Visioning the Future
Family Conversations
Standards, Outline, and Materials

Program Goal: To foster school success and promote resiliency of young children by encouraging home/school partnerships and active participation of families in the education of their preschool and kindergarten children.

Session Objectives:
- To examine the effects of family life on communication and interactions among family members
- To encourage family members to create home environments that support their children’s development of habits and practices associated with school success
- To encourage adult family members to consider their goals and expectations for their children

Florida School Readiness Performance Standards:

**Social & Emotional Development Domain: Self-Concept** *(three and four year olds)*
- Demonstrates self confidence
  - *Example:* Sitting at the art table and exchanging ideas and thoughts even when the discussion is unrelated to the artwork they are making

**Approaches to Learning Domain: Planning and Reflection** *(four year olds)*
- Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner
  - *Example:* Continuing a discussion by asking related questions or making comments

Outline for Family Conversations:
- 15 minutes *Greeting/ Starter Activity:* My Family When I Was Growing Up
- 20 minutes *Conversation Time:* A Day In the Life Of My Child
- 5 minutes *Transition to Meal:* If You’re Hungry and You Know It
- 25 minutes *Meal and Discussion:* The Family That I Am In Now
- 5 minutes *Transition to Literacy:* Sing With Me

Session Materials:
- Handouts *(per participant)*
  - *My Family When I Was Growing Up*
  - *A Day in the Life of My Child*
  - *The Family That I Am In Now*
  - *Words to transition activities (If You’re Hungry and You Know It and Sing with Me)*
- Writing utensil *(per participant)*
- Timer
Title of Starter Activity:  My Family When I Was Growing Up

Length of Time for Activity:  15 minutes

Format of Activity: Participants should be seated at a table so they can write comfortably.

Note for Presenter: This is a starter activity, introduce the activity to each participant as he/she arrives and encourage immediate involvement. Have the handout and writing utensils on the tables upon arrival.

Materials: Timer; per participant - My Family When I Was Growing Up handout, writing utensil

Procedure:

✓ Set timer for 13 minutes right at the starting time of the workshop.

✓ Say to each participant as he/she arrives,
  o “On your table there is a handout titled, 'My Family When I Was Growing Up.'"
  o “Read each question one at a time and record your responses by circling either yes or no.”
  o “Feel free to write down examples or stories related to each question for sharing.”
  o “We will engage in a discussion regarding your responses during mealtime.”

✓ As participants are completing the activity, facilitator should move from group to group and:
  o Encourage those who do not have anything written down to engage in the activity.

✓ When the timer goes off, ask participants to put their writing utensils down and turn toward you.
Title of Conversation Time Activity: *A Day in the Life of My Child*

Length of Time for Activity: 20 minutes

Format of Activity: This is a visualization activity.

Note for Presenter: Allow this to be a quiet time for participants to close their eyes and visualize their children in 25 years. Do not rush through this activity. Be sure to use a pleasant and relaxed voice to guide the visualization experience.

Materials: *Per participant* - *A Day in the Life of My Child* handout, writing utensil

Procedure:

✓ Say,
  - “For our next activity I want you to think about the aspirations and goals you have for your child and how you would like your child’s life to be as a young adult. To do this we will take a few moments to visualize a day in the life of your child 20 years from now.”

✓ Begin visualization experience by saying,
  - “I will guide you through a visualization experience. Please close your eyes and think about the life you would like your child to have when they reach their mid-twenties.”
  - “Imagine that it is a glorious spring morning and the alarm has just rung at your son or daughter’s house.”
  - “I want you to think about the house where your son or daughter lives and the room where he/she is sleeping.”
  - “Is there someone there with your son or daughter?”
  - “What does your son/daughter do upon waking?”
  - “How does your son or daughter prepare for the day?”

✓ Allow participants a few moments to ponder on these thoughts.

✓ Say,
  - “Now imagine your son or daughter as the day begins.”
  - “What is he/she doing?”
How is your son or daughter dressed?"
"What is going on around your son or daughter?"
"Are there other people present, what are they doing?"

Allow a few moments for participants to ponder on these thoughts.

**Say,**

"It is now mid-day and your son or daughter is having lunch."
"Where is he/she eating?"
"Is your son or daughter alone or eating with someone?"
"What kind of work (if any) is he/she doing?"
"How does your son or daughter feel?"

Allow a few moments for participants to ponder on these thoughts.

**Say,**

"Imagine now that the time is late afternoon."
"What is your son or daughter doing?"
"Picture the environment and the people around him/her."

Allow a few moments for participants to ponder on these thoughts.

**Say,**

"Imagine that the time is now between 7:00 – 9:00p.m. What is the situation?"
"Is there tension or harmony in the environment around your son or daughter?"
"How is he/she contributing to the situation?"
✓ Allow a few moments for participants to ponder on these thoughts.

✓ Say,
  o “The day is winding down and your son or daughter is reflecting on the past 14 hours.”
  o “What are his/her thoughts?”
  o “How does he/she rate the day?”
  o “What is he/she looking forward to?”

✓ Allow a few moments for participants to ponder on these thoughts.

✓ Say,
  o “We have now come to the end of our visualization experience.”
  o “Please open your eyes now and turn towards me.”
  o “You will now have an opportunity to write down some of the things that you visualized your child doing on the handout titled *A Day in the Life.*”

✓ Give each participant a handout titled *A Day in the Life* and a writing utensil. Say,
  o “Go ahead and fill out the handout based upon what you visualized your child doing and/or feeling during each time period on the handout.”
  o “You will be given the opportunity to share your responses with the group when completed.”

✓ After participants have recorded their visualizations on the handout say,
  o “Would someone please describe to us the day you just imagined for your son or daughter?” (Make sure many participants have an opportunity to share.)
✓ **Ask** a few of the following prompting questions,
  
  o “Was it easy for you to think of your child as an adult?”
  o “If it was difficult, what were the barriers?”
  o “What life did you see your child leading?”
  o “What were the factors that contributed to your images?”
  o “What factors affected your child’s choices?”
  o “What was the environment like?”

✓ **As you wrap up the discussion, ask,**
  
  o “What will you need to do to help your child have the life that you envisioned?”

✓ **As participants respond, affirm and extend** their comments with phrases such as *(do NOT read all of the phrases on the list - only those pertaining to comments of participants):*
  
  o “Setting goals for your children gives them something to work towards.”
  o “Being an active participator in your children’s education will enhance their academic success.”
  o “Setting clear boundaries and routines with your children will help promote school success.”
Title of Transition to Meal Activity: If You’re Hungry and You Know It

Length of Time for Activity: 5 minutes

Format of Activity: A quick and short transition activity so participants are aware that they will be transitioning from Family Conversations to mealtime.

Note for Presenter: Remind participants to use transition activities in their own homes.

Materials: Per participant - handout of words to song - “If You’re Hungry and You Know It”

Procedure:

✓ Say,

   o “We are going to sing a transition song called ‘If You’re Hungry and You Know It.’”
   o “The song is to the tune of ‘If You’re Happy and You Know It.’”
   o “Instead of singing, ‘If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands’ we are going to sing ‘If you’re hungry and you know it say, ‘Feed me!’”

✓ Give each participant a handout with words to the song.

✓ Invite participants to sing along with you.

If You’re Hungry and You Know It

(Sung to the tune of: If You’re Happy and You Know It)

If you’re hungry and you know it say, “Feed me!”

If you’re hungry and you know it say, “Feed me!”

If you’re hungry and you know it then your tummy will surely show it.

If you’re hungry and you know it say, “Feed me!”
Title of Meal and Discussion Topic: *The Family That I Am In Now*

Length of Time for Activity: 25 minutes

Format of Activity: Participants should be seated at tables in small groups while eating.

Note for Presenter: Some participants may be hesitant to share in front of the group. Try to make this as relaxed and as fun as you can.

Materials: *The Family That I Am In Now* handout

Procedure:

✔ Begin this time period by allowing participants to get their meal and find a seat at a table.

✔ Once everyone is seated and has started eating their meal, begin the discussion by saying,

  - “As you finish your meal we are going to go around the room and each of us will have an opportunity to share with the group some insight into your family when you were growing up and compare these things to what your family does now.”

  - “Let me remind you of the questions that you answered about your family when you were growing up. The questions were:

    • When you were growing up, was the **radio** or **television** always on?
    • Did your parents **listen** to you and your siblings?
    • Did people **sulk** and refuse to talk when they were upset?
    • Did your family **yell** at each other a lot?”

✔ Give each participant a handout titled 'The Family That I Am In Now' and say,

  - “Now think about those same questions for the family your child is growing up in today." (**Repeat the questions if necessary.**)

  - “Is the family your child is growing up in similar or different than the family you grew up in?”

  - “Who would like to begin sharing with us about the family you grew up in compared to the family your child is growing up in today?”

✔ Encourage participants to share with the group.
Title of Transition to Literacy Activity: *Sing with Me*
Length of Time for Activity: 5 minutes
Format of Activity: A quick and short transition activity so participants are aware that they will be transitioning from mealtime to the Literacy Learning component.
Note for Presenter: Sing through the song a few times to make sure participants learn the words.
Materials: *Per participant* - handout of words to song - “Sing with Me”

Procedure:
✓ Give each participant a handout with words to the song “Sing with Me” and **say**,  
  ○ “We are going to sing a song called “Sing with Me.”
✓ **Review** the words to the song.
✓ Invite participants to sing along with you.

**Sing with Me**  
*(Sung to the tune of: Row, Row, Row Your Boat)*
Sing, sing, sing, with me.
Sing out loud and clear.
Tell the people everywhere
That story time is here!

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