



Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior

The Manual the Hospital Forgot to Give You

I. Introduction: Project Slide 2.

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



1. Promoting Family Unity
 - a. Tonight we will explore strategies for promoting family unity;
 - b. Discuss methods of helping children to recognize their importance to the family unit;
 - c. and complete a quick program review



Unit 16:

Promoting Family Unity

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

Parents will be able to:

- List strategies and activities to promote family unity
- Discuss methods of helping a child recognize his importance to the family unit
- Lead a support group session



B. Activity: Before We Begin Unit 16. Project Slide 4. See page 277. (Allow 1 minute)

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

**Unit 16:****Before We Begin** 

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

Session Roles:

Group Facilitator: _____

Group Time Keeper: _____

Group Reporter: _____

Group Nurturers/Cheerleader(s): _____



C. Warm Up Activity. See page 278. (Allow 5 minutes)

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity
3. Debrief activity
 - a. Ask for volunteers to share with the group their child's response to their discussions about their parent's expectations, standards, and values with the group.

II. Lecturette: A Sense of Family. Project Slide 5.



- A. Poor Sense of Family
 1. In unit 6, we discovered that one of the main reasons children join gangs and other poor peer groups is a *poor sense of family*.
 2. When children do not feel they are an important part of their own family, or when family unity does not exist, children often seek out other groups to satisfy their need to belong.
- B. Adolescents and Family
 1. As children grow older, they naturally begin spending less time with family.
 2. Even in the later teenage years, some time needs to be spent with family.
 3. Strong family units are generally the result of structured and scheduled events designed to bring families together.
 4. In one study, researchers discovered that when families ate dinner together, the children performed better in school. Parents working PM shifts could gather the family together for daily breakfast and could expect similar positive results.
 5. Eating meals together is the easiest and most effective ways of promoting family unity.
 6. Families that spend good times together help promote children's success.



Warm Up

In your support group, take a few minutes to share your stories from last week's S.O.S.

- ▶ How did your child react to your conversation regarding your expectations, values, and standards?

(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.)

A Sense of Family

In Unit 6, we explored the many reasons why children join gangs. One of the main reasons discussed was no sense of family. When children do not feel they are an important part of their own family, or when family unity does not exist, they often seek out other groups to satisfy their need to belong. By strengthening the family unit and helping children to feel they are essential members of the family, parents can help prevent or overcome many of the problems children face today. As one of our parents teaches his children, *Marriage and family are the one source of unconditional love in your life.*

Adolescent children naturally begin spending less time with their families as they grow older. Still, no matter how old children become, some time needs to be spent with family.

A strong sense of family is not developed by accident. Parents who have been successful in creating healthy family units have generally planned, structured, and scheduled family events designed to bring family members together. In one study, researchers discovered that when families ate din-

ner together, children performed better in school. Perhaps it was because parents took the opportunity to ask their children about their homework, or because the parents used dinner time to help convey their values on education. Whatever the reason, eating meals together as a family promotes children's success.



“ Still, no matter how old children become, some time needs to be spent with family. ”



C. Group Activity 16.1. See page 279 and continued on page 280. (Allow 5 minutes)

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud. (Parents may need some assistance with the instruction. Do this activity one step at a time.)
2. Complete activity.
3. Debrief activity



a. Project Slide 6. Chart responses

b. Review responses



4. Summarize concept.

a. Family unity is generally the result of careful planning and structure.

b. Even if we sometimes have to force the issue with our teens, some time must be spent with family.

c. Example:

Dad: *Come on son get in the car. We are going to the park for a picnic lunch.*

Justin: *I don't want to go to the park. You guys are boring.*

Dad: *I understand how you can feel that way. Now get in the car.*



Group Activity 16.1: *Building a Sense of Family*

1. Working with your support group, take a few minutes to fill in the blanks of statements C & D, on the following page. Use the examples below, to help you get started.

2. Using A as an example, brainstorm, and record in the spaces provided, ways parents can schedule or structure events at home, to accomplish statements B, C & D.

Examples:

A. The family that EATS together, stays together.

1. Schedule one dinner time for the entire family. Insist everyone eat dinner together as a family.
2. If possible, take time out to sit down with your children for 20 minutes at lunch time.
3. Schedule a convenient breakfast time for the family and wake everyone to eat as a family.
4. When it is not possible to eat breakfast together during the week, schedule a weekly Saturday or Sunday breakfast for the family.

B. The family that PLAYS together, stays together.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

C. The family that _____ together, stays together.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

D. The family that _____ together, stays together.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Remember, even if parents have to force the issue with adolescent children, some time **must** be spent with family.



III. Lecturette: Children as Family Members



- A. Parents who want to keep their children close to the family must help their children see that they are important members of the family.
- B. Children are important members of the family unit. Children are the main reason why traditional families exist.
 - 1. In order for children to feel they are important members of their family children must feel that they significantly contribute to the family unit.



C. Group Activity 16.2. See page 281. (Allow 4 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. Despite what some children may say, they want and need a strong family unit.
- b. Because there is a tendency to support what we helped to create, when children feel they are an important member of the family, their help and support should naturally follow.

IV. Program Review

- A. The parenting techniques we have learned and practiced over the past fifteen weeks are necessary to bring about lasting change and improve the parent/child relationship.
 - 1. It is time to finish the structured program and move on.



B. Project Slide 8. Everything we have learned over the past weeks can be summarized in the following:



- 1. *Set aside time for your children every day.*
 - a. Parents of strong-willed children need to set aside time every day to focus on the positive.
 - 1. When talking with your child, treat them as you would treat your best friend.
 - 2. Recognize his/her strengths, acknowledge growth, and just listen.
- 2. *Pay attention to your child's behavior*
 - a. Know what danger signs to look for.
 - b. Actively supervise (who, what, when, where, why and spot checks)
- 3. *Prepare and Implement*
 - a. Parents should think before they speak.
 - b. Parents should plan before they act.
 - c. Parents should courageously enforce the house rules and limits using their Six Step Action Plans and applying appropriate, short-term consequences.
- 4. *Find support for yourself.*
 - a. Change is a difficult process.
 - b. Finding the necessary practical and emotional support will help facilitate positive change.

Family unity is important for children's development. A child must also feel that he is an important member of the family.



Group Activity 16.2: Kids Are Important

Working with your support group, take a few minutes to brainstorm a list of ways parents can help children to know they are an important part of the family.

Example:

INVOLVE THE CHILD IN IMPORTANT FAMILY DISCUSSIONS AND ASK FOR HIS OPINION.

INVITE THE CHILD TO HELP CREATE THE FAMILY RULES.

Program Review

Although the information contained in the last fifteen units can seem overwhelming, most of the parenting techniques we have examined can be summarized in the following parental advice:

Set aside time for your children every day. All parents, but especially parents of strong-willed children, need to set aside time with their children to focus on the positive. This is a time to treat our children as we would our best friend. We need to recognize strengths, acknowledge growth, and listen to our children. Let your children know how much they are loved.

Pay attention to your children's behavior. Parents should know what danger signs to look for in their child's behavior. We must actively supervise our child's daily activities.

Prepare and Implement. Parents should think before they speak and plan before they act. We must courageously enforce the house rules and limits we have set using our Six-Step Action Plans.

Find support for yourself. Change is a difficult process. Finding the necessary practical and emotional support promotes the process of positive change in our families.

V. Map Your Progress

A. Activity 16.3. Project Slide 9. See page 282. (Allow 4 minutes)



1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity
3. Debrief activity.
 - a. (Show of hands) How many parents have noted positive change?
 - b. (Show of hands) How many parents have noted no change?
4. Remember the process of change and try not to get discouraged.
5. If you need emotional support, use the support system you have developed here.
6. There is no quick fix for behaviors that have continued for prolonged periods of time.
7. If you stick to your action plans and refuse to give up, everything is possible.
8. If you have been taking your Steps of Success and have not seen any movement, you may want to consider pursuing professional help with a qualified mental health care professional. Ensure he/she is experienced working with out-of-control teens and their parents.



Map Your Progress



Activity 16.3: *The Starting Point*

Working alone, with your spouse, or significant other, think back to the first day of this program and record the primary behavior problem you were having with your child. (For help, see pages 28 & 72.)

Consider the behavior problem above and decide which phase of change your family is currently experiencing. Record your answer by checking the appropriate box.

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

Now compare today's answer to the answer on your Steps of Success on page 132.

For parents who have yet to see any change in their child's behavior, try not to be discouraged. Remember, there is no quick fix for drug and alcohol use, violence, or any unwanted behavior that has existed for a prolonged period. When parents stick to their action plans and refuse to give up, everything is possible.

VI. Self-Help Support Groups, Project Slide 10



- A. In addition to knowledge and desire, parents also need emotional support to continue the process of change at home.
 - 1. Emotional support cannot come from your workbooks.
 - 2. We strongly recommend that you continue meeting on your own.
 - a) As a group, you have developed the knowledge and skills necessary to continue on your own.

Self-Help Support Groups

We have found that in addition to awareness, information, practice, and desire, parents also need emotional support to continue the process of change at home. If you have been with us the past sixteen sessions, you have indeed demonstrated the desire; and you now have the knowledge and practice. Emotional support cannot come from this workbook. That is why we strongly recommend that you continue meeting with your support group on your own. Your facilitator will continue to be a resource for you in the exceptional or unusual situation. Still, as a group, you have developed the knowledge and skills to work effectively together on your own.





B. Group Activity 16.4. See page 284. (Allow 4-5 minutes)

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity.
3. Debrief activity.
 - a. (Show of hands) How many groups will continue meeting on their own?
 - b. (Activity) In cases where the group is split on the decision to continue meeting, try to form a new groups/s with the parents that would like to continue with the support group process.**





Group Activity 16.4: *The Power of Support*

Consider your current situation with your child. With your support group, take a few minutes to share your feelings about the support group process.

1. In what ways has your support group helped you and your family?

2. How can continuing to meet with your group help your home situation?

3. How does the rest of your group feel?



C. Group Activity 16.5. See page 285. (Allow 10-15 minutes)

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity
3. Debrief activity.
 - a. Ask each group where they have decided to meet.
 - b. Ensure every group has established a meeting place & specific starting time.





Group Activity 16.5: *The Next Step*

If your group has decided to continue meeting, the first task is to decide where your group will meet. Working with your support group, take a few minutes to choose a date, time, and location for your first meeting.

In choosing a location, your group should take into consideration the following:

- ▶ Is there easy access for all members, including those with disabilities?
- ▶ Does the location lend to those using public transportation?
- ▶ Is there enough space to accommodate all members?
- ▶ Are there enough chairs for the group?
- ▶ Can confidentiality be maintained at the location?

Will you be able to continue to meet in the present location? Will you meet at a group member's home, church or community building?

Our first meeting will be located at: _____

We will meet on: (day/date) _____ from: _____ AM/PM to: _____ AM/PM

The telephone number at the meeting location is: (_____) _____



D. Group Activity 16.6. See page 286. (Allow 4-5 minutes)

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the activity instructions aloud.
2. Complete activity.
3. Debrief activity.
 - a. Ensure that every group member has the telephone numbers of the rest of the group.



Group Activity 16.6: *Getting Details*

Working with your support group, record the name and telephone number of every group member that will be attending future meetings.

Name

Telephone Number

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____





E. Tips for running support groups on your own. Project Slide 11. See page 287.

1. Meet on a weekly basis from 1 1/2 to 2 hours.
2. Rotate the group roles among every member.
3. If the group chooses, members can take turns bringing refreshments.
4. If necessary, the task of childcare can also be shared by the group.
5. Start your meeting on time.
 - a. When meetings start on time, members usually arrive on time.
6. End your meeting on time.
 - a. Parents who must leave on time are put on the spot when meetings run over.
7. Use the meeting format in the book.
 - a. It will help add structure to your meetings. (See support group format pages in the appendix.)

VII. Close:



- A. Ask for volunteers to read the last four paragraphs on page 287, aloud. (“We realize that for parents . . .”)
- B. In summary, for parents, the learning process never ends.
 1. We should not expect ourselves to be perfect.
 2. Every parent has and will make mistakes raising children.
- C. If we continue to practice the techniques learned in this course, we can reduce the number of mistakes we make as we move forward with the process of change.
- D. For parents who refuse to give up, anything & everything is possible.





We recommend that your group meet weekly for 1 and 1/2 to 2 hours. The group roles of Facilitator, Reporter, Time Keeper, and Nurturer should be rotated and shared among the group members. If your group chooses, members can take turns bringing refreshments, and if necessary, the task of child care can also be shared by your support group members.

To keep your group running smoothly:

Start your meetings on time. When meetings start on time, group members usually arrive on time.

End your meetings on time. Group members may have other commitments. Parents who must leave at the end of the scheduled time are put on the spot if the meetings run overtime.

Use the meeting format outlined in the book. This is the same format you have used the past nine sessions. It will help add structure to your meetings.

We realize that for parents, and especially parents of strong-willed children, the learning process

never ends, but parents should not expect themselves to be perfect. Every parent has and will make mistakes raising their children.

The noted psychiatrist, D.W. Winnicott, coined the phrase, *good enough mothering*. That phrase could certainly be changed to, *Good enough parenting*. Winnicott said that parents cannot expect perfection from themselves and mistakes will occur. These normal mistakes will not prevent a child from developing into a healthy adult.

We cannot entirely eliminate our mistakes. But if we continue to practice the parenting techniques learned from this program, we can reduce the number and type of mistakes we make to a level that is even more than *good enough*.

When parents with strong-willed children courageously enforce their limits, take time for their children and refuse to give up the fight to change destructive adolescent behavior, everything is possible.

E. Review Activity 16.7. See page 288. (Allow 2 minutes)

1. Complete activity.
2. Debrief activity.



a. Project Slide 12. Chart responses



b. Project Slide 13.

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

Review Activity 16.7



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.

Don't forget the most powerful idea you have learned.

1. No matter how old children become, _____ needs to be spent with _____.
2. Children need to feel they are _____ members of the family.
3. Families should _____ together.
4. Children often join _____ because they feel no sense of _____.

important **meals** **some** **family**
time **family** **eat** **gangs**

5. Working by yourself, what was the most powerful idea you personally learned from this course?

VIII. Begin the Support Group Format. See page 289.

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. Ask for volunteers to provide the definition of each ground rule below.
 - 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. Ask for a volunteer to provide a brief description of the Timekeeper's role. (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

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:**Minutes Allotted:**

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____

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.

IX. Preview Next Session



- A. Next week you will begin meeting on your own.
 - 1. This is your opportunity to continue the practical and emotional support you have received in this class.
 - 2. Don't let this opportunity pass you by.



B. Steps of Success: See page 290.

- 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 14.

- 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)

In the space provided, record all of the ideas for promoting family unity developed by your support group in activity 16.1, on page 277.

Sometime during the next week, call a family meeting. Ask the family to choose what they feel is the best idea from each of the four categories developed by your group in activity 16.1.

Now incorporate those ideas into your family's daily or weekly schedule. Remember to hold firm despite any complaints you may get from your children. No matter what your children may say, they want, need and will benefit from a strong family unit. Bring back your stories to share with your group.

(Remember to celebrate success, regardless how small.)

The family that **EATS** together, stays together.:

The family that **Plays** together, stays together.

The family that _____ together, stays together.

The family that _____ together, stays together.

“

Critical Family Concept:
I'll never give up; I'll never give
up; I'll never give up!

”

Promoting Family Unity *(Unit 16: Content Evaluation)*

Session Objectives: List strategies to promote family unity, Discuss methods of helping a child recognize his importance to the family unit, Lead a support group session.

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. How did your child respond to the values you shared with him/her last week?
 Positive (Good) Indifferent (So what) Negative (Poor)
8. What was your child's response to the positive expectations you have for him/her? _____

(Remember: our children may need to hear our expectations, values and standards several times before they respond.)

9. On what day will you hold your family meeting to discuss the ideas your family thinks are best for building family unity? (See the homework assignment on page 270.) _____
10. Parents' comments _____

