

SESSION 5

LOTS OF PEOPLE LIKE US

OVERVIEW:

To understand that most families struggle with problems. Many families dealing with today's issues feel alone and disempowered. A lot of kids today feel that they are responsible for the problems in their family. When a person is able to share in a trusting environment, they may find serenity and solutions. This session is designed to help members see that they are not alone. Through the support of group members. The goal is to increase resiliency skills.

WORKSHEETS:

- * The 4 C's Kindergarten - Parent
- * Facts About Children of Alcoholics Kindergarten - Parent
- * Information From The National Association for COA's 7th grade - Parents
- * Fostering Resiliency in Kids Parent & Teacher
- * People Who Are Important to Me Kindergarten - Parent
- * What Can I Change? 4th grade - Parent
- * In Your Family High School - Parent
- * Genogram 4th grade - Parents

ART:

- * All About My Family Kindergarten - 6th grade

STORY:

- * The Wizard of Oz Kindergarten - Parent

GAMES:

- * Feeling Faces Kindergarten - Parents



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR KIDS!
Kids are not responsible for adult problems.

You did not Cause it.

You can not Control it.

You can not Cure it.

BUT YOU CAN COPE!

FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

- ♦ An estimated 28 million Americans have at least one alcoholic parent.
- ♦ One out of every four school children comes from an alcoholic family.
- ♦ More than 50% of all children of alcoholics grow up and marry an alcoholic.
- ♦ Children of alcoholics are at the highest risk of developing alcoholism themselves or marry someone who becomes an alcoholic
- ♦ In 90% of all child abuse cases, alcohol is a significant problem.
- ♦ Children of alcoholics are frequently victims of child abuse, incest, neglect and violence.
- ♦ A disproportionate number of children of alcoholics enter juvenile justice systems, courts, prisons, mental health facilities and are referred to school authorities.
- ♦ Children of alcoholics are prone to experience a range of psychological difficulties, including learning difficulties, anxiety, eating disorders, attempted and completed suicides, and compulsive achieving.
- ♦ Children of alcoholics often adapt to the unpredictability and chaos of an alcoholic home developing behaviors which result in low self-esteem, depression, isolation, guilt and difficulty maintaining satisfying relationships. These and other problems often persist throughout adulthood.
- ♦ The problems of most children of alcoholics remain invisible because their coping behavior tends to be socially acceptable and approval seeking .
- ♦ In 1979 no more than 5% of children of alcoholics were receiving assistance.

Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
National Association for Children of Alcoholics

Information From The National Association For Children Of Alcoholics

Source: Prevention Forum, Fall 1990

Handout for discussion, 7th - Parent

Because one in every eight Americans is the child of an alcoholic, CoAs are not a small minority. **JUST SOME FACTS:**

- Children of alcoholics are at a higher risk than children of non-alcoholics for alcoholism or marry into a family where alcoholism exists.
- Children of alcoholics have two to four times greater risk of alcoholism than children of non-alcoholics.
- Children of alcoholics are prone to learning disabilities, anxiety, eating disorders, stress related medical problems and compulsive achieving.
- In up to 90% of child abuse cases, alcohol is a significant factor.
- Children of Alcoholics often develop an inability to trust, an extreme need to control, excessive sense of responsibility and denial of feelings, which can persist throughout adulthood.
- One of three families currently reports alcohol abuse by a family member.
- More than half of all alcoholics have an alcoholic parent.
- Children of alcoholics exhibit symptoms of depression and anxiety more than children of non-alcoholics.
- It is estimated there are approximately 28.6 million children of alcoholics in the United States; 6.6 million are under the age of 18 and live with a practicing alcoholic(s).
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is the leading cause of retardation in the United States today. 15% of all live births are prenatal exposed, resulting in detectable birth defects.

As youngsters, these children may be more likely to: do poorly in school, be truant or delinquent, use alcohol or drugs, be neglected or abused, feel lonely, unloved or frightened and have few friends.

As adults, children of alcoholics may suffer from alcoholism or physical or mental illness, or may be rigidly controlled overachievers who suffer depression in mid-life.

Alcoholism runs in families, continuing the cycle on to future generations. As we enter the 21st century, NACoA's vision is to motivate caregivers to intervene in the life of a child of an alcoholic or other drug abuser. Women are the prime targets of the campaign to save the children.

FOSTERING RESILIENCY IN KIDS

Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community

Source: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
HANDOUT AND/OR INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND FACILITATOR

PROFILE OF THE RESILIENT CHILD: *Resilient children are considerably more responsive (and can elicit more positive responses from others), more active, and more flexible and adaptable even in infancy. The resilient child as one who " works well, plays well, loves well, an expects well".*

Research on resilient children has discovered that these problem solving skills are identifiable in early childhood. The attributes of social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and sense of purpose appear to be the common threads running through the personalities of resilient children.

1. **SOCIAL COMPETENCE:** *Identified attribute of resilient children usually includes the qualities of responsiveness, flexibility, empathy and caring, communication skills, a sense of humor, and any other prosocial behavior. Resilient children are considerably more responsive (and can elicit more positive responses from others), more active, and more flexible and adaptable even in infancy.*
2. **PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS:** *These skills include the ability to think abstractly, reflectively, and flexibly and to be able to attempt alternate solutions for both cognitive and social problems.*
3. **AUTONOMY:** *To separate oneself from a dysfunctional family environment.*
4. **SENSE OF PURPOSE AND FUTURE:** *Related to a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy and the belief that one can have some degree of control over one's environment.*

PROTECTIVE FACTORS WITHIN THE FAMILY: *What clearly emerges as a powerful predictor of the outcome for children and youth is the quality of the immediate caregiving environment, which is determined by the following characteristics. The incredible power of their attribute of caring, support, and affection to protect children is clear.*

1. **CARING AND SUPPORT:** *Most resilient children, even those in family discord or poverty, have established a close bond with at least one person (not necessarily the mother or father) who provided them with stable care, from whom they received adequate and appropriate attention during the first year of life. A basic sense of trust developed in the early years, due to caring and support, appears to be the critical foundation for human development and bonding, thus human resiliency.*
2. **HIGH EXPECTATIONS:** *Families that establish high expectations for their children's behavior from an early age play a role in developing resiliency in their children.*

3. **ENCOURAGE CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION:** When children are given responsibilities, the message is clearly communicated that they are worthy and capable of being contributing members of the family. For families to create environments characterized by the qualities of caring, high expectations, and opportunities for participation, they in turn must exist in communities which also provide support and opportunities.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS WITHIN THE SCHOOL: *There is ample evidence that a school can serve as a protective shield to help children withstand the many difficulties of a stressful world, which includes both family and environment. Also included in the evidence is the fact that schools have the power to overcome incredible risk factors in the lives of youth including those for alcohol and drug abuse.*

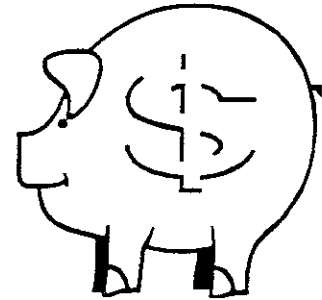
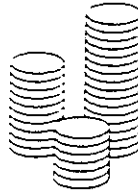
1. **CARING AND SUPPORT:** *Just as in the family arena, a level of caring and support within the school is a powerful predictor of positive outcome for youth. A factor often overlooked is the role of caring peers and friends in the school and community environments.*
2. **HIGH EXPECTATIONS:** *Schools that establish high expectations for all kids and give them the support necessary to achieve them, have incredibly high rates of academic success. When the message one consistently hears is, "You are a bright and capable person", one naturally sees oneself as a bright and capable person.*
3. **YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT:** *A natural outcome in schools, as in families, of having high expectations for youth is providing them with the opportunities to participate and be meaningfully involved and have roles of responsibility within the school environment. The operating dynamic reflects the fundamental human need to bond, to participate, to belong, to have some power or control over one's life.*

PROTECTIVE FACTORS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY: *The community must support its families and schools, have high expectation and clear norms for its families and schools and encourage the active participation and collaboration of its families and schools in the life and work of the community.*

1. **CARING AND SUPPORT:** *Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of caring and support at the community level is the availability of resources necessary for healthy human development: health care, child care, housing, education, job training, employment and recreation.*
2. **HIGH EXPECTATIONS:** *Countries in which drunkenness is more socially acceptable tend to have higher rates of alcohol abuse.*
3. **OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION:** *The natural outcome of having high expectations for youth is the creation of opportunities for them to be contributing members of their community. Shifting the balance or tipping the scales from vulnerability to resilience may happen as a result of one person or one opportunity.*

PROTECTIVE FACTORS PERSPECTIVE: *A major underlying cause of the development of social problems can be traced back to the gradual destruction of naturally occurring social networks in the community.*

What Can I Change?



Examples

4th grade - Parent

4th Ppt-15 CHANGE SALES 04

WHEN YOU... Describe to the other person the exact behavior you find bothersome. Be objective and specific.

POOR "You're ignoring me! You insensitive, spiteful, obnoxious creep!"

BETTER "When we set up a time to meet somewhere you're often late."

I FEEL... Express how you feel about the other person's behavior. Acknowledge that these are your feelings.

POOR "You make me so angry I could wring your neck. You are disgusting. I hate you."

BETTER "When you do this my feelings get hurt. I feel that I'm unimportant to you."

I WISH/ I WANT... Ask clearly for a different, specific behavior. "Please stop doing X and start doing Y." The request must be reasonable and within the power of the other person to meet.

POOR "Notice I'm Alive!"

BETTER "I wish you would really make an effort to be on time when we set something up."

IF YOU CAN DO THAT, I WILL... Spell out the positive effect if the other person can change. This may be as simple as making you feel better. Emphasize the positive consequences whenever possible.

POOR "If you don't, I'll trash your home."

BETTER "I'd feel more respected and our relationship would be better."

DIRECTIONS:

1. Using the examples above discuss the ability to change situations. Remember you rarely can change the way others feel, think or behave. Be sure to use the handout the 4 C's.
2. Giving each group member the opportunity to share, ask the questions:
What are 3 things in your life you cannot change? (These are some things I will probably not be able to change, no matter how upset I get and no matter how hard I try. I will work on accepting them.) What are 3 things in your life you can change? (These are some things I can change, either in a small way or in a big way. I will work on changing them.)
3. Have group members pick one change for the following week. They will report back to the group during Highs & Lows at the next meeting.

Source: Thinking, Changing, Rearranging, Timberline Press

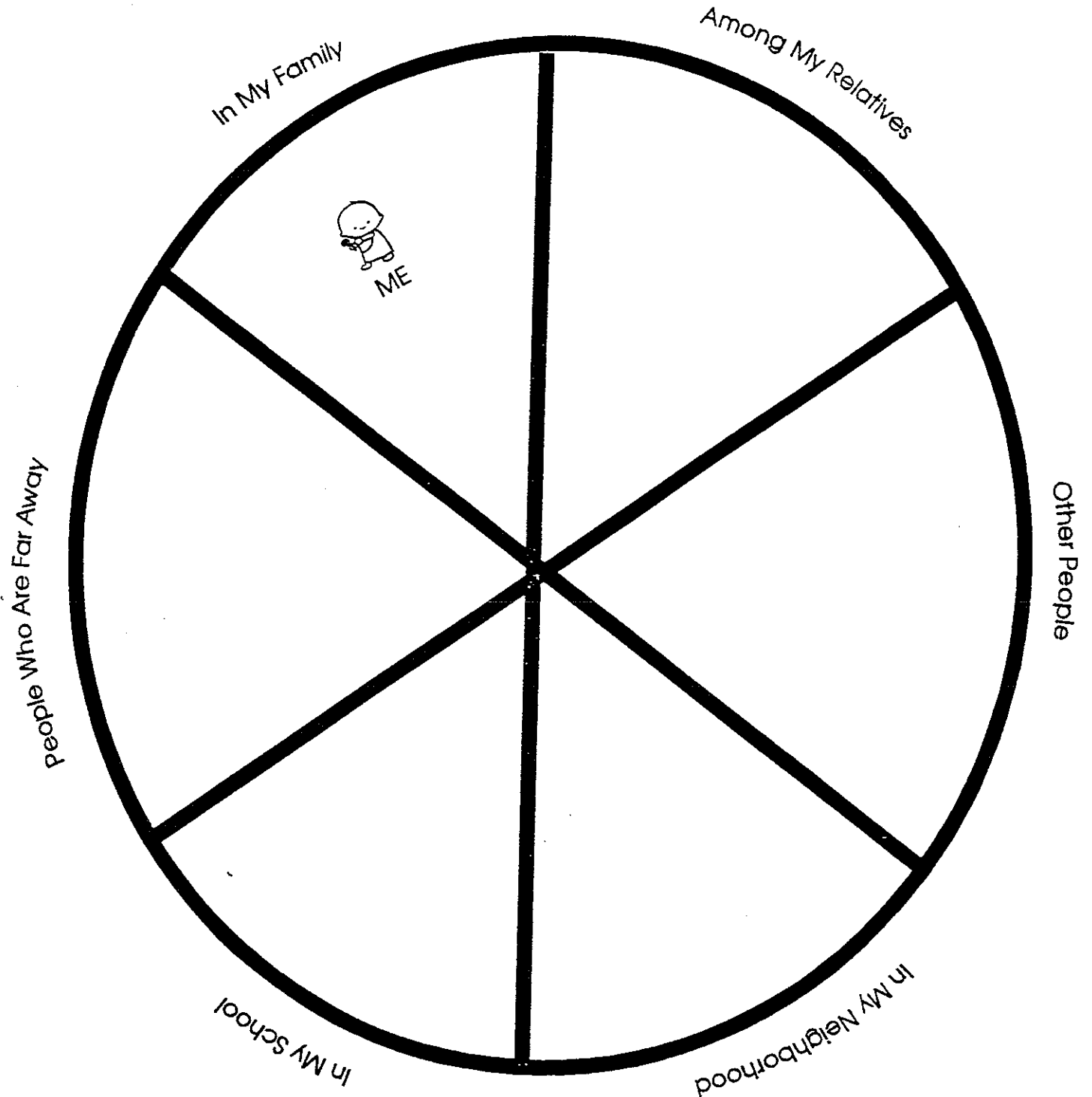
PEOPLE WHO ARE IMPORTANT TO ME

DIRECTIONS: Have group members draw or write in the circle, people who they consider significant in their life

GOAL: To identify people who may be resources for problem solving, communication, caring, etc.

Kindergarten - Parent

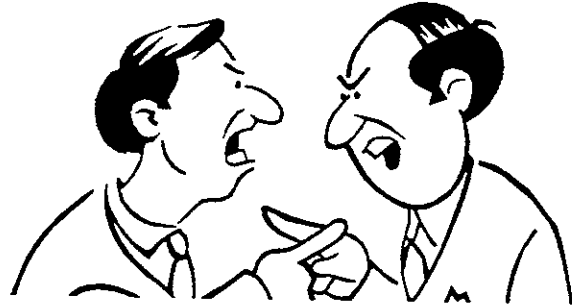
Source: The Value Corner, Weston Press



IN YOUR FAMILY?

DIRECTIONS: Check the box(s) that relate to you. Follow with a group discussion, **HOW DOES FAMILY PROBLEMS AFFECT YOU AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS?**

High School - Parents



- Do you constantly seek approval and affirmation?
- Do you fail to recognize your accomplishments?
- Do you fear criticism?
- Do you over react?
- Have you had problems with your own compulsive behavior?
- Do you have a need for perfection?
- Are you uneasy when your life is going smoothly, continually anticipating problems?
- Do you feel more alive in the midst of a crisis?
- Do you feel responsible for others, as you did for a problem in your family?
- Do you care for others easily, yet find it difficult to care for yourself?
- Do you isolate yourself from other people?
- Do you respond with anxiety to authority figures and angry people?
- Do you feel that individuals and society in general are taking advantage of you?
- Do you have trouble with letting people get close to you?
- Do you confuse pity with love?
- Do you attract and seek people who tend to be compulsive?
- Do you cling to relationships because you are afraid of being alone?
- Do you often mistrust your own feelings and the feelings expressed by others?
- Do you find it difficult to express your emotions?
- Do you think the family problem may have affected you?

The above questions indicate that there may be a problem that is not being dealt with in a family. Family problems affect all members of the family. When a family is ignoring the problem it continues to grow, causing negative behavior among all members.

Adapted from the Alanon Family Group literature: Alcoholism and addiction is a family disease. Those who have lived with this disease sometimes have problems which the Alanon program can help to resolve. If you answered yes to some or all of the questions and the answers relate to substance abuse, Alanon is a resource that may help. You can call Alanon at 462-1352.

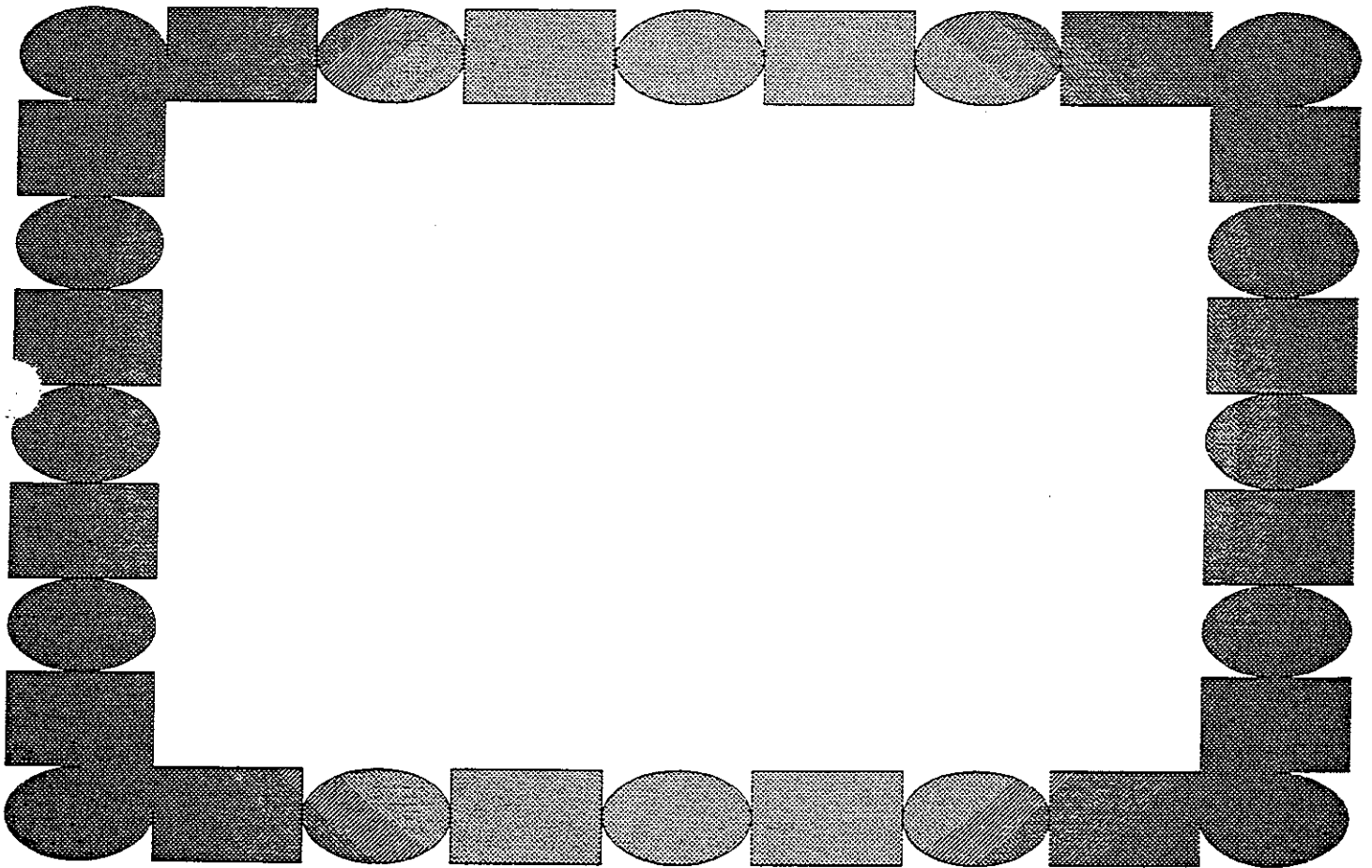
Ami Pro-(SALANON.SAM) #3

All About My Family

Kindergarten - 6th grade

Ami Pro-(SALL SAM) #4

1. Draw the members of your family in the frame below or on back of this ditto.
2. Name each member, and write something special about each member.
3. Draw a heart around or by the member you feel closest to.
4. Draw a circle around the member you would like to feel closest to.
5. Put a star next to the parent that makes most of the decisions.
6. Put a ? next to the parent that makes the least decisions.
7. When you finish the drawing, answer the questions below.
8. Each group member will have the opportunity to share drawings and family information with the group.

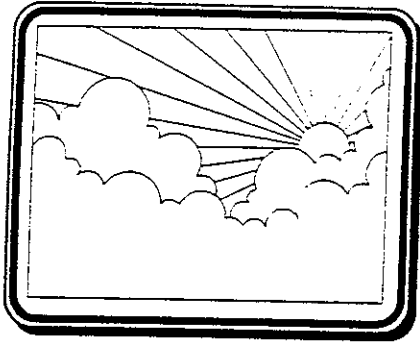


I feel special when my family?

One thing about my Family I can change is?

What I add to my family is ?

One thing I would change about my Family but can't is?



WIZARD OF OZ

Once upon a time there was a young girl named Dorothy, who lived in Kansas. A big storm came to her town in 1993 and blew her house to another land. There she found herself abandoned and alone.

Dorothy was frightened, all she wanted to do is find her way home. And then appeared a good witch. The good witch said, "I will help you Dorothy". So Dorothy began her journey. But Dorothy would have many obstacles. There was also a bad witch who would make her journey difficult.

Dorothy was told that the only way to get home, was to visit the Wizard in the land of Oz. The road to Oz was called the Yellow Brick Road.

Dorothy began to follow the Yellow Brick Road alone. But along the way she met a boy named Scarecrow, he too was alone. Scarecrow was picked on a lot and he didn't know how to deal with the teasing. What he thought he needed, was a brain, to help think of ways to deal with his problems. So Dorothy asked him to join her on the way to OZ. Maybe the Wizard could also help Scarecrow. Also along the way she met a Tin Man, who felt he needed a heart, maybe then he wouldn't be so alone. And then they met a Lion, who felt he needed courage, so he could feel strong and good about himself. Dorothy started to feel not so alone anymore. She began to see that there were others that had similar problems and who felt like she did.

Finally when they reach the Land of Oz and met the Wizard. He helped them to realize that they had the answers to their difficulties. Dorothy was home with her friends, they would guide her to Kansas. Scarecrow was very bright, his recognizing the problem was step towards the solution. Tin Man had a heart, he cared about his friends and they cared for him. And Lion had great courage, he protected his friends against the bad witch. Being a good honest friend many times takes courage. Dorothy, Scarecrow, the Tin Man and Lion realized that they were smart, courageous, caring and not alone!

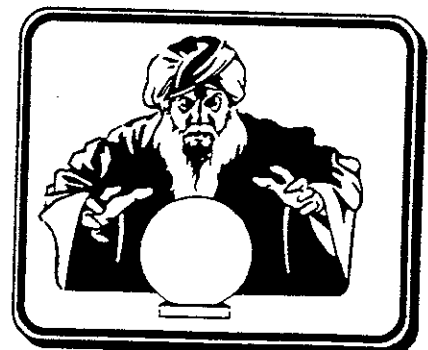
NOTE: The facilitator can adapt the story to meet the needs of the group (relating to current problems of group members). Please emphasize that they are not alone, they are resilient.

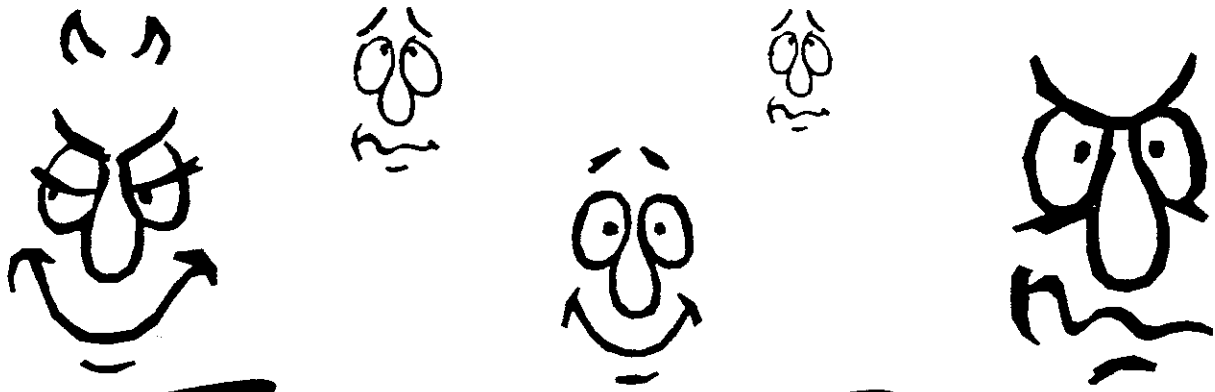
Kindergarten - Parent
Adapted From: The Wizard of Oz

Am: Pro-(SWIZARD) #3

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the storm mean to you?
2. What does the Yellow Brick Road mean to you?
3. Who are the scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Lion to you?
4. What does the brain, heart and courage mean to you?





Feeling Faces

The game demonstrates that everyone struggles with problems and feelings. Group members are encouraged to identify feelings. They learn that feelings are neither right nor wrong, they just are! The first step to working with a problem is to identify the feeling. Group members learn to share experiences and the feeling that relates to the situation.

Directions:

1. Hand each group member an index card. Using felt pins, the group members will draw a face on each index card.
2. The facilitator chooses a group member to begin the game. The group member holds the stack of cards in his/her hand face down.
3. The other members pick a card.
4. Each group member takes a turn describing the face on their card. The description will include a feeling. They will then talk about a time that they felt that way.
5. **OPTION:** A basketball hoop, darts, ring toss, etc. can be used. After the group member completes #4, they have a turn at the above options. Points can be calculated. You may also want to do this exercise in teams.

Sharing feelings and experiences helps group members feel that they are not alone!

Materials Needed: Index Cards & Felt Pens.

Kindergarten - Parent

