

ADJUSTMENT PHASE FOR YOUTHS AND CAREGIVERS/PARENTS
PROJECT TALC (TEENS AND PARENTS LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE)

Prepared by Sutherland Miller, Ph.D.

SESSION 1: (JOINT - SPLIT) WHAT DO ADOLESCENTS AND CAREGIVERS/PARENTS NEED FROM EACH OTHER? (Session 1, Day 1, Morning session)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Youths and caregivers/parents will experience less strain from the new relationship through expressing feelings and concerns and through gaining support from their respective sub-group.
2. Youths and caregivers/parents will identify what both groups need from each other.
3. Youths and caregivers/parents will experience increased comfort in the group and increased group cohesion.

RATIONALE:

This session begins a new phase: the adjustment phase. The parent with AIDS is ill or deceased, and the new arrangements with either a different parent or a caregiver have begun. The adjustment phase will be difficult for both youth and caregiver/parent; consequently both groups must be supported and have some of their needs met. The primary goal is to strengthen the youth-caregiver/parent relationship, providing them with new tools and enabling them to address the conflicts and hard times that lie ahead.

Youths and caregivers/parents attend all sessions in this phase, although they meet in separate groups for part of the time. The first session is devoted to taking stock through sharing. Where are the youths and caregivers/parents right now? What is going on? How are they reacting to the new arrangements? Answering these questions in separate groups of youths and caregivers/parents allow the participants to express themselves more fully and places them in a supportive environment.

These youths face special situations: having lived with a person who had AIDS, death, a new caregiver or new family situation, a variety of losses, and so on. These unusual circumstances come on top of adjusting to the changes of adolescence. Thus we take some time to highlight the developmental issues of adolescence, as a way of providing background. Focusing on development also "cools" down the first session and creates a little necessary distance. The first session emphasizes non-threatening sharing and getting acquainted, supporting each other, openness, respect, a safe environment, positive qualities of the participants.

SUMMARY OF EXERCISES:

1. Welcome the group and explain what sessions are all about. Introduce the facilitators; have the participants introduce each other; give out "Thanks;" and do a lottery. (25 minutes)
2. Separate the youths and caregivers/parents in separate rooms. Have youths and caregivers/parents introduce themselves again. Have a volunteer from each group talk honestly to an empty chair (representing a person from the other group) about what was liked and disliked about living together so far. (30 minutes)
3. Caregivers, parents and youths come back together in main room. Have all group members meet in family units to describe the positive and negative aspects of being a new family. (20 minutes)
4. Have the separate groups make a list of needs: 1) youths identify what youths need from caregivers and parents; 2) caregivers/parents identify what caregivers/parents need from youths. (20 minutes)
5. Have the groups come back together again and share their lists with each other. Then discuss. (20 minutes)
6. End with group appreciation and a reminder about when to start after lunch. (5 minutes)

MATERIALS:

News pads and pencils
Lottery tickets
Two lottery prizes (youth and caregiver/parent)
Feeling Thermometer
Course Outline

NOTES TO THE FACILITATORS: Text in **bold** letters tells you what the purpose of each exercise is. Text in CAPITAL letters tells you what to do. Text in small letters tells you what to say. Once you become familiar with what to say, please put it in your own words. Do not read aloud the text in small letters - make it natural.

The times listed under the headings of each exercise are to help you keep on target and move the session along. Exercises may be lengthened or shortened at your discretion, as long as all the material is covered.

FACILITATOR'S NOTES - REMINDERS AND POINTS TO MAKE

Exercise 1: What Is Going To Happen Here?

(25 Minutes)

[The purpose of this exercise is to create a comfortable environment through positive introductions and explaining what the workshop's goals are and what will be covered.]

#THE FACILITATOR SAYS

Welcome to our workshops for Project Talk youths, new caregivers, and parents.

In these eight Saturdays we are going to focus on having a new life.

First, let us find out who is here.

I want the youths to introduce their caregiver - maybe their guardian or parent.

Tell us what your caregiver's name is and a positive quality that your caregiver has.

Also tell us what your caregiver's relation to you is - like a father, an aunt or older sister.

If you don't have a caregiver with you today, tell us your first name and one thing you like about yourself.

We want people to get to know each other; therefore you can ask the person who is being introduced a question if it doesn't put them on the defensive.

After you introduce your caregiver, we want the caregiver to tell the group your name and one positive quality the caregiver thinks that you have.

Also what is the young person's relationship to you? For example, a grandson.

If I were a teenager, I might put it all together and say, "This is my Aunt Grace. I like the fact that she is always very fair."

#HAVE THE YOUTHS AND CAREGIVERS INTRODUCE EACH OTHER, GIVING A NAME, POSITIVE QUALITY, AND

RELATIONSHIP.

Thank you. That was great.

When someone does or says something that we like in here, we let them know by giving them a "Thanks."

#HOLD UP A "THANKS."

"Thanks" are like little thank-you-notes.

At the end of a session I hope you have given your "Thanks" away to other people in this room.

I like the way you did the introductions.

#GIVE EVERYONE A "THANKS."

Here is your stack of "Thanks" to give away when you catch someone doing something good.

#GIVE EACH PERSON 20 "THANKS."

I want to make two other comments about how the group runs.

First, the sessions are active, and you are asked to participate.

The activities won't put you on the spot or embarrass you.

We try to make this a safe place.

Second, there are some ground rules that were developed by the group members in the sessions before these.

Some of the those ground rules are

#WRITE THE UNDERLINED WORDS ON NEWSPRINT AS YOU SAY THEM.

1. Keep confidentiality - What is said in here stays in here. We want to build trust.
2. No put-downs - Support other people.
3. Express yourself without hurting others - Be open about how you feel but don't blame others for those feelings.
4. Respect others - Make each other feel good.
5. Don't come high on drugs or alcohol - To heal from our loss we have to get in touch with and work with our truest feelings. Getting high is an escape from these feelings.

It gets in the way of finding peace and real joy.

Besides some people may be trying to fight drugs alcohol. You can help them by coming clean.

Are there any changes you would make or anything you would like to add?

#ENCOURAGE REACTIONS AND MAKE CHANGES IF A CONSENSUS EXISTS. DON'T SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON THE GROUND RULES.

A lot has happened in your lives recently.

For some of you: a new place to live, new school, new friends.

Every youth has had a parent get sick or die from HIV/AIDS.

Some people have new caregivers, and everybody has had lots of other changes.

Our goal in this workshop is to help youths, new caregivers and parents adjust successfully to a new life.

We know that caregivers play a critical role and must be involved if the adjustment is to prove effective.

Here is what we are going to be covering in the next eight Saturdays.

**#HAND OUT COPIES OF THE COURSE OUTLINE TO EVERYONE
OR REFER TO HANDBOOKS. GO OVER IT BRIEFLY.**

PROJECT TALK NEW CAREGIVER/PARENT AND YOUTH GROUP WORKSHOPS

Saturday 1

Morning (S1): What do adolescents and caregivers/parents need from each other?
Afternoon (S2): What role am I playing and what is expected of me?

Saturday 2

Morning (S3): Dealing with loss and grief - Part I
Afternoon (S4): Youths: My future - Part I, Caregivers: Raising an Adolescent

Saturday 3

Morning (S5): Dealing with loss and grief - Part II
Afternoon (S6): How can we improve communication? - Part I (Active listening and responding)

Saturday 4

Morning (S7): Ways of helping someone cope with loss and grief
Afternoon (S8): How can we improve communication - Part II (effective expressing)

Saturday 5

Morning (S9): Youths: My future - Part II, Caregivers: Caregiver support
Afternoon (S10): How can we deal with anger in the relationship

Saturday 6

Morning (S11): How can I cope with sadness
Afternoon (S12): Youths: How can I deal with fear, Caregivers: How Can I Deal with Problem Behavior

Saturday 7

Morning (S13): How do we practice safer sex and reduce drug use?

Afternoon (S14): How can we resolve conflicts at home?

Saturday 8

Morning (S15): How can we create a positive atmosphere at home?

Afternoon (S16): Looking to the future together

Does anyone have questions?

#ANSWER QUESTIONS.

Before we start getting more into today's session, I want to do a lottery. This morning we will do a youth prize and a caregiver/parent prize. Sometimes we will have a family prize.

Write your name on the lottery ticket and drop it in the youth or caregiver/parent basket.

Then we will mix them up, draw one from each basket, and pass out a winner's prize.

#PASS OUT A LOTTERY TICKET TO EACH PERSON. HAVE THEM WRITE THEIR NAME ON IT. MIX THEM UP, DRAW ONE, AND GIVE OUT THE TWO PRIZES.

Today we will find out how things have been going at home up to this point.

Some times everyone will work together, and at other times the youths will be in one place and the caregivers/parents in another. Sometimes caregivers will be separate from the youths for the whole session.

Today we started together in the introductions, and now I want you to separate.

The youths will go with one facilitator and the caregivers/parents with the other facilitator.

#HAVE THE GROUPS SEPARATE, USING SEPARATE ROOMS (IF POSSIBLE).

Exercise 2: How Do I Feel about What's Happening?
(30 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to continue to release feelings in a safe environment and to build support from others with similar feelings. The Feeling Thermometer and Empty Chair are employed. NOTE: YOUTHS AND CAREGIVERS/PARENTS ARE IN SEPARATE ROOMS]

We introduced each other as family members. Now let's go around again and learn more about each other.

Like we did earlier, say your first name and one thing that you can do really well.

#HAVE THE GROUP MEMBERS REPEAT THEIR FIRST NAMES
AND SAY ONE THING THEY DO WELL.

Now let's find out about your emotional experiences.

Here is a Feeling Thermometer.

#HAND OUT A FEELING THERMOMETER TO EVERYONE.

100 degrees means that you are really, very uncomfortable.

You could feel uncomfortable because you are angry, irritated, hurt, guilty, and upset. Or have some other negative feeling.

0 degrees means that you are completely at ease.

In what situations did you feel uncomfortable recently?

#HAVE GROUP MEMBERS IDENTIFY SITUATIONS IN WHICH
THEY FELT UNCOMFORTABLE.

What about a situation in which you felt about 50 degrees.

#ENCOURAGE A CONTRASTING SITUATION.

That's very good.

Now I want a volunteer to do the empty chair exercise.

(FOR CAREGIVERS) Imagine that the youth you are taking care of is seated in that chair.

(FOR YOUTHS) Imagine that your new caregiver or parent is seated in the chair.

Feel free to tell him or her what you are really thinking or feeling about what it is like to live with him or her and the way things are going between you.

For example, you could say:

"You don't show me any respect!"

"You treat me like a baby!"

Who will volunteer?

SELECT A VOLUNTEER AND SET UP THE EMPTY CHAIR.

Go ahead and say what is really on your mind.

#ENCOURAGE THREE MINUTES OF EXPRESSING. TRY TO GET PARTICIPANTS TO REALLY EXPRESS WHAT ANNOYS THEM. SCREAMING OR YELLING IS PERMITTED!

That was great!

#GIVE "THANKS" TO THE EXPRESSOR.

Now we are going to go back to the rest of the group.

#HAVE THE GROUPS COME BACK TOGETHER.

Exercise 3: How Do I Feel about What's Happening - Part 2?
(20 minutes)

[The purposes of this exercise are to release feelings of irritation in a safe environment and to build support from others with similar feelings. NOTE: YOUTHS AND CAREGIVERS ARE TOGETHER FOR THIS EXERCISE]

Now everyone has a chance at telling the youth or caregiver your honest reactions to living together.

Please pair-up with your family member(s). Tell your "partner" (for example, your teenager, parent or caregiver) what you have been feeling about this new arrangement.

If there are siblings, everybody should take a turn to share.

What has it been like living together?

Be sure to communicate something positive that you have felt as well as what bothers you.

**#ENCOURAGE SHARING OF FEELINGS. ALLOW FOR 5 MINUTES PER PARTNER.
THEN BRING THE GROUP BACK TOGETHER.**

Now let's have a family member summarize to the group how things have been going and what you discussed just now.

The young person in the family should give the summary, being sure to mention the positive as well as negative.

If there is more than one young person in a family here today, you can decide who will present to the group.

#HAVE TEEN REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT SUMMARY OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF HOW THINGS HAVE BEEN GOING.

That was great!

How did that go?

What kind of feelings did you have?

#ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION OF THE EXPERIENCE.

Next we are going to talk about what caregivers and youths need from each other.

Exercise 4: What Do We Need?
(20 minutes)

[The purpose of this exercise is to identify what youths need from caregivers and what caregivers need from youths. Creating lists is the approach used. NOTE: SEPARATE YOUTHS AND CAREGIVERS/PARENTS IN THE ROOM]

To make the new family work youths and caregivers need to know what they want from each other.

So, we will have each group work separately on coming up with a list of needs.

#ASK THE YOUTHS TO DEVELOP A LIST OF WHAT THEY NEED FROM CAREGIVERS. ASK THE CAREGIVERS TO IDENTIFY WHAT THEY NEED FROM YOUTHS. PUT THE IDEAS ON NEWSPRINT AND SELECT A PRESENTER WHO WILL TELL THE OTHER GROUP WHAT IS WANTED.

Now we are going to share our list with the group.

#HAVE THE GROUPS COME BACK TOGETHER.

Exercise 5: What Does Each Group Want and Need?
(20 minutes)

[The purpose of the exercise is to make youths aware of their needs and the needs of caregivers and vice versa. Sharing lists is the approach used.]

Let's start with the youths.

Would you please present to us

w
h
a
t

y
o
u
t
h
s

n
e
e
d

f
r
o
m

c
a
r
e
g
i
v
e
r
s
.

#HAVE THE YOUTHS PRESENT.

What do you make of these suggestions?

#ENCOURAGE A DISCUSSION.

(TO CAREGIVERS): If you were a young person, what would you add or change about what they want?

#HAVE THE CAREGIVERS DISCUSS WHAT YOUTHS PRESENTED

What do the caregivers want from the youths?

#HAVE THE CAREGIVERS MAKE A PRESENTATION.

What do you make of these ideas?

#ENCOURAGE A DISCUSSION.

(TO YOUTHS): If you were a caregiver, what would you add or change about what they want?

#HAVE THE YOUTHS DISCUSS WHAT CAREGIVERS PRESENTED

What would be some barriers to meeting each other's needs?

#ENCOURAGE SHARING OF OBSTACLES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.

These are some of the things we are going to be working on together over the next eight workshop days.

Exercise 6: What Is Next?
(5 minutes)

[The purpose is to build group cohesion. Giving group appreciation is the approach used.]

At the end of a session we like to make sure that everyone knows how much we appreciate their presence and contributions.

We want them to know that we liked what they said and did or that we were pleased they simply showed up.

Take some time and show your appreciation to the other members of the group.

#ENCOURAGE SHARING. MODEL GIVING OUT "THANKS" AND
SHOWING APPRECIATION. MAKE SURE NO ONE IS OMITTED.

That was very good.

The next meeting is this afternoon at _____ (time) in this room number _____.

THE END OF SESSION 1

PROJECT TALK NEW CAREGIVER/PARENT AND YOUTH GROUP WORKSHOPS

TOPICS

Saturday 1

Morning (S1): What do adolescents and caregivers/parents need from each other?
Afternoon (S2): What role am I playing and what is expected of me?

Saturday 2

Morning (S3): Dealing with loss and grief - Part I
Afternoon (S4): Youths: My future - Part I, Caregivers: Raising an Adolescent

Saturday 3

Morning (S5): Dealing with loss and grief - Part II
Afternoon (S6): How can we improve communication? - Part I (Active listening and responding)

Saturday 4

Morning (S7): Ways of helping someone cope with loss and grief
Afternoon (S8): How can we improve communication - Part II (effective expressing)

Saturday 5

Morning (S9): Youths: My future - Part II, Caregivers: Caregiver support
Afternoon (S10): How can we deal with anger in the relationship

Saturday 6

Morning (S11): How can I cope with sadness
Afternoon (S12): Youths: How can I deal with fear, Caregivers: How Can I Deal with Problem Behavior

Saturday 7

Morning (S13): How do we practice safer sex and reduce drug use?
Afternoon (S14): How can we resolve conflicts at home?

Saturday 8

Morning (S15): How can we create a positive atmosphere at home?
Afternoon (S16): Looking to the future together

FEELING THERMOMETER

100 VERY UNCOMFORTABLE

90

80

70

60

50

40

30

20

10

0 COMPLETELY COMFORTABLE