

MODULE 5:

Families – Roles And Responsibilities

Learning Goals

During this module, participants will:

- ◆ Define the term “family” for themselves and discuss how families differ from each other.
- ◆ Identify the various roles and responsibilities of each family member.
- ◆ Emphasize the roles that youth play as daughters or sons, sisters or brothers, aunts or uncles, etc.
- ◆ Highlight challenges that arise within family systems and how to prevent such challenges from becoming crisis situations.
- ◆ Highlight and practice effective communication skills to deal with family members and family problems.

MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

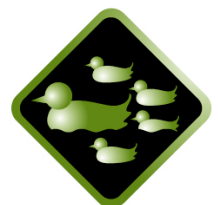
DEFINE THE ISSUE

Each year, family dynamics rank high on the list of issues identified by callers to the National Runaway Switchboard. For NRS, this may include anything from problems with parents, guardians, or siblings to conflicts with family rules. Youth living outside a traditional home setting would likely agree that families play, or don't play as the case may be, a significant role in their current situations.

Module 5 is included in the curriculum because of the family's significance in the lives of many youth, and because the function and importance of family rules and discipline were rated "very important" by participants in our initial research. Module 5 asks participants to think about the roles they play within what they consider their "family" and emphasizes the importance of their responsibilities, no matter how big or small. Participants will learn techniques for effective family communication and apply them to real life scenarios.

ICONS:

For further details, see the Introduction Module.



MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MODULE ACTIVITIES



ACTIVITY	TIME	METHODOLOGY
A. Defining Family Roles And Responsibilities	15 minutes	Discussion/Activity
B. Personal Roles And Responsibilities	10 minutes	Discussion/Activity
C. Family Talk	10 minutes	Discussion/Activity
D. Family Communication Tips	10 minutes	Discussion

Total time required: **45 minutes**



MATERIALS

- ◆ Poster paper or chalk/dry erase board
- ◆ Markers or chalk
- ◆ Pens or pencils
- ◆ NRS prizes for "Personal Roles and Responsibilities Within The Family" Activity
- ◆ Candy for prizes
- ◆ "Family Matters" worksheet
- ◆ "Roles and Responsibilities" worksheet
- ◆ "Family...T.A.L.K." handout
- ◆ "Family Communication Tips" handout



Anger Management + Stress Reduction



Consider showing the curriculum companion film "1-800-RUNAWAY".



Remember to order NRS prizes for Activity B in advance.



MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ACTIVITY 5A. DEFINING FAMILY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

15 minutes



INTRODUCE family roles and responsibilities.

STATE *"Family" means different things to different people. For some, it may mean the people you live with; for others it may be the friends you choose. Also remember that a family member doesn't necessarily have to be related to you. They could be anyone that you consider to be close to you, including stepsiblings, stepparents, or extended family.*

Families play various roles in our lives. Families can be a great source of support, but they can also cause stress. No two families are alike. They can vary in size, in the way family members talk to each other, and in the types of tasks that each family member is responsible for.

Each person has a role within the family. There are different responsibilities that go hand-in-hand with certain family roles. For example, a parent or guardian may consider him or herself responsible for the financial well being of the entire family, while a son or daughter may consider him or herself responsible for accomplishing certain tasks, like getting good grades or taking out the garbage.

We'll spend the next few minutes thinking about our own families. Remember that your family consists of those people who are closest to you and who may live where you consider your home to be.

HAND OUT "Family Matters" worksheets.

ASK *Would you please draw a picture of what you consider home from an aerial view?*

STATE *Pretend that someone peeled back the roof of the structure you consider "home". Draw the rooms and people that make up what you consider home. Think about the responsibilities of each person you include under your roof. If you're more comfortable using words than pictures, that's fine.*

ALLOW 2-3 minutes for participants to draw.



STATE

As you draw or write, think about the following points:

- *Who makes up your family?*
- *Where is everyone located and why?*
- *What are the roles and responsibilities of each family member?*
- *Who is present and who is not? If someone is not present, where is he or she?*
- *Who is the person that you feel comfortable going to when you need advice? Why do you choose this person?*
- *Is this a typical day for your family?*

ALLOW

participants time to consider the points.

ASK

Who would like to share what he or she was thinking?

DISCUSS

differences and similarities in thoughts.

ASK

Do you have any questions or comments?

DISCUSS

responses.

STATE

As you can see, each of our homes looks very different. They are different sizes, have different people in them, and each person has different roles and responsibilities. Responsibilities can be related to chores that are necessary to keep the household running, or they may be in the form of support and guidance.



MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ACTIVITY 5B. PERSONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE FAMILY

10 minutes



Facilitator should allow physical space for participants to move around during this next activity.

INTRODUCE

individual roles and responsibilities.

STATE

As members of our families, we each have certain roles and important responsibilities related to these roles.

HAND OUT

“Roles and Responsibilities” worksheets.

ASK

What are the different roles you play within your family? What are the responsibilities associated with these roles? Take a minute or so to list at least 5 of the responsibilities you perform in a typical week. Keep the list to yourself.

ALLOW

1 minute for participants to complete their worksheets.

STATE

Now that you’ve created your lists, you are going to share with a partner the various responsibilities you listed on your “Roles and Responsibilities” worksheet.

The catch is that you will have to act out everything on your list within 1 minute. This means no speaking, no noises and no writing. It’s just like Charades. When your partner has guessed the correct responsibility, move quickly to the next item. If you are able to convey at least 5 items on your list within 1 minute, you will get to choose a prize!

DIVIDE

participants into pairs.

STATE

Ready? Set? GO!

MONITOR

the time and inform the groups when to switch actors. When everyone has had a chance to act out his or her responsibilities, gather the group together again.



It may be helpful to have an additional facilitator or assistant to help monitor groups and answer any questions.



STATE

Congratulations on your great acting. Now let's discuss a few questions about the activities.

- *What are some of your partner's responsibilities?*
- *What responsibilities do you and your partner have in common? What ones are different?*
- *What are your reactions to hearing about your partner's responsibilities?*

In this activity, you've had a chance to recognize things you are responsible for within a typical week. This game emphasized how much you contribute to your "family" and "home." You've also learned about the responsibilities of others and how they may be similar to or different from your own.

ASK

Why is it important to have responsibilities within your family?

What would happen if no one had responsibilities?

DISCUSS

responses.

DISTRIBUTE

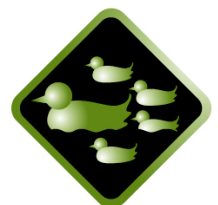
NRS pencils, pens or key chains to all participants. If NRS items are not available, hand out candy.

ASK

Do you have any questions or comments?

DISCUSS

responses.



MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ACTIVITY 5C. FAMILY T.A.L.K.

10 minutes



INTRODUCE

effective family communication.

STATE

Talking with a family member about an important issue can be difficult. If you're prepared and know how to communicate effectively, you will be able to get your point across clearly and successfully.

It is important to admit issues that exist and to attempt to work through them. An open and honest discussion can correct many misunderstandings between family members.

HAND OUT

"Family...T.A.L.K." handouts.

READ

the handout:

TIMING

Choose an appropriate time to talk with your family. If the family member that you need to talk with has a busy lifestyle, then it might be easier for you to set a meeting time. This way, each person's attention can be focused on the issue.

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Clearly tell your family member how you feel and what you want or need by being honest and direct. Think carefully about your relationship and pay attention to your family member's response. Depending on the specific family member, you might have to address issues differently. Remember to use "I" statements, take deep breaths, keep a reasonable tone, and actively listen to your family member.

ASK

Does anyone know what an "I" statement is?

ALLOW

participants' responses. If no one provides the right definition, use the one below:

STATE

An "I" statement is a way of expressing your feelings and reactions about someone's behavior without pointing blame at the person. When a person uses an "I" statement, she or he first describes how she or he is feeling, thus "owning" her or his feeling or reaction.

ASK

How might another person feel or react if you were upset with them and first pointed out what they did wrong?

ALLOW

responses. Examples include angry or defensive.

WRITE

the following formula on poster paper or a chalk/dry erase board.



STATE *The formula for an "I" statement is as follows:*
"I feel _____ (fill in an emotion) when you _____
(behavior). What I need is _____ (action you would
like the other person to take, or change they might make)."

ASK *Who can give me an example of an "I" statement?*

ALLOW *responses.*

STATE *An "I" statement might still be difficult for someone to hear. It*
sometimes works to take a deep breath, speak as calmly as
possible, and put the emphasis on how you are feeling and what
you would like to see change rather than what the other person is
doing "wrong."

ASK *Are there any questions?*

ALLOW *responses.*

CONTINUE *reading the "Family...T.A.L.K." handout.*

STATE **LOCATION**
Choose a quiet place where you and your family member
cannot be interrupted or overheard by others.

KNOW WHAT TO SAY
Think about what you want to say in advance by sorting
out your own feelings about the issue before talking with your
family member. You might find that making a list or writing a letter
of your thoughts and feelings will help you focus.

Now let's discuss what each T.A.L.K. point stands for.

SELECT *a scenario from the following list.*

READ *aloud the scenario you selected.*

SCENARIO 1:
Imagine that you and a family member had an argument about
your responsibilities at home. I'm going to ask you several
questions about talking to that person about reducing your
chores.

You are 16 years old and you feel like you have NO social life
because your mom pours on the responsibilities at home. When
you get home from a full day of school, she goes to work, so you
must watch your three younger siblings, clean up their messes,
help them with their homework, and then make dinner for them.
You're also responsible for getting them to bed. After that, you
have your own homework to do. It's a wonder you have any
friends. Last time you and your mom tried to talk about this,
a huge argument broke out. You really wish you had
more time to yourself.



SCENARIO 2:

Imagine that you and a family member had an argument about the friends with whom you hang out. I'm going to ask you several questions about talking to that person about your friends.

You are 15 and recently made the varsity soccer team. That's a huge deal for someone not yet in high school. You like spending time with the other players, but your parents aren't thrilled with you hanging out with 17 and 18 year olds. And, to be honest, they do drink and throw big parties, but you feel like you can still be friends with them and not do those things. You feel like your parents don't trust you, which is ridiculous because you've never done anything to lose their trust before. Last time you all talked about this, your dad flipped out.

SCENARIO 3:

Imagine that you and a family member had an argument about your coming out to them. I'm going to ask you several questions about talking to that person about your sexual orientation.

You are 14 and identify as gay. It's been something you've known for a while, but you never spoke up about it. At school, you joined the Gay/Straight Alliance, and are starting to feel more comfortable being out and proud. But when you told your dad, he didn't take it so well. He kept yelling about your being too young to know and too young to like anyone. Then he threw up his hands and walked out of the room. It's not like he kicked you out or anything, but now you feel really uncomfortable at home. He doesn't talk to you much and he certainly doesn't look you in the eye. It's like he doesn't want to know you anymore. He's the only family you've got, and you're really hoping to get his support.

ASK

Does anyone need to hear the scenario again?

REPEAT

as necessary, reminding participants to put themselves in the situation.

ASK

What would you say?

When would you say it?

Where would you say it?

REMIND

participants to use the "Family...T.A.L.K." worksheet to help them answer the questions.

WRITE

responses on a piece of poster paper or on a chalk/dry erase board.



families

STATE

I hope you all feel prepared to practice effective communication with your family members.

Remember that when you need help communicating with your family members, you can call 1-800-RUNAWAY and talk to someone at the National Runaway Switchboard. An NRS front line team member (hotline staff and volunteers, or "liners") can even help mediate a discussion between you and your guardian.

ASK

Do you have any questions or comments?

DISCUSS

responses.



MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ACTIVITY 5D. FAMILY COMMUNICATION TIPS

10 minutes



- INTRODUCE** family communication tips.
- HAND OUT** "Family Communication Tips" handouts.
- STATE** *Let's read the tips together. You can ask questions about each of them as we go through the list.*
- HAVE** each participant read a tip. Your list includes comments to make about each tip.
1. Set aside time to talk.
-Remember what the "T" in "T.A.L.K." stands for (TIMING).
 2. Don't expect your family to read your mind.
-Why is this important?
 3. Be specific and realistic about your expectations and requests.
-This is a good place to use an "I" statement.
 4. Have patience! Good communication takes time and effort.
-Consider the "K" in "T.A.L.K." and spend time preparing what you want to communicate.
 5. Brainstorm ideas before making a final decision.
-Consider all of your options, including pros and cons of each.
 6. Ask for input from family members.
-It may be helpful to seek the assistance of a neutral family member as a resource.
 7. Write things down; make a list of changes you want to see.
-Finish the statement "What I need is...", which is part of an "I" statement.
 8. Be willing to compromise.
-Can someone give me an example of a compromise?
 9. Do fun things together.
-What are some fun things you all do with your "family?"
 10. Use community resources when you need help.
-What are some resources in this community?





If you are in a Safe Place community, you might want to mention it as a resource. You can access their information at <http://www.nationalsafeplace.org>.

ASK

Can you think of any other tips you might add?

DISCUSS

responses.

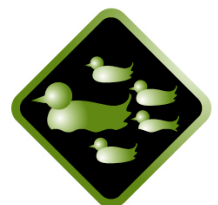
ASK

Do you have any questions or comments?

DISCUSS

responses.

families



MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SUMMARY

STATE

- "Family" can be people related to you, the people you live with, or friends you choose.
- Families can be a source of support or stress. No two are alike.
- Each person has a role within the family. There are different responsibilities that go hand-in-hand with certain family roles.
- Everyone needs to have a role to feel part of the family.
- Talking with a family member about an important issue can be difficult.
- "I" statements are important when communicating about a difficult issue.
- The acronym "T.A.L.K." reminds us to
 - **T**ime the talk so it occurs when we're ready.
 - **A**ssertively communicate, stating our needs as well as acknowledging those of others.
 - **L**ocate the talk where we can speak freely.
 - **K**now in advance what we want to say.
- There are many communication tips to help us when we talk with our family members.

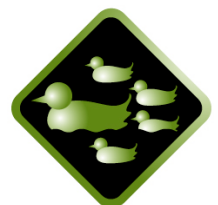
ASK

What communication tip will help you most?

DISCUSS

responses.

roles



MODULE 5: FAMILIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

HANDOUTS AND WORKSHEETS

- A. Family Matters
- B. Roles and Responsibilities
- C. Family...T.A.L.K.
- D. Family Communication Tips

REFERENCES

Harper, G. W., Bangi, A. K., Sanchez, B., Doll, M., & Pedraza, A. (2006). Improving the sexual health of Latina adolescents: A participatory empowerment approach. In J. Denner & B. Guzman (Eds). *Latina Adolescent Girls: Strengths and Strategies*. New York: NYU Press.

Levy, Jeff, LCSW, CTRS, Live Oak, Inc. in Chicago, IL. "Household Drawing Technique" from the workshop "Creative and Expressive Strategies with Youth At Risk and Their Families." Adapted from Ken Jacobson, LCSW, Jewish Children's Bureau.

National Runaway Switchboard (2001). *Runaway Prevention Curriculum For Classroom and Community Educators*, Chicago, IL: NRS

RESOURCES

As a service of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the website provides access to print, electronic publications, websites, and online databases covering a wide range of topics (<http://www.childwelfare.gov/organizations/index.cfm>).

The Children, Youth and Family Consortium's website is a bridge to a wide range of information and resources about children and families. It connects research, teaching, policy, and community practice (<http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/welcome.html>).

The National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth (NCFY) is a free information service for communities, organizations, and individuals interested in developing new and effective strategies for supporting young people and their families (<http://www.ncfy.com>).

National Runaway Switchboard is the federally-designated national communication system (hotline and website) for runaway and homeless youth. Youth and family members call 1-800-RUNAWAY or access the website to work through problems and to find local help (<http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org>).

Safe Place provides access to immediate help and supportive resources for all young people in crisis through a network of sites sustained by qualified agencies, trained volunteers, and businesses (<http://nationalsafeplace.org>).



FAMILY MATTERS

Directions: Pretend that someone peeled back the roof of the structure you consider “home.” Draw the rooms and people that make up what you consider home. Think about the responsibilities of each person that you include under your roof.

Need to talk? Call us.
1-800-RUNAWAY
National Runaway Switchboard
www.1800RUNAWAY.org



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Directions: Use 1 minute to list at least 5 of the responsibilities that you perform within a typical week. Make sure that no one else sees your list.

responsibilities

Need to talk? Call us.
1-800-RUNAWAY
National Runaway Switchboard
www.1800RUNAWAY.org



Family...



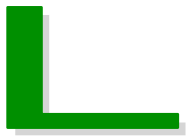
TIMING

Choose an appropriate time to talk with your family. If the family member that you need to talk with has a busy lifestyle, then it might be easier for you to set a meeting time. This way, each person's attention can be focused on the issue.



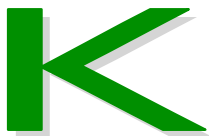
ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Clearly tell your family member how you feel and what you want or need by being honest and direct. Think carefully about your relationship and pay attention to your family member's response. Depending on the specific family member, you might have to address issues differently. Remember to use "I" statements, take deep breaths, keep a reasonable tone, and actively listen to your family member.



LOCATION

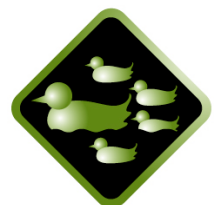
Choose a quiet place where you and your family member cannot be interrupted or overheard by others.



NOW WHAT TO SAY

Think about what you want to say ahead of time by sorting out your own feelings about the issue before talking with your family member. You might find that making a list or writing a letter of your thoughts and feelings can help you focus.

Need to talk? Call us.
1-800-RUNAWAY
National Runaway Switchboard
www.1800RUNAWAY.org



FAMILY COMMUNICATION TIPS

Directions: Use these tips to help your family improve their relationships. Post them in a central spot. Not all tips will work for everyone. Pick the ones that work for you. What other tips would you add?

1. Set aside time to talk.
2. Don't expect your family to read your mind.
3. Be specific and realistic about your expectations and requests.
4. Have patience! Good communication takes time and effort.
5. Brainstorm ideas before making a final decision.
6. Ask for input from family members.
7. Write things down; make a list of changes you want to see.
8. Be willing to compromise.
9. Do fun things together.
10. Use community resources when you need help.

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Module 5: Families: Roles and Responsibilities Pre and Post-Activity Worksheet

Initials:

Directions: Please put your initials at the top of the page and circle "pre" if you are taking the test before class or "post" if you are taking the test after class. Answer the following questions to the best of your ability!

What is your **gender:** _____ **Race/ethnicity:** _____ **Age:** _____

- We each play a number of these in our own families.
 - Characters
 - Games
 - Roles
 - None of the above
- If we didn't have _____, things at home would not get done.
 - responsibilities
 - rules
 - siblings
 - schedules
- An "I" statement is a statement that _____.
 - blames someone else for how you are feeling
 - states how you are feeling and what you need
 - states how you are feeling
 - is any statement beginning with "I"
- The "K" in T.A.L.K. stands for _____.
 - knowledge
 - know what to say
 - know who to talk to
 - know when to have the discussion
- Good family communication _____.
 - just happens
 - takes patience, time, and effort
 - is not important
 - is not my responsibility
- Location is important in T.A.L.K. because _____.
 - you want to be in a place where it is quiet
 - you want to have distractions
 - you want to be overheard by others
 - all of the above
- Assertive communication is _____.
 - forcing your opinion on others
 - being direct and honest
 - telling someone how you feel and what you want
 - both b and c
- When you need to communicate seriously with your family, it is best to _____.
 - talk whenever you feel like it
 - talk a few minutes before your parents are leaving for work
 - talk at a sports game
 - set a time when everyone can be engaged and focused
- What would **NOT** be a tip for effective family communication?
 - Don't expect your family to read your mind
 - Be patient
 - Think of lots of ideas before making a decision
 - Don't be too specific about your requests
- The makeup of every family is the same.
 - True
 - False

