

RESPECT

Successful family relationships begin with respect. This doesn't mean we're perfect and deserve respect. No! Our respect for each other grows out of the recognition for each other. We show respect by showing love for one another.

This implies that we must allow each other to be individuals. We can't dominate each other for our own personal needs. We don't manipulate people we respect. All our attempts to force the thoughts and actions of the rest of the family may work- but only outwardly. People whose lives are dictated by others, feel they are not respected. They're neither happy nor productive.

Parents teach most effectively when they model the values they accept. Training and demanding are very different words.

The games in this section offer us a chance to listen to each other, so we can respect the thoughts and feelings of those we love most.

1) BIRTHDAY CERTIFICATES

Materials: Paper, paint or crayons, old magazines, scissors, glue.

Method: Get the family together around the kitchen or dining room table, with paint, crayons, and old magazines ready for use. Explain that each person will get to create a personalized BIRTHDAY CERTIFICATE for the birthday person.

Ask that each person first finish this sentence without talking out loud. "I respect our birthday person because - ." Then invite each family member to illustrate his or her answer. Draw or paint a picture. Or write a fancy poem. Or find some old magazine pictures that illustrate the message. The birthday person can create a certificate as well, suggesting a reason he or she deserves respect.

After everyone is finished, let the birthday person guess the meaning of each certificate. After all the certificates have been discussed, give them to the person to save or to hang on the wall.

2) FOOD FAIRE

Materials: Your family car and local grocery store.

Method: Announce to the family that everyone is going to the store to buy one food item. The only requirement (except a price ceiling, perhaps) is that each person must choose a food he or she has never tasted before.

Return home. Take turns introducing the food by reading the label and passing out samples. No one eats a particular food until each person has a sample. Then at the same moment everyone tastes together. This prevents one person from prejudicing the attitude of the rest. Continue around the circle until all foods have been tasted.

This game works only if everyone promises in advance to try a sample of every food selected. FOOD FAIRE increases respect for the choices of others in the family, and may also be used to increase respect for the foods of other cultures.

3) STORY BOARDS

Materials: Some small bulletin boards or clipboards, enough for everyone in the family. Paper and pens, crayons, or paint

Method: Distribute the bulletin boards/ clipboards. Explain that each board will become an art center to be displayed wherever the person chooses.

Ask each family member to finish this sentence for the others in the family. "I think you help our family when you"

Suggest that people can draw or paint their response, if they don't want to write.

Distribute the completed art and discuss. Hang the boards in a prominent place. Leave them up until you want to change them. Then answer a different question.

Samples: "I think your most important strength is" ; "I like it when you" ; "I remember fondly the time when you"

4) CENTER STAGE

Materials: None.

Method: Move furniture around so that everyone faces two chairs, one for the "host" and one for the "guest." Draw names to determine the host and first guest. The host then interviews the guest, who pretends to be someone he or she highly respects. Run the game as a typical talk show, with the "host" asking questions about the background, attitudes, and activities of the "guest."

After the host has completed the interview of the guest, ask the family to guess the identity of the person.

This game works even better if each person can choose a highly respected person in advance, so everyone can do some prior reading about the person they'll be representing.

After each has had a turn, discuss your choices. Why did you choose the people you did?

5) FIVE FAVOURITES

Materials: Paper and pencils or pens.

Method: Respect for others includes respect for their preferences. This game gives you a chance to discover the preferences of the rest of the family.

Give each person a 3 x 5 piece of paper. Read the following questions, asking each person to answer them.

1. What two colors do you like best as a combination?
2. What's your favorite quality in other people?
3. What's your favorite sport to watch?
4. What's your favorite dessert?
5. What's a favorite book?

Put all the completed papers into a box or jar. One person (mom or dad) draws each of the papers out of the jar, one at a time. After each draw, he or she slowly reads the answers. The rest of the family tries to guess whose list of favorites is being read.

6) HALL OF FAME

Materials: Paper and pens, pencils, crayons, or paint.

Method: Respect for others includes respect for the people important to them. This is a drawing or painting game about our heroes.

Each person thinks of an answer to this question: "Who do you respect most in this world?"

Do not answer the question out loud.

Family members then draw a representation of the person they respect.

After everyone is finished, go around the circle, trying to guess the identity of the people chosen as favorites.

Ask people why they chose the persons they did.

You may want to hang all the pictures together for a while in a prominent place.

7) FAMILY T&T

Materials: Paper and pencils.

Method: Choose who will get the first batch of telegrams. Then everyone writes a telegram to that person at the same time.

The person who's receiving the telegrams can choose a phrase for people to use at the beginning of the telegram.

Each telegram begins with the same words.

Some examples: "I like you because ..."; "I remember how good I felt when you told me ..."

Put all the telegrams into a pile.

The person receiving them picks them up, one at a time and reads them out loud.

Other members can comment as they wish.

Take turns so that everyone gets a chance to receive a series of telegrams.

8) I NEED RESPECT

Materials: None.

Method: This game gives everyone a chance to tell others how he or she likes to be respected.

Each person finishes this sentence on a piece of paper, "I think I should be respected when ..."

After everyone has completed writing the sentence, announce that each person gets to direct a play, each family member must participate.

The first person reads his or her sentence, and imagines a situation which would illustrate the respect he or she wants. The rest of the family acts out the situation, following the instructions of the "director."

Take turns until each family member has directed a play revealing how he or she wants people to show respect.

9) GUESS WHO

Materials: None.

Method: One person leaves the room. Everyone else writes a compliment about the person who just left.

After everyone has finished, the person is called back.

Choose one person to read the compliments, one at a time. The person tries to guess who wrote the compliment.

Take turns leaving the room until the entire family has had a chance to be complimented.