great ritual for connecting with other family members at home.

## 2. Challenging Growth and Providing Support: What's Hard? What's Not?

15 minutes

- a. Today's topic is **challenging growth and providing support**. This means that part of **what we do as parenting adults is to push our kids to keep growing and learning** in different parts of their lives, particularly as they discover what they're good at and what's important to them. While challenging them, we also provide support that helps them grow and accomplish goals. It's also helpful to remember the ways our kids push us to grow and can provide support to us as parenting adults as well.

**OPTIONAL:** You may show Search Institute's "Challenge Growth" video from ([www.keepconnected.info/media-library](http://www.keepconnected.info/media-library)) to introduce the idea of challenging growth.

## 3. Re-introduce the key messages from this session:

- a. In positive relationships, we **push each other** to grow in different parts of life so that we can each **be and become our best selves**.
- b. When we push each other to grow, it's also important to provide support in different ways. We support or help each other **in different ways as we grow up**.
- c. Challenge growth is best when it **focuses on our own goals or priorities**, not on things other people wish they would do. (This isn't about "fixing" other people.)
- d. Providing support focuses on how we give practical help to each other in solving problems and achieving goals.
- e. **We improve the most in the "Growth Zone,"** where we are stretched to learn and try new things, but are **also guided and supported** so we can succeed. The Growth Zone is the intersection between Challenge Growth and Provide Support.

Ask participants to reflect on how they were challenged and supported when they were young. Ask, "What was a time you faced a challenge when you were young? Who supported you?" Have participants pair up and share with each other, and then invite a few to share with the large group.

### Focusing on Program Priorities

If different goal areas fit your program goals better, you may substitute or add them.

Point out the posted sheets of paper with different areas of life where some parenting adults focus on encouraging their kids to do or be their best. Add sheets for additional growth areas from parenting adults' "three wishes" from the first session, if they are not covered by the prepared topics. You may also ask parenting adults to add topics.

NOTE: The focus here is not on whether they have rules for each of these areas, such as setting limits for technology use. The focus is on children learning and growing to be their best in each area.

- f. Give each parenting adult **sticky dots in three different colors (all participants should have the same three colors)**. Have them put a sticky dot of the first color on each sheet that describes for them an area in which they think they tend to challenge their kids more; **have them put a sticky dot of the second color in areas where they think they tend to provide support more; have them put a sticky dot of the third color in areas where they think they balance challenging growth and providing support.** (They don't have to use all their dots.) If there are areas that haven't come up for their family, they do not need to mark that sheet.
- g. Identify and discuss any patterns that emerge. Are there certain areas where most parenting adults tend to challenge growth? Where they tend to provide support? Where they balance the two? Invite a few to share why they may gravitate toward one or the other.
- h. Next, have parenting adults get into pairs. In their pairs, have them each share one area where they think they do a good job of balancing challenge growth and provide support. Then, have them share one area where they think they could improve in balancing the two. After they discuss in pairs, invite a few parenting adults to share out to the whole group.
- i. With the large group, give time for parenting adults to discuss any patterns they see as they look at the posters and that emerged through the discussion. Point out that there are no right or wrong answers. Emphasize that families deal with different issues at different times. Some things they dealt with in the past may fade away as kids grow up. Others that they've never dealt with may come up for the first time. Use the following discussion questions:
  - What happens when you focus too much on challenging growth without providing support?

- What happens when you focus too much on providing support without challenging growth?
- What are some strategies you can use to make sure you're balancing challenge and support with your kids?

#### 4. The Challenge of Challenging Growth and Providing Support

15 minutes

- a. **Distribute Family Handout 4.1a:** "Some Key Ideas about Challenging Growth" and **Family Handout 4.1b** "Some Key Ideas about Provide Support." Give parenting adults time to read through the handouts. Discuss what parts make the most sense to them. What parts, if any, don't make sense to them? Talk about areas where they may have differences of opinion.



**OPTIONAL:** If you prefer and have the equipment, you may show Search Institute's "Challenge Growth" video and/or "Provide Support" video from [www.keepconnected.info/media-library](http://www.keepconnected.info/media-library) to introduce the ideas of challenging growth and providing support.

- b. Say that most parenting adults have some areas where they feel they have **been successful in pushing kids to grow and successful in providing support**. Ask for examples of some of the most **rewarding times** they've had in challenging growth or providing support.
- c. Then invite parenting adults to focus on the section of the handouts titled "What Does Challenging Growth Look Like During the Teen Years?" and "What Does Challenging Growth Look Like During the Teen Years?"

Ask parenting adults to brainstorm how they might **apply these strategies to the topics** you just talked about (in the sticky dot exercise).

- d. Conclude by saying that **challenging growth and providing support are important parts of our responsibility as parenting adults**. But a hard part about challenging growth and providing support is to know if you're pushing too hard or not hard enough, and if you're providing too much support or not enough. We'll focus on that in the family session, and you'll practice some strategies that can help challenge growth while providing support more effectively.

## 5. Transition to the Family Session

5 minutes

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

- a. Say that it is time to combine the session with the youth to talk together about challenging growth in ways that respect parenting adult’ perspectives as well as kids’ perspectives.
- b. Remind parenting adults of the logistics of how you’ll move around. Then make the transition.

### 1. Reconnect: Highs and Lows

10 minutes

- a. Remind youth of the “Highs and Lows” activity from the previous sessions. Ask if anyone tried this activity at home since the last session. How did it go?
  - b. Remind them that each person is invited to share in one or two sentences a **“high” and a “low”** from the past week. But this week is going to be a bit different. Instead of a general “high” or “low,” we’ll each share the following:
    - **High**—A goal (or something else you’re proud of) you met or made progress toward in the past week. It could be something serious, fun, or normal. It could be personal, professional, or in your relationships. For example, you might have made progress on a school project. Who is someone that has supported you in reaching this goal or making progress?
    - **Low**—An area of life where you’re trying to improve, but where you aren’t making the progress you’d like. It might be, for example, improving your free-throw shot in basketball or finishing your homework before dinner time. Who is someone you can turn to for support as you try to make progress?
  - c. Explain that each person will share, but you’re **not going to problem-solve or get into a long discussion**. If there’s something that needs to be talked about, you can make a note in the Parking Lot if you’re using one, or just ask people to hold it until after the session so that everyone can participate fully during this time.
- NOTE: If you have more than 10 to 12 participants, break into groups of 6-8 people for this activity.
- d. After clarifying that everyone understands the process, give them time to **share these highs and lows with each other**. Model by going first. If any youth want to pass, they can do that. But let them know you hope this group becomes a safe place to share their experiences.
  - e. When everyone who wants to share has done so, thank them for opening up. Remind them that the highs and lows can be a great ritual for connecting with other family members at home.

**This “Highs and Lows” activity is different from the others.**

## 2. Building a Tower: What Motivates Us to Be and Do Our Best?

10 minutes

- a. Form small groups of 3-4 people.
- b. Give each small group a **set of blocks or objects** they can use to build a tower. These might be toy wooden blocks, dominoes, Jenga blocks, cardboard blocks, or lumber scraps. They should be unbreakable and not too heavy.
- c. Say: *The next activity is all about challenges. You have a set of objects in front of you. Your first challenge with these objects is to **do whatever you want**. You have 1 minute.*
- d. Don't give any more instructions or answer any questions other than to repeat the statement above; just sit and watch what the youth do, which may be nothing. After a minute passes, **ask if the challenge was easy or hard**. (Just get them to describe their experience, not try to interpret it.)
- e. Then say: *Your next challenge is to use all these objects to build the tallest possible tower. **You may only place them one on top of another**; no two can be at the same level. (See image on right.)* Do not tell them that this will be difficult, even impossible to do. **Give 1 minute**. (Make sure each small group has enough blocks that stacking them all one on top of another will indeed be challenging.)
- f. **After a minute, stop the youth** and ask them how it went. Then ask how it was different from the first experience.
- g. Finally, tell them that they are to build a tower **that uses the blocks they have in the best ways, based on what they would like their tower to be like**. Let them know you'll start with giving you them minute to work on it, then check in to see how they're progressing and if they need more time.
- h. Have the youth get started. Walk around to check in on all the groups as they work. If you see them developing a strategy, **give words of encouragement**. If the tower crashes, say something like: "That's okay. What can you do differently next time based on what happened?" If you see groups struggling, give them a hand or provide some advice that might help them.
- i. After a minute, stop the building. Comment on how they are working together well (or not). If they're not all done with their towers, have them negotiate for how much more time they need, then get them going again.
- j. When their time is up, **stop the game**, and ask the youth how this final version felt to them? **How was it different** from the other two?



- k. Say, *Obviously this was just a game. However, I wonder if we can learn some things about what motivates us to work hard from this activity. What might be some of the **differences in how you were motivated and felt supported** in these three different tower-building games?*
- l. As you're able, bring out these points, building on what youth say:
- *In the first round, there were no expectations and you had no support, guidance, or guidelines. For most people that's not very motivating or helpful.*
  - *In the second round, the challenge was **basically impossible, and again there was no support**. That often leads to people getting very frustrated and just giving up.*
  - *In the third round, there were some parameters and expectations, as well as time to plan and an invitation to take ownership of the design. I checked in with you and provided some hints or advice. There was still a challenge, but you had support and people to encourage you and it seemed doable, right?*

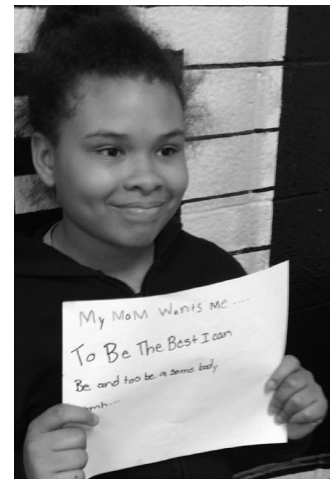
### 3. How Family Members Challenge Us to Grow and Support Us

10 minutes

- a. Say that strong relationships involve people challenging each other to work toward their own goals and to use their talents while also providing support that helps us accomplish those goals. That means pushing each other to do or be their best. When it works well, we call it the **Growth Zone**, which we'll discuss more when we rejoin the parenting adults. For now, know that some parts of challenging growth are:
- Expecting each other to be their best.
  - Stretching people to go further.
  - Holding each other accountable for our actions.
  - Helping each other learn from mistakes or setbacks.
- b. Some parts of providing support are:
- Guiding each other through hard situations and systems.
  - Building each other's confidence to take charge of our lives.
  - Advocating or standing up for each other when we need it.
  - Setting boundaries and putting limits in place that keep us on track.
- c. **Think**—Give each youth paper and markers. Have them think of **one way a parenting adult or extended family member has challenged them to grow that**

**motivated them to be their best.** (Encourage them to think of an example of something their parenting adult did, but if they have trouble thinking of an example they can consider another family member or, if needed, a teacher, coach, or other adult.) What did this person do? In what ways did they challenge you? In what ways did they support you? It can be a small thing or a big thing related to any part of their life, from school to sports to a hobby to household chores. Examples could include a parenting adult challenging them to be a role model for younger siblings and giving them some ideas on how to do it, a parenting adult pushing them to achieve a goal in sports and helping them practice, or a family member encouraging them to improve their grades and providing some extra help on their homework.

- d. **Pair**—Have them pair up and describe for each other how this person pushed them to grow and supported them, and then each use markers to write that person’s name on a sheet of paper (or they can draw a picture). Underneath it, write in a few words what this person does that challenges them to grow. (See example on right.)
- e. **Share**—Have youth take turns holding up their sign and sharing out to the group. Give youth the option to “pass” if they prefer not to share. If youth feel comfortable, take pictures of them holding their signs so you can send them to their parenting adults during or after the session.
- f. Collect all the signs to post on the wall when you go into the joint session with parenting adults. (If a young person does not want their sign to be posted, let them keep it to themselves.)



#### 4. Adding to the Family Pledge to Keep Connected

10 minutes

**NOTE:** You will need to **adjust this activity** to reflect the option you picked in the first workshop. If some families didn’t participate in the earlier workshops, you may need to help youth at least get started with the activity from the first workshop. They can add to it as you go.

Remind youth that through this workshop series, families are creating a “Family Pledge to Keep Connected.” It will focus on everyday things your families can do to keep connected in the coming years.

### Option #1: The Family Pledge Box

- a. **Give youth the box** they started during the first session. (If they don't have one, give them a blank box.)
- b. Have markers and other supplies for decorating the box available. Have a sample box available to show them what you mean.
- c. Explain that they will decorate two sides of the box to represent challenge growth and provide support:
  - *Start by writing CHALLENGE GROWTH on one side of the box and PROVIDE SUPPORT on another.*
  - *Then draw pictures or write words on each side that remind you of **what it means to challenge growth and what it means to provide support.***

Remind them that their parenting adults challenge them to grow and support them, and they may also challenge their parenting adult to grow and provide support to them. (For example, some kids really push their parenting adults to care for the environment or help them better use technology.)
- d. Have youth **share their “challenge growth” and “provide support”** sides with the other youth as a way to practice talking about how they understand challenging growth and providing support.



### Option #2: Family Relationships Pledge Collage

- a. **Give each young person the collage** they started the first session. If they didn't create one, give them a blank poster board or a large sheet of paper.
- b. Have markers, old magazines to clip pictures from, glue sticks, and scissors available. Make sure the magazines you provide are reflective of the participant group in terms of race/ethnicity and family structure.
- c. Remind them that at the **center of the poster**, they started with a collage about their family in the first session by showing their family in the center. During the second session, they added images that focus on expressing care. In the third session, they added ideas about sharing power.
- d. Now they are going to add images that focus on **what it means or looks like to challenge growth and to provide support.** (Encourage them to think of ways their parenting adults do these things, but also ways they challenge growth and provide support to their parenting adults. For example, some kids really push



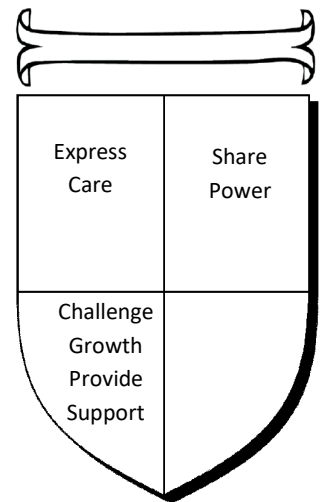
their parenting adults to care for the environment or support them to use technology better.) They can draw, write words, clip and paste magazine pictures, or other options you have available. Make sure the magazines you provide are reflective of the participant group in terms of race/ethnicity and family structure.

- e. Have youth **share their “challenge growth” design** with the other youth as a way to practice talking about how they understand challenging growth and providing support.

Option #3: Family Relationships Crest

- a. **Give youth the family crests** they started in the first session and added to in the second and third. If they weren’t there, give them the poster board they’ll need to create one. Have markers and other supplies available for decorating the crest.

- b. Have youth **decorate a third panel** in the crest to represent **what it means or looks like to challenge growth and to provide support**. (Encourage them to think of ways their parenting adults do these things, but also ways they challenge growth and provide support to their parenting adults. For example, some kids really push their parenting adults to care for the environment or support them to use technology better.) They can draw, write words, clip and paste magazine pictures, or other options you have available. Make sure the magazines you provide are reflective of the participant group in terms of race/ethnicity and family structure.



- c. Have youth **describe their “challenge growth/provide support” panel** to the other youth as a way to practice talking about how they understand challenging growth.

Option #4: Family T-Shirt Design

- a. Give youth the family shirt designs they started in the previous session. If they weren’t there, give them the poster board they’ll need to create one, letting them know they can catch up as the sessions continue. Have markers and other supplies to decorate the design.



- b. Have youth decorate one area on the front of the shirt to represent the ways they like to challenge growth and provide support in their family (see diagram). They can draw, write words, clip and paste magazine pictures, or other

options you have available. Make sure the magazines you provide are reflective of the participant group in terms of race/ethnicity and family structure.

- c. Have youth describe their “challenge growth” and “provide support” design to the other youth as a way to practice talking about how they like to do these things in their family.

**Optional Supplemental Activity: Blindfold Adventure**

*If you have extra time, add this supplemental activity.* In this challenge, participants guide a blindfolded partner from one point to another, learning and demonstrating the importance of giving and receiving help.

**5. Transition to the Family Session**

5 minutes

- a. Say that it is time to combine the session with the parenting adults. Explain the logistics of how you’ll move.
- b. Remind youth that they are going to be sharing their additions to the pledges with their families. Have youth take their projects with them to the joint family session.

## Optional Youth Energizers and Activities

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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*.

### Energizers

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#### **Santana! Santana!**

Watch this energizer from Right to Play Canada in action at: <https://youtu.be/R-EFVzi5JGA>

1. Have everyone stand in a circle.
2. As the leader, call out “Santana! Santana!” and jump in the air. All the participants also jump in the air with the same amount of energy as you did, replying, “Huso! Huso!”
3. Continue this call and response, adjusting how loud you shout (or whisper) and how high you jump, with the youth all matching what you do.
4. As a leader, you can yell out “Azim-zim!” instead. When you do, the youth respond, “Down, down, down” as they sway from side to side and get as low to the ground as they can.
5. Keep going as long as you like!

#### **If the Shoe Fits . . .**

1. Say: Let’s give our feet a break!
2. Stand in a circle. (If you have more than 8 youth, form groups of 4-5 youth in each.)
3. Have the youth take off their shoes, pile them in the middle of their circle and mix them up. Then have them form the circle again and hold hands.
4. On “go,” each group will use its feet only (while still holding hands) to slide the shoes clockwise around the circle until they get to their owners. *They can only use their feet, and they have to keep holding hands in their circle.*
5. When everyone on the team has their own shoes, they can drop hands and put their shoes on.
6. If multiple teams are playing, the first team with all their shoes on (and ties), is the winner.

*Options:* Make this game more challenging by:

- Allowing no talking.
- Requiring people to put their arms around each other’s shoulders instead of holding hands.

## Optional Youth Activity: Unfair Challenges

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A game with candy and toothpicks raises questions about fairness when it comes to being challenged to grow and thrive, and having the support needed to grow.

### Planning and Preparation

**Recommended Number of Participants:** 6 – 15 youth      **Time:** 10 minutes

#### Set-up

#### Materials

150 toothpicks

150 gumdrops

Set 3 tables far apart so the teams can't see each other's work.

### Facilitator Instructions

1. Form three equal groups of youth. Make lots of room since the teams will be working independently and should not be able to see what the other teams are doing.
2. Give each group 50 toothpicks and 50 gumdrops. To one group, whisper (so that the other groups cannot hear) that they can eat as many gumdrops as they wish in the course of building their structure, but must do so discreetly so the other groups don't notice that they aren't using all the gumdrops. Explain that they can stick as many toothpicks as they wish into each gumdrop in order to use all 50 toothpicks.
3. Stand at the front of the room and instruct the whole group to build a structure using the toothpicks and the gumdrops. Tell them the goal is to be the first group to finish, but they *must* use all of their toothpicks and gumdrops.
4. Have the groups begin. Once a group wins, stop the activity. Have the groups examine the winning structure. See how long it takes for the other teams to notice the team with different "rules."

### Reflect

- What was your reaction when you saw the difference in how the winning team built its structure?
- What are some different ways this team could have responded when it got a different set of instructions? How could those have changed anything about the situation?
- In what ways do you see this activity being a little like things that happen in school and everyday life? How do you respond to them?
- How do we deal with the unfair challenges that we sometimes have to deal with, whether we're on the "team" that gets it easy or the "team" that gets it hard? What are things we personally can do to make it fairer? What kind of support makes a difference for us?

## Optional Youth Activity Blindfold Adventure

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Participants guide a blindfolded partner from one point to another, learning and demonstrating the importance of giving and receiving help.

### Planning and Preparation

**Recommended Number of Participants:** Any number      **Time:** 15-30 minutes

**Materials:** Something to use as a blindfold for half the group (i.e. bandana, scarf, eye mask)      **Set-up:** An open space that doesn't have a lot of obstacles, clutter, or stairs.

### Facilitator Notes

- Some participants may be uncomfortable being blindfolded or closing their eyes. Those who are uncomfortable should be given the role of giving directions.
- For an added challenge, tape out a few specific routes around the room that participants need to follow. Rather than simply navigating around obstacles, guides will have to help their partners follow the specific route.

**Alternate activities to blindfold:** If you are worried that using blindfolds would not work well with your group, consider these similar activities:

- Pairs have a barrier between them (could be a folder) so that they can't see the desk/table in front of their partner. One person has a picture, and has to describe to the other how to draw it, without telling them what it is (only using directions about shapes and lines, etc.).
- Pairs have a barrier between them. Each partner has an identical set of blocks or Legos. One person builds something and then has to describe to the other how to replicate it.

### Facilitator Instructions

1. If participants have been introduced to the Developmental Relationships Framework, let them know that this activity is focused on the element of **Provide Support**.
2. Ask participants to pair up with a partner. One partner should put on a blindfold. If there are participants who are not comfortable being blindfolded, they should partner with participants who are comfortable. As an alternative to being blindfolded, participants can close their eyes.

3. Take a few minutes before starting the activity to demonstrate giving directions that will help a blindfolded person walk through the room (for example, “take three big steps forward, then turn to your left”).
4. Then have the person without the blindfold guide the other person around the space (safely!) without the blindfolded person being able to see. After 2-3 minutes (or when they’ve reached a chosen destination), switch roles and repeat.
5. Reflect—Discuss these questions as a large group:
  - What was it like to be blindfolded? What was it like to be the guide?
  - What did the guide do that made it easier for you to find your way around? What did they do that made it harder?
  - What did the follower do that made it easier or harder to guide them?
  - What did you learn about yourself by doing the activity? What did you learn about your partner?
  - How did this activity help you better understand the importance of giving and receiving guidance?
  - What is one thing you do in real life with friends to provide guidance or support?
  - Think of a time in the past when someone has helped you. What did they say or do that felt supportive and helpful?

## Family Session

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### 1. Family Reconnecting

5 minutes

- a. Have **youth and parenting adults sit together**.
- b. As they are getting settled, **post the signs** from the youth activity “How Family Members Challenge Us to Grow and Support Us” on the wall where people can see them. (Make sure to get permission from the youth before posting their signs.)
- c. Explain that parenting adults and youth have been talking separately about how we challenge growth and provide support.
  - In their session, the parenting adults talked about **areas where it’s hard and easy** to challenge kids to grow and provide support, and about finding the balance between challenging and supporting.
  - In their session, the youth used a tower-building exercise to explore how **challenge and support can motivate them**. They also talked about **ways parenting adults and other family members, challenge them to grow and support them**. (Read some of the signs on the wall from the “How Family Members Challenge Us to Grow and Support Us” youth activity.)
  - Remind participants that these examples are ways young people appreciated others challenging and supporting them. Encourage families to continue using these strategies to challenge and support their young people. If the example came from a different family member or adult, encourage parenting adults and youth to discuss whether or not this method of support would be something they would want the parenting adults to try, too.
- d. *Now that we’re all together, we’re going to focus on how we challenge each other to grow through our relationships. We’ll explore what we’ll call the Growth Zone, and then focus on ways we want to challenge each other to grow moving forward. This will include adding another strategy to our Family Pledge to Keep Connected.*

### 2. Exploring the Growth Zone

15 minutes

- a. Distribute Family Handout 4.2, “Understanding the ‘Growth Zone.’” Explain each of the three columns. Use an analogy of strength training for a sport or basic fitness to make the following points. (If you have athletes in the session, you can “interview” them about the process.)



- Too easy: If you don't make any effort when working out, you won't see any results. You'll likely get bored and stop doing anything.
- Too hard: On the other hand, if you try to lift far too much weight, you won't be able to move it at all. So you won't see any progress either, and you'll get frustrated.
- Just right: The best workouts happen when you're pushing hard—often with a coach who also pushes beyond where you're comfortable but not so hard that you give up. The coach often also teaches you new skills and provides guidance.
- Emphasize that the growth comes when the person trying to build strength is self-motivated (they have the goal) AND they have someone pushing them beyond what's comfortable. If you're working on something that's not a goal to you, you're unlikely to push hard or stay motivated for very long.
- This "Growth Zone" doesn't just happen with physical fitness. It's also true for learning new things and working toward goals. The key to a strong relationship is to push each other (and ourselves) just hard enough to stretch without pushing so hard that the other person just gives up in frustration.

### Alternate Process

If you have time, consider posting each of the three "zones" on a separate flip chart. Write the three questions at the bottom around the margins. Have families rotate among the different sheets, adding their ideas to each one.

- Have family members think of other examples until most people have a clear idea of what is meant by the "growth zone."
- Have families each work together to answer the questions at the bottom of the sheet. They can draw from ideas that they discussed in the parenting adult and youth sessions earlier.

### 3. Challenging Growth and Providing Support Around a "Hard Thing"

10 minutes

- Have **participants get together with their own family.**
- Explain that each person has some area of life that they are working on that is hard for them. It takes **effort, commitment, and practice.** For some, it might be schoolwork or a new assignment at work. For others, it might be a health issue. We need each other to keep challenging us to grow in these areas that are important to us.
- Say: *One way to we can ask others to challenge us to grow is to **pick one "hard thing" as a focus**—something you really want to do, but you need others to help*

you grow in the “Growth Zone.” It might be you’ve talked about during this session, or it might be something else.

- d. Give each family member a **wide rubber band** (wide enough to write on at least with small letters) and a thin permanent marker that can write on a rubber band (such as a Sharpie).

Explain that rubber bands are a good symbol of the “Growth Zone.” They have to be stretched to be useful. Rubber bands only do their job of holding things together when they’re stretched—but not so far that they break.

That’s similar to what it means to challenge growth. By stretching each other beyond what’s easiest and most comfortable, we stimulate each other to learn and grow. If we try to stretch too far, we probably won’t break like a rubber band, but we *will* likely get stressed, and we won’t be motivated to grow.

- e. Have each person write a **word or two that describes their “hard thing”** on the rubber band. Encourage them to describe what they wrote to the other family member(s), either a parenting adult or a youth.
- f. Then have them **pass their rubber band to another family member**. On the back, this person should write on the other side in 2-3 words **what they are willing to do** to support and encourage their parenting adult or youth to grow in the Growth Zone. They can then describe what they would do. If needed, the family can talk through other ideas to be sure that the ways they are challenging growth will be valued and helpful.
- g. Have family members **keep their own rubber band as a reminder** of the people who challenge them to work on their “hard thing”. (They might wear them as bracelets.) Ask them to decide how they’ll regularly check in as a family to see how each person’s hard thing is going and, when necessary, provide encouragement and assistance.

#### 4. Pledge to Challenge Growth and Provide Support

5 minutes

- a. Have youth get their Family Pledge to Keep Connected project. Explain that youth spent time thinking about **what it means to challenge growth and provide support**. Ask youth to share what they wrote or added to their project with their parenting adult.
- b. Give each family **2-3 more rubber bands** and a marker that will write on the rubber bands.



- c. Have each family **brainstorm two or three things** they learned during today’s session that they would like to **do together as a family** to challenge each other to learn and grow and support each other. Write each of these on a separate rubber band.
- d. Have families attach these rubber bands to the collage, t-shirt, or crest, or put them in the pledge box (depending on the option you chose for the pledge).
- e. Invite a few families to share with the whole group the **ways they plan to “stretch”** themselves to challenge growth in new ways in the coming weeks and the ways they will support each other in doing this.

**OPTIONAL:** Give family members each an object or trinket that will remind them of the importance of challenging growth and providing support. These kinds of objects are available at dollar stores. They can also write messages to themselves on them. If you’re creating a pledge box, these can be kept inside the pledge box, and then pulled out as reminders.

Examples would include:

Challenge growth:

- g. A rubber band (to stretch)
- h. A Rubik’s Cube (challenge)
- i. An eraser (learning from mistakes or failures)

Provide support:

- A toy compass (for help with navigating)
- A coach’s whistle (a reminder of people who provide support)

## 5. Take the Conversation Home

5 minutes

- a. Give each person (youth and parenting adult) a copy of the **“At-Home Activities” handout** (Family Handout 4.3).
- b. Say that you hope these workshops will just be the first step. Families can learn and grow at home together. These at-home activities give you a chance to build on what you learned today to figure out what will work for your family.



These activities introduce two other key ideas in “challenging growth”: Giving feedback and learning from mistakes and failures. Both are important skills to develop to challenge each other to grow. They also invite you to think about the supports you have outside of your household.

- c. Briefly **describe each option** for at-home activities from this session:

- **POST IT:** Handout 4.3b summarizes the key themes from this session and offers discussion starters and tips for challenging growth. It also reminds you that there are more resources on [www.KeepConnected.info](http://www.KeepConnected.info).
  - **LEARN ABOUT IT:** Handout 4.3c introduced four steps to positive feedback to help challenge growth in other people, including kids and parenting adult. Talk about it as a family, then identify some areas where you can learn to give better feedback to each other.
  - **TRY IT:** Family Handout 4.5d focuses on how we view setbacks and failures. Through a simple checklist, family members focus on how to shift from seeing failures as fatal to seeing failures and setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow.
  - **TRY IT:** Family Handout 4.5e focuses on identifying the people outside of your household who can provide support to your family.
- d. Have families turn back to the first page of the “At-Home Activities” handout (4.3a). Have **families pick one thing** they want to do between now and the next workshop. Have them checkmark their choices and write down when they plan to do the activities.
- e. If there’s time, invite them to **share their plan** with one other family.

**EXTRA IDEA:** Encourage parenting adults to take a picture with a smartphone when they do their activity together to share when they come to the next session.

## 6. Wrap Up

5 minutes

- a. **Thank participants** for coming to the workshop. Encourage them to try the activities they identified to complete in the next few days.
- b. Remind them of the next session, which will focus on two keys to parenting adult-youth relationships: “Provide Support” and “Expand Possibilities.”
- c. Discuss your plan for the graduation celebration following the six workshops. If families may invite other supporters to the celebration, talk with them about that.

## 2. Follow-Up to the Session

- a. Send the picture of each young person from “How Family Members Challenge Us to Grow and Support Us” to their parenting adult if you have permission from

the young person). Comment on ways the child is contributing to the youth sessions, and thank parenting adults for their participation.

- b. Keep all the Family Pledge collages, boxes, or crests so that they are available for the upcoming workshops.
- c. Gather the flipcharts and other materials for future sessions.
- 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)

This section continues from the parenting adult-only session if you're not having a joint family session (with youth and parenting adults together). Most of the activities parallel the family session, but they assume only parenting adults are participating.

### 1. Exploring the Growth Zone

15 minutes

- a. Distribute Family Handout 4.2, "Understanding the Growth Zone." Explain each of the three columns. Use an analogy of strength training for a sport or basic fitness to make the following points. (If you have athletes in the session, they can help you by "interviewing" them about the process.)



- Too easy: If you don't make any effort when working out, you won't see any results. You'll likely get bored and stop doing anything.
- Too hard: On the other hand, if you try to lift far too much weight, you won't be able to move it at all. So you won't see any progress either, and you'll get frustrated.
- Just right: The best workouts happen when you're pushing hard—often with a coach who also pushes beyond where you're comfortable but not so hard that you give up. The coach often also teaches you new skills and provides guidance.
- Emphasize that the growth comes when the person trying to build strength is self-motivated (they have the goal) AND they have someone pushing them beyond what's comfortable. If you're working on something that's not a goal to you, you're unlikely to push hard or stay motivated for very long.
- This "Growth Zone" doesn't just happen with physical fitness. It's also true for learning new things and working toward goals. The key to a strong relationship is to push each other (and ourselves) just hard enough to stretch without pushing so hard that the other person just gives up in frustration.

#### Alternate Process

If you have time, consider posting each of the three "zones" on a separate flip chart. Write the three questions at the bottom around the margins. Have families rotate among the different sheets, adding their ideas to each one.

- b. Have parenting adults think of other examples until most people have a clear idea of what is meant by the "growth zone."

- c. Have parenting adults work in pairs or trios to answer the questions at the bottom of the sheet. They can draw in ideas that they discussed earlier in the session.

## 2. Challenging Growth and Providing Support Around a “Hard Thing”

10 minutes

- a. Explain that each person has some area of life that they are working on that is hard for them. It takes **effort, commitment, and practice**. For some, it might be schoolwork or a new assignment at work. For others, it might be a health issue. We need each other to keep challenging us to grow in these areas that are important to us.
- b. Say: *One way to we can ask others to challenge us to grow is to **pick one “hard thing” as a focus**—something you really want to do, but you need others to help you grow in the Growth Zone.*
- c. Give each parenting adult a **wide rubber band** (wide enough to write on at least with small letters) and a thin permanent marker that can write on a rubber band (such as a fine-tip Sharpie).

Explain that rubber bands are a good symbol of the “Growth Zone.” They have to be stretched to be useful. Rubber bands only do their job of holding things together when they’re stretched—but not so far that they break.

That’s similar to what it means to challenge growth. By stretching each other beyond what’s easiest and most comfortable, we stimulate each other to learn and grow. If we try to stretch too far, we probably won’t break like a rubber band, but we *will* likely get stressed, and we won’t be motivated to grow.

- d. Have each person write a **word or two that describes their “hard thing”** on the rubber band. If they’d like, invite them to pair up with another parenting adult to describe what they wrote. However, if they’re more comfortable, they can reflect on their work alone.
- e. Then ask the parenting adults to reflect on ways they would **like other family members to challenge them** to grow and ways their family members can support them in the Growth Zone.
- f. Next, have each parenting adult think of an area **where their youth would like to grow**—a place where they could use some challenge. Have them write it on the other rubber band.



- g. Then have them think about all the strategies you've discussed during this session. Have them write **1-2 strategies on the rubber band** as reminders of how they'd like to challenge their child to grow and 1-2 strategies as reminders of ways they can support their youth.
- h. Have parenting adults **keep the rubber bands as reminders**. Encourage them to talk with their child about the challenge area they discussed. Also talk with the child about the area where they as a parenting adult could use some challenge in order to grow.

### 3. Pledge to Challenge Growth

10 minutes

**NOTE:** You will need to **adjust this activity** to reflect the option you picked in the first workshop. If some parenting adults didn't participate in the earlier workshops, you may need to have parenting adults at least get started with the activity from the first workshop. They can add to it as you go.

Remind parenting adults that through this workshop series, they are creating a "Family Pledge to Keep Connected." It will focus on everyday things your families can do to keep connected in the coming years.

#### Option #1: The Family Pledge Box

- a. **Give parenting adults the box** they started during the first session. If they don't have one, give them a blank box.
- b. Have markers and other supplies for decorating the box available. Have a sample box available to show them what you mean.
- c. Have them focus on two new sides of the box, which they will decorate to represent challenge growth and provide support.
  - Have them start by writing CHALLENGE GROWTH on this side of the box and PROVIDE SUPPORT on another.
  - Have them draw pictures or write words on that side that remind them of **ways they already challenge growth and provide support** for each other in their families.



Remind them that they challenge their kids to grow, and their kids also challenge them to grow. (For example, some kids really push their parenting adult to care for the environment or to better use technology.) They also provide support to one another.

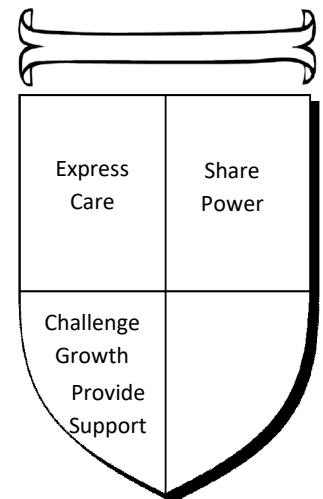
- d. Have parenting adults **share their “challenge growth” and “provide support”** sides with one other parenting adult.

Option #2: Family Relationships Pledge Collage



- a. **Give each parenting adults the collage poster** they started the first session. If they didn’t create one, give them a blank poster board or a large sheet of paper.
- b. Have markers, old magazines to clip pictures from, glue sticks, and scissors available.
- c. Remind them that at the **center of the poster**, they started with a collage about their family. During the second session, they added images that focus on how they express care. In the third session, they added how they share power.
- d. Now they are going to add images that focus on **how they challenge growth and provide support**. Encourage them to think of ways they challenge and support their kids—and how their kids challenge and support them. For example, some kids really push parenting adults to care for the environment or support them in using technology. Parenting adults can draw, write words, clip and paste magazine pictures, or other options you have available.
- e. Have parenting adults **share their “challenge growth” and “provide support” collage** with the other parenting adults.

Option #3: Family Relationships Crest



- a. **Give parenting adults the family crest** they started in the first session and added to in the second and third. If they weren’t there, give them the poster board they’ll need to create one. Have markers and other supplies to decorate the crest.
- b. Have parenting adults **decorate a third panel** in the crest to represent the ways they challenge growth and provide support in their family (see diagram). Encourage them to think of ways they challenge and support their kids—and how their kids challenge and support them. For example, some kids really push parenting adults to care for the environment or support them in using technology. They can draw, write words, clip and paste magazine pictures, or other options you have available.
- c. Have parenting adults **describe their “challenge growth” and “provide support” panel** to the other parenting adults.

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

- d. Give parenting adults the family shirt designs they started in the previous session. If they weren't there, give them the poster board they'll need to create one, letting them know they can catch up as the sessions continue. Have markers and other supplies to decorate the design.
- e. Have them decorate one area on the front of the shirt to represent the ways they like to challenge growth and provide support in their family (see diagram). They can draw, write words, clip and paste magazine pictures, or other options you have available.
- f. Have parenting adults describe their "challenge growth" and "provide support" design to the others as a way to practice talking about how they like to do these things in their family.



Give each parenting adult **2-3 more rubber bands** and a marker that will write on the rubber bands.



- d. Have them each **brainstorm two or three things** they learned during today's session that they would like to **do together with their family** to challenge each other to learn and grow. Write each of these on a separate rubber band.
- e. Have parenting adults attach these rubber bands to the collage, t-shirt, or crest, or put them in the pledge box (depending on the option you chose for the pledge).
- f. Invite a few parenting adults to share with the whole group the **ways they plan to "stretch"** themselves to challenge growth and the support they will need in new ways in the coming weeks.

**OPTIONAL:** Give parenting adults each an object or trinket that will remind them of the importance of challenging growth. These kinds of objects are available at dollar stores. They can also write messages to themselves on them. If you're creating a pledge box, these can be kept inside the pledge box, and then pulled out as reminders.

Examples would include:

Challenge growth:

- a. A rubber band (to stretch)
- b. A Rubik's Cube (challenge)
- c. An eraser (learning from mistakes or failures)

Provide support:

- A toy compass (for help with navigating)
- A coach's whistle (a reminder of people who provide support)

5 minutes



#### 4. Take the Conversation Home

- f. Give each parenting adult a copy of the “**At-Home Activities**” handout (Family Handout 4.3).
- g. Say that you hope these workshops will just be the first step. Families can learn and grow at home together. These at-home activities give you a chance to build on what you learned today to figure out what will work for your family.

These activities introduce two other key ideas in “challenging growth”: Giving feedback and learning from mistakes and failures. Both are important skills to develop to challenge each other to grow.

- h. Briefly **describe each option** for at-home activities from this session:
  - **POST IT:** *Handout 4.3b summarizes the key themes from this session and offers discussion starters and tips for challenging growth. It also reminds you that there are more resources on [www.KeepConnected.info](http://www.KeepConnected.info).*
  - **LEARN ABOUT IT:** *Handout 4.3c introduced four steps to positive feedback to help challenge growth in other people, including kids and parenting adults. Talk about it as a family, then identify some areas where you can learn to give better feedback to each other.*
  - **TRY IT:** *Family Handout 4.5d focuses on how we view setbacks and failures. Through a simple checklist, family members focus on how to shift from seeing failures as fatal to seeing failures and setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow.*
  - **TRY IT:** *Family Handout 4.3e provides an opportunity to think about the people outside of your household who can provide support to your family.*
- i. Have parenting adults turn back to the first page of the “At-Home Activities” handout (4.3a). Have **them pick one thing** they want to do between now and the next workshop with their family. Have them checkmark their choices and write down when they plan to do the activities.
- j. If there’s time, invite them to **share their plan** with one other family.

**EXTRA IDEA:** Encourage parenting adults to take a picture with a smartphone when they do their activity together to share when they come to the next session.

## 5. Wrap Up

5 minutes

- a. **Thank participants** for coming to the workshop. Encourage them to try the activities they identified to complete in the next few days.
- b. Remind them of the next session, which will focus on the final key to parenting adult-youth relationships: “Expand Possibilities.”
- c. 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).
- d. Discuss the plan for the graduation celebration following the six workshops. If families may invite other supporters to the celebration, talk with them about that.
- 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>