



Celebrating Your Family’s Journey Together: The Graduation

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Overview and Learning Objectives | 2 |
| Graduation at a Glance | 3 |
| Preparation, Materials, and Supplies | 4 |
| Facilitators Planning Worksheets | 5 |
| Family Graduation Celebration | 7 |
| Parenting Adult Graduation Celebration (if youth have not participated) | 12 |

| | |
|---|--|
| Parenting Adult and Youth Surveys | Online (facilitator registration required) |
| Editable Template for Graduation Celebration Program | Word document online |
| Editable Template for Certificate of Completion | PowerPoint template online |

Overview

Families participate in a graduation celebration in which they receive certificates of completion and share in a pledge to keep connected.

NOTE: You may choose to encourage families to invite their other family members and key supporters to join them for this final graduation celebration. In addition, you may invite a respected school or community leader to participate in the celebration as a way to recognize families.

Learning Objectives

Through this graduation celebration, participants will . . .

- Affirm their commitment to keep connected.
- Be encouraged to follow through on their commitments.
- Reinforce the connections and commitments they made to each other.

Graduation at a Glance

Celebrating Your Family's Journey Together

Total Time: 40-50 minutes (Time will vary, depending on the number of families as well as enhancements made.)

| Graduation Ceremony - Youth and Parenting Adults | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| Sign-in and Nametags | | 15 min prior to start |
| 1 | Feedback on the Workshop Series | 15 min |
| 2 | Welcome and Opening Remarks | 5 min |
| 3 | Youth "Graduation Speech" | 10 min |
| 4 | Our Families' Pledges to Each Other | 10 min |
| 5 | Presentation of Certificates | 5 min |
| 6 | Closing Remarks | 5 min |

| Graduation Ceremony - Parenting Adults Only | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| Sign-in and Nametags | | 15 min prior to start |
| 1 | Feedback on the Workshop Series | 15 min |
| 2 | Welcome and Opening Remarks | 5 min |
| 3 | Our Families' Pledges to Each Other | 10 min |
| 4 | Presentation of Certificates | 5 min |
| 5 | Closing Remarks | 5 min |

Preparation, Materials, and Supplies

| Preparation | Materials and Supplies |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Invite other people (e.g., other family members, “officials,” etc.) you want to participate in the celebration <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare to collect feedback from participants through feedback surveys. * <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare your remarks for the graduation celebration. Adapt the talking points to your own program and families. <input type="checkbox"/> Create the program for the graduation celebration, using the Program Template for Graduation Celebration <input type="checkbox"/> Create certificates of completion for participants, using the provided template <input type="checkbox"/> Bring the needed materials from the final workshop session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Family Pledge to Keep Connected projects ✓ The flip chart of the youth graduation “speech” ✓ Other posters, photos, or materials that remind people of the experiences they had together. <input type="checkbox"/> Set up a celebratory space for the event. Include artifacts from the sessions, including the Family Pledges to Keep Connected. <input type="checkbox"/> Add music and festive decorations, if desired. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Surveys for each participant (either paper copies or log-in information) <input type="checkbox"/> Nametags for everyone <input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Customized programs for the celebration <input type="checkbox"/> Completed certificated of completion for each family <input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Take-away gifts for families <input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Mortar boards (graduation hats) for all participants |

* Search Institute has prepared surveys you can use. Participants can complete it online, or you can download it for them to complete on paper. You can then enter the responses, and Search Institute will generate a report on your participants (at no cost to you). You need to sign up in advance to get a unique code for your participants.

Go here to complete the process:

www.KeepConnected.info/feedback-and-evaluation-resources/

Facilitator Planning Worksheets

| Activity | Facilitator Notes | Materials | Time Needed/ Est. Start Time |
|---|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Family Graduation Celebration | | | |
| <p>Sign-in and Nametags</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Finalize logistics</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Maintain a relaxed, conversational approach</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Nametags <input type="checkbox"/> Graduation program (customized) | 15 min before start |
| <p>1 Feedback on the Workshop Series</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Collect feedback on participants' experience for continuous improvement and to assess value of the experience</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Online or paper survey</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Paper or online surveys for youth and parenting adults <input type="checkbox"/> Pens and pencils if using paper surveys | 15 min |
| <p>2 Welcome and Opening Remarks</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Set the stage and tone for the celebration</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Presentation</p> | | | 5 min |
| <p>3 Youth "Graduation Speech"</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Youth express appreciation for their family relationships</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Youth present their "speech" from session 6</p> | | | 10 min |
| <p>4 Our Families' Pledges to Each Other</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Reinforce the commitments families made by sharing them publicly</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Families present their "Pledge to Keep Connected" to the group</p> | | | 10 min |
| <p>5 Presentation of Certificates</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Affirm and reinforce families' participation in <i>Keep Connected</i></p> <p><u>Method:</u> Distribute certificates</p> | | Prepared graduation certificates | 5 min |
| <p>6 Closing Remarks</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Bring the workshop series and graduation to a close</p> <p><u>Method:</u> Brief remarks</p> | | Send-off gifts (optional) | 5 min |

| Activity | Facilitator Notes | Materials | Time Needed/ Est. Start Time |
|--|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Parenting Adult Graduation Celebration | | | |
| Sign-in and Nametags <u>Purpose:</u> Finalize logistics <u>Method:</u> Maintain a relaxed, conversational approach | | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign-in sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Nametags <input type="checkbox"/> Graduation program (customized) | 15 min before start |
| 1 Feedback on the Workshop Series <u>Purpose:</u> Collect feedback on participants' experience for continuous improvement and to assess value of the experience <u>Method:</u> Online or paper survey | | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper or online surveys for parenting adults <input type="checkbox"/> Pens and pencils if using paper surveys | 15 min |
| 2 Welcome and Opening Remarks <u>Purpose:</u> Set the stage and tone for the celebration <u>Method:</u> Presentation | | | 5 min |
| 3 Our Families' Pledges to Each Other <u>Purpose:</u> Reinforce the commitments families made by sharing them publicly <u>Method:</u> Families present their "Pledge to Keep Connected" to the group | | | 10 min |
| 4 Presentation of Certificates <u>Purpose:</u> Affirm and reinforce families' participation in <i>Keep Connected</i> <u>Method:</u> Distribute certificates | | Prepared graduation certificates | 5 min |

Follow Up to the Session

- Complete the online feedback form about the session. Receive a \$5 gift card:
<https://tinyurl.com/SIKeepConnectedFeedback>
- If parenting adult participants completed paper feedback surveys, enter their data to generate a report. Otherwise, notify Search Institute that you have completed the data collection to receive your report.
- Keep the Keep Connected materials together to reuse the next time you lead the course.
- Send a text message or an email in a few days to participants, thanking them for participating and letting them know about other opportunities to stay connected.

Family Graduation Celebration

NOTE: Families are together for this whole session. There are not separate parenting adult and youth activities.

Sign In and Nametags

Start 15 minutes before the ceremony begins

- a. **Display the families' pledge projects** in a central location.
- b. As people arrive, **greet them individually**. Thank them for coming. If families who participated in the workshops have brought guests or other family members for the graduation celebration, be sure to greet them as well. Comment on ways the parenting adults and youth contributed to the workshop experience.
- c. Confirm with youth that they are ready to read aloud their shared "graduation speech."
- d. Have each participant **sign in on the prepared sign-in sheet**. Ask each person in the family to sign in separately.
- e. Have everyone **wear nametags** with their first name.
- f. Distribute to all participants the customized version of the Graduation Celebration Program (based on the provided template).



1. Feedback on the Workshop Series

15 minutes

- a. As participants are gathering, ask them to complete the feedback survey, which will take about 10 minutes. Depending on how you have set it up, they may complete it on paper or on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Emphasize that the survey is designed to give you feedback to improve future workshops. It is not a test of what they have learned or of their family.
- b. If you use the paper survey . . .
 - Be sure everyone has a **pen or pencil**. They should not put their name on the survey, and their responses should remain anonymous.
 - When all the surveys are completed, collect them in an envelope. Don't look at them when they are turned in. It is helpful to leave the envelope on a table and let participants put their survey into the envelope themselves – this ensures anonymity and encourages people to respond honestly.
- c. Ask people to **work in silence** as they complete the survey. If they have questions, **answer them briefly**. Avoid telling them how they should respond.

They do not have to complete a survey if they do not want to, and they can skip questions if they want.

- d. **Thank youth and parenting adults for completing the surveys.**

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

5 minutes

Adapt the following talking points to your own program and families.

- a. Introduce yourself. Welcome everyone to the *Keep Connected* graduation celebration.
- b. Thank families for their ongoing participation, knowing how busy life can be. Affirm their commitment to each other and to their families. Thank the other people who have come for their support and encouragement.
- c. This celebration marks a milestone in families' commitment to keep connected as a family through the young person's teen years.
- d. In the *Keep Connected* workshop series, all of your families committed to set aside time to focus on your relationships with each other. You became a community for each other.
- e. This has been a significant commitment, and I hope you'll agree it's a big step forward as our kids go through middle school and high school.
- f. Our hope is that it is only one of many steps you take. Our hope is that you will continue to make your relationships a priority, even in the midst of all the challenges that will come up. After all, our relationships are often what pull us through those tough times.
- g. It is appropriate that we celebrate with a graduation ceremony. You didn't just sit through classes. You actively participated. You taught each other. We really did learn and grow together.
- h. Highlight particular gifts/attitudes that different group members (adults and youth) have brought to the workshop series.

3. Youth's "Graduation Speech"

10 minutes

- a. Say that one activity youth did in the last workshop session was to think about the future and imagine that they are now ready to graduate from high school. They created a shared graduation speech to **thank their families** for keeping connected through middle school and high school.

- b. Invite youth to come to the front of the room and **read aloud the shared “graduation speech”** they prepared.
- c. Give time for cheers and affirmation from the parents. Reinforce that these statements reflect the young people’s hopes for how their family will keep connected through middle school and high school.

4. Our Families’ Pledges to Each Other

10 min

- a. Say that the graduation speech represented hopes for the future. At the final workshop, **families made commitments together** to stay focused on their relationships so that these wishes for the future will come true.
- b. Invite families each to stand together and read their commitment to keep connected to the whole group. Encourage the youth to hold up the Keep Connected Pledge art project as a reminder of all the ideas they explored across the workshop series. (If some would prefer not to share, don’t push them.)
- c. Encourage all participants to clap or cheer for each family.
- d. When all families have shared who wish to share, ask everyone to read together the pledge to keep connected that is printed on the graduation ceremony program.



5. Presentation of Certificates

5 minutes

- a. Invite each family to come forward together. Give people each their certificate (prepared in advance).
- b. Congratulate each family. Thank them for their participation.

6. Closing Remarks

5 minutes

- a. If you have a **take-away gift** for families, share it here.
- b. As we’ve been through these six workshops together, **we’ve learned a lot about each other**. We’ve had fun and challenging conversations.
- c. Through it all, I hope we **now see each other as friends, supporters, and resources** to help our families stay strong and keep connected in the years that come.
- d. My hope for you is that when these young people graduate from high school, **your relationships will be different**. We all learn and grow. But I hope that your

relationships are strong, preparing your family for the next phase of life when these young people become young adults.

- e. I'm excited to see how we all **learn and grow in the years ahead**. I hope that we can keep connected with each other so that we can celebrate your family's milestones and successes along the way.
- f. Thank everyone one final time.

Follow Up to the Session

- If you had participants complete paper surveys, enter the survey data into the online platform to generate your report. If they entered their responses online, notify Search Institute when all the responses are in so you can receive your report. More information is at (log-in required):
www.KeepConnected.info/feedback-and-evaluation-resources/
- Within a day or two of the graduation celebration, 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>

Parenting Adult Graduation Celebration (if youth have not participated)

Sign In and Nametags

Start 15 minutes before the session begins

- a. **Display the parenting adults' pledge projects** in a central location.
- b. As people arrive, **greet them individually**. Thank them for coming. If parenting adults who participated in the workshops have brought family members or other guests for the graduation celebration, be sure to greet them as well. Comment on ways the parenting adults contributed to the workshop experience.
- c. Have each participant **sign in on the prepared sign-in sheet**. Ask each person in the family to sign in separately.
- d. Have everyone **wear nametags** with their first name.
- e. Distribute to all participants the customized version of the Graduation Celebration Program (based on the provided template).



1. Feedback on the Workshop Series

15 minutes

- a. As participants are gathering, ask them to complete the feedback survey, which will take about 10 minutes. Depending on how you have set it up, they may complete it on paper or on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Emphasize that the survey is designed to give you feedback to improve future workshops. It is not a test of what they have learned or of their family.
- b. If you use the paper survey . . .
 - Be sure everyone has a **pen or pencil**. They should not put their name on the survey, and their responses should remain anonymous.
 - When all the surveys are completed, collect them in an envelope. Don't look at them when they are turned in.
- c. Ask people to **work in silence** as they complete the survey. If they have questions, **answer them briefly**. Avoid telling them how they should respond. **They do not have to complete a survey if they do not want to.**
- d. **Thank parenting adults for completing the surveys.**

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

5 minutes

Adapt the following talking points to your own program and families.

- a. Introduce yourself. Welcome everyone to the *Keep Connected* graduation celebration.
- b. Thank parenting adults for their ongoing participation, knowing how busy life can be. Affirm their commitment to each other and to their families. Thank the other people who have come for their support and encouragement.
- c. This celebration marks a milestone in parents' commitment to keep connected as a family through the young person's teen years.
- d. In the *Keep Connected* workshop series, parenting adults all committed to set aside time to focus on relationships with each other in your families. You became a community for each other.
- e. This has been a significant commitment, and I hope you'll agree it's a big step forward as kids go through middle school and high school.
- f. Our hope is that it is only one of many steps you take. Our hope is that you will continue to make your relationships a priority, even in the midst of all the challenges that will come up. After all, our relationships are often what pull us through those tough times.
- g. It is appropriate that we celebrate with a graduation celebration. You didn't just sit through classes. You actively participated. You taught each other. We really did learn and grow together.
- h. Highlight particular gifts/attitudes that different group members have brought to the workshop series.

3. Our Families' Pledges to Each Other

10 minutes

- a. Say that the graduation speech represented hopes for the future. At the final session, **parenting adults made commitments** to stay focused on their family relationships so their kids can thrive through middle school and high school.
- b. Invite parenting adults each to stand and read their commitment to keep connected to the whole group. Encourage them to hold up the Keep Connected Pledge art project as a reminder of all the ideas they explored across the workshop series. (If some would prefer not to share, don't push them.)
- c. Encourage all participants to clap or cheer for each parent.

- d. When all parenting adults have shared who wish to share, ask everyone to read together the pledge to keep connected that is printed on the graduation ceremony program.

4. Presentation of Certificates

5 minutes

- a. Invite each parenting adult to come forward together. Give people each their certificate (prepared in advance).

NOTE: If they have family members with them, encourage them to come forward as well.



- b. Congratulate each family. Thank them for their participation.

5. Closing Remarks

5 minutes

- a. If you have a **take-away gift** for parenting adults, share it here.
- b. As we've been through these six workshops together, **we've learned a lot about each other**. We've had fun and challenging conversations.
- c. Through it all, I hope we now **see each other as friends, supporters, and resources** to help our families stay strong and keep connected in the years that come.
- d. My hope for you is that when these young people graduate from high school, **your relationships will be different**. We all learn and grow. But I hope that your relationships are strong, preparing your family for the next phase of life when these young people become young adults.
- e. I'm excited to see how we all **learn and grow in the years ahead**. I hope that we can keep connected with each other so that we can celebrate your family's milestones and successes along the way.

6. Thank everyone one final time.

7. Follow Up to the Session

- a. If you had participants complete paper surveys, enter the survey data into the online platform to generate your report. If they entered their responses online, notify Search Institute when all the responses are in so you can receive your report. More information is at (registration required):
www.KeepConnected.info/feedback-and-evaluation-resources/

- b. Within a day or two of the graduation celebration, 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>