



# Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior

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## I. Introduction: Project Slide 2. See page 210.



### A. Introduce session's topic: Project Slide 3.

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1. Managing Conflict in the Home
    - a. Recognize situations that create conflict.
    - b. Identify strategies to reduce parent/child conflict.

**Unit 11:**

# Managing Conflict in the Home

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**SESSION OBJECTIVES:**

Parents will be able to:

- Recognize some of the potential causes of parent/child conflict
- List strategies for reducing conflict in the home
- Practice the support group process



## B. Activity: Before We Begin Unit 11. See page 211. Project Slide 4

1. Complete activity
2. Ensure that every member has been assigned a group role.

**Unit 11:****Before We Begin** 

Take a minute to elect every support group member to one of the group roles.

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Session Roles:

Group Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Time Keeper: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Reporter: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Nurturers/Cheerleader(s): \_\_\_\_\_



### C. Warm Up Activity. See page 212. (Allow 4 minutes)

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1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
  2. Complete activity
  3. Debrief activity (Show of hands)
    - a. How many parents found your families in Phase 1? (The behavior has gotten worse.) Remember, if the behavior has gotten worse, it may still be a good sign. It likely means the process of change has begun.
    - b. How many parents found your families in Phase 2? (The behavior is occurring less frequently, but just as bad as ever.)
    - c. How many found yourselves in Phase 3? (The behavior is occurring less frequently and with less intensity as well.)
    - d. Make sure you see a show of hands from every parent.

## II. Lecturette: Taking Time Out

### A. Taking Time Out

1. As we have already learned, when trying to change behavior, things will probably get worse before they get better.
2. Children will try to frustrate their parent's attempts to influence behavior by making life miserable around the house.
3. Taking time out can effectively reduce the opportunity for conflict, especially in the home.
4. When we talk about taking time out here, we are not discussing Time Out, as in negative consequences.
5. We are talking about taking time out to calm down.
6. Both children and parents can benefit from this conflict management skill.

### B. Group Activity 11.1(a). See page 212. (Allow 1 minute)



1. Ask for a volunteer to read all of activity 11.1(a), aloud.
2. Move to the next page.



## Warm Up

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In your support group, take a few minutes to share your stories from last week's S.O.S. Which phase of change do you find your family experiencing?

- ▶  Phase 1: The behavior has gotten worse.
- ▶  Phase 2: The behavior is occurring less frequently, but just as bad as ever.
- ▶  Phase 3: The behavior is occurring less frequently and with less intensity.

(Please remember that support groups are not a place for judgment, criticism or confrontation, but instead, should be a safe, comfortable and positive place to share your feelings and stories. Every member should be celebrated, encouraged and given positive strokes.)

## Taking Time Out

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As stated in Unit 10, when parents begin to make changes at home, things are likely to get worse before they get better. Children will usually try to frustrate their parent's attempts to influence their behavior, and that often means a significant change in the child's attitude as well. Parents

may not be able to eliminate parent/child conflict entirely, especially during the adolescent years. However, by recognizing situations that are likely to create a struggle, parents will put themselves in a better position to avoid or at least reduce the level of family conflict.



## Group Activity 11.1(a): Heated Times

Review the list of situations likely to create a parent/child conflict (see 1-5).

1. A mother asks her daughter to clean up her room immediately. One hour later, the mother walks by her daughter's bedroom and sees that the room has not been touched.
2. A child asks a parent if he can go out. The parent says, "No." The child becomes angry and begins yelling at the parent.
3. A parent physically tries to stop his/her teen from leaving the house.
4. A parent and child find themselves in a heated discussion about dating. Both parent and child are becoming angry, but the discussion is far from over.
5. A father wakes up to find his daughter sneaking into the house two hours past her curfew. She has been drinking, but is not drunk.

**B. Group Activity 11.1(b). See page 213. (Allow 4 minutes)**



1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions, aloud.
2. Ask for another volunteer to read answers A through E, aloud.
3. Complete activity
4. Debrief activity



**a. Project Slide 5 and chart responses**

- b. Review the responses aloud.
  1. (B)
  2. (D)
  3. (A)
  4. (E)
  5. (C)



**5. Summarize concept: Project Slide 6.**

- a. Time outs can be very effective in reducing family conflict whenever:
  1. a parent or child becomes defensive,
  2. voices are raised,
  3. arguments begin,
  4. or offensive language is used.
  5. When parents recognize their day has been stressful and nerves are on edge, it is better to put off discussions regarding problematic adolescent behavior until the parent is calm enough to talk quietly about the situation.



## Group Activity 11.1(b): Calming It Down

Now, review the strategies designed to help reduce parent/ child conflict (see A-E). Working with your support group, match the strategy that the group feels will work best to help reduce the conflict in the situations above. Record the group's choice by writing the letter of the strategy chosen next to the appropriate situation on the previous page.

- A. Tell your child that you do not control him, but if he leaves, the consequences will be severe.
- B. Calmly tell your child you are removing everything on their list, until they do what you asked; and add the statement, "Take as much time as you need."

- C. Tell your child that you are very upset with her behavior and too angry to discuss the situation now. Tell her you will discuss it with her in the morning when you are calm, and she is sober.
- D. Tell your child to go to his room and when he is calm, you will discuss it with him further.
- E. Tell your child that you would like to discuss the situation with him further. It is obvious however, that both of you are getting upset. Suggest that you both walk away and take twenty minutes to calm down. Resume the discussion after twenty minutes.



“ At one time or another the stresses and pressures of raising a family in today’s world affects every parent. ”



### C. Lecturette: Negotiating a Compromise

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1. There is a tendency in human nature to support what we helped to create.
  2. If a child helps to create the rules, he/she will be more likely to follow them.
  3. But, with destructive adolescent behaviors there should be no compromise.
  4. Children should be allowed an opportunity to suggest rules regarding curfew, hair styles, etc.
  5. Ask for a volunteer to read the example on page 214, aloud.  
("A 16-year-old girl . . .")
  6. Ask for a volunteer to read the last 2 paragraphs starting on page 214 and continuing on page 215, aloud. ("Parent/child discussions . . .")

**T**ime outs can be useful in reducing family conflict whenever a parent or child becomes defensive, when voices rise, arguments begin, or offensive language is used. Going to neutral corners of the house allows both the parent and child an opportunity to calm down. This parent and child time out is effective because it is not seen as punishment by the child.

In Unit 2, we discussed how our children are driven by emotion, and how their emotional nature often causes outbursts of anger. However, it is equally

important for us to realize that parents also can become too emotionally charged to deal with their children effectively. At one time or another, the stresses and pressures of raising a family in today's world affects every parent. When parents recognize that their day has been stressful and nerves are on edge, it is better to put off discussions regarding problematic adolescent behavior until the parent feels calm enough to deal more rationally with the situation.

## Negotiating a Compromise

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**A**nother method of reducing family conflict is negotiating a compromise with our children. There is a tendency in human nature to support what we have helped to create. Therefore, if a child helps to create the rules, he will be more likely to follow them. Certainly, with issues like drug and alcohol use, gang involvement, violence, or school attendance, etc., there can be no compromise. Parents must maintain a Zero-Tolerance attitude with destructive behaviors. However, children should be allowed an opportunity to suggest rules regarding curfew, hairstyles, and other issues. Children often need to be reminded that rules are designed to be changed over and over again, based upon the maturity and cooperation of the child.

**Example:** A 16-year-old girl has a regular weekend curfew of 11:00 PM. The child complains that she should have a curfew of 2:00 AM, like the rest of her friends. The parents explain to their daughter that they would actually feel better if she were home by 9:00 PM, but they realize she would probably find a 9:00 PM curfew unrealistic. By the same token, the daughter must recognize that Mom and Dad cannot accept a 2:00 AM curfew. From there, the parents and child can, hopefully, establish a curfew time that is agreeable to everyone. These parents should also inform their daughter that they are confident she will continue to respect the new curfew time.

Parent/child discussions about compromise should

“ Parent/child discussions about compromise should only occur after a period of cooperation from the child on the rule or issue. If a child has not honored his existing curfew, parents should refuse to negotiate a new curfew time. ”

**D. Group Activity 11.2. See page 215. (Allow 3 minutes)**



1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity
3. Debrief activity



**a. Project Slide 7. Chart responses**

- b. Review responses
4. Summarize concept
    - a. Compromise is a valuable tool for reducing family conflict and brings children into the decision-making process.
    - b. Inviting children to negotiate a compromise also allows them to practice a valuable life skill.
    - c. When we compromise with our children and rules are changed, we may want to write down the new rule to avoid confusion.



only occur after a period of cooperation from the child on the rule or issue. If a child has not honored his existing curfew, parents should refuse to negotiate a new curfew time. The message parents want to send to their children is that “cooperation brings compromise.”

Most strong-willed teenagers drive a hard bargain,

and many will argue relentlessly for the 2:00 AM curfew. Therefore, before the negotiation process begins, parents should be clear on what they, as responsible parents, can live with. When negotiating a compromise, parents should not be afraid to take a time out from the discussion to think about what their child has proposed.



## **Group Activity 11.2:** *Choosing Battles Wisely*

**Working with your support group, brainstorm a list of rules or items that might be negotiated with your child.**

Example: HAIR STYLES

Example: CURFEW TIMES

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**E. Review Activity 11.3. See page 216. (Allow 3 minutes)**

1. Complete activity
2. Debrief activity

 **a) Project Slide 8. Chart responses**

 **b) Project Slide 9. Chart responses**

(Chart responses to review question #5. What was the most powerful idea you learned from this unit? Chart one response from each parent.)

**R**emember, every child is different, and what can be negotiated with one child may not work with another. Still, compromise is a valuable tool for reducing family conflict and brings children into the decision-making process and allows them to practice a valuable life skill.

Note: When working with strong-willed children, it may be helpful to write down the new house rule and have everyone read and sign it for later reference.



## Review Activity 11.3

With your support group, take a few minutes to complete the following statements by filling in the blanks using the words in bold print below. Feel free to use your books.

Then, working by yourself, record the most powerful idea you learned from this unit.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ can be very effective in reducing family conflicts.
2. Children are more likely to \_\_\_\_\_ a rule they helped to create.
3. Certain rules or items can be \_\_\_\_\_ with children to reach a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Parents should never confront their children when parents are \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Working by yourself, what was the most powerful idea you personally learned from this Unit?

**support    compromise    angry**

**negotiated    Time outs**

### **III. The Support Group Format. See page 217.**



#### **A. Arrange support group/s in a circle**

1. Ensure there are no empty spaces or empty chairs.

#### **B. Make any Announcements for the session at this time.**

#### **C. Check-In Process**

1. Facilitator/Leader should review the Check In process and ask for a volunteer to begin the Check-In for the group.
2. Complete the Check-In Process

#### **D. Group Process**

1. Before group begins, briefly review for the members:
  - a. Confidentiality
  - b. W.I.S.E. Advice
  - c. Right to Pass
  - d. Time Limits
  - e. Democracy

#### **E. Individual Time**

1. Have the reporter divide the remaining time evenly among the group members.
2. Remind the members that any portion of their time may be shared with any other group member.
3. Briefly review the Timekeeper's responsibility. (When the Timekeeper's Individual Time is due, have another group member take over the Timekeeper responsibilities.).
4. Complete Individual Time.

#### **F. Wrap Up**

1. Leader to review the Wrap Up process and ask for a volunteer to begin.
  - a. Ensure every member states how they are feeling after the session.
  - b. Encourage parents when they affirm each other (practical help, suggestions and emotional support).

# Support Group Format

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**Announcements:**

Make brief announcements of any information that is of interest to all. (Change in group meeting times or location, etc.)

**Check-In:**

A brief (one or two sentences only), statement is shared by each group member regarding something positive that occurred over the past week.

**Group Process:**

Group process issues are discussed and resolved at this time. Questions regarding confidentiality, group roles or other group business are discussed here.

**Individual Time:**

The amount of time the group has left is evenly divided among all group members and recorded below. Group members take their time now. Individual concerns, problems and issues are discussed here. Willing group members may share any portion of their time with any other group member.

**Name:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

**Minutes Allotted:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Wrap Up:**

Each member shares with the group how he/she is feeling at this point in the session. Statements of appreciation are encouraged. Good-byes are completed.

## **IV. Preview Next Session**

-  A. Building Positive Self Concepts
  1. Begins with active listening
  2. We will list the components of active listening,
  3. and discuss the barriers to active listening. What keeps us from understanding what our children say?

-  **B. Steps of Success: See page 218.**

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  1. Ask for a volunteer to read the S.O.S. instructions aloud.
  2. Make sure you bring back your stories to share with your support group.

-  **C. Project Slide 10.**

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  1. Ask the entire class to read the Slide aloud.

- D. Ask the class to complete and turn in their Parent Evaluation forms.**

*(Ensure you receive an evaluation from every parent/family.)*

# S.O.S. (Steps of Success)

For the next week, carefully monitor your discussions with your child. At the first hint of anger or defensiveness, try taking a time out.

If the opportunity presents itself, try negotiating a compromise with your child over a small issue. Bring back your stories to share with your support group.

(Remember to give your children positive strokes.)

I called for a time out when:

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Old Rule or Norm:

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My child and I were able to reach a compromise over:

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Compromise:

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“ Critical Family Concept:  
My kids need a strong sense of  
family and I’m gonna provide it. ”

TG 219

# Managing Conflict in the Home (Unit 11: Content Evaluation)

**Session Objectives:** Recognize some of the potential causes of parent/child conflict, List strategies for reducing conflict in the home, Practice the support group process

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home (Message) Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Are both parents/caregivers attending tonight?  Yes  No

Names of other parents/caregivers attending with you tonight? \_\_\_\_\_

What group role did you play?

Group Facilitator  Group Reporter  Group Timekeeper  Group Cheerleader

How well did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: The following questions were designed to both help your instructor better meet your family's needs, and highlight the key points of tonight's lesson.

## Session Evaluation:

1. The thing I liked best about tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_
2. What would have made learning easier or better for me tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_
3. The most powerful thing I learned tonight was: \_\_\_\_\_
4. During the last seven days, I remembered to show/tell my child how much I love him/her:  
 Every day  Almost every day  A few times  I forgot  I was unable to
5. What were your children's reactions to your open displays of love and affection?  
 Positive (Good)  Indifferent (So what)  Negative (Poor)
6. Reflecting on the last seven days, how do you feel about your efforts to do the right thing?  
 Excellent  Good  Fair  Troubled  Unsatisfied
7. My child's behavior I targeted to reduce was: \_\_\_\_\_
8. When monitoring our family's progress in decreasing that behavior, I/we found we are in:  Phase 1: The behavior has gotten worse.  Phase 2: The behavior is occurring less frequently, but just as bad as ever.  Phase 3: The behavior is occurring less frequently and with less intensity as well.
9. Rules or issues open to negotiation must meet two standards: a) The rule is currently being obeyed. b) The issue does not involve destructive behaviors. With that in mind, a relatively small rule or issue I may choose to negotiate with my child involves:  curfew  clothing style  chores  other?
10. Parents' comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Parent Project, Sr. Unit 11: Data Collection**

Instructor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Session Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Co-facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

