SESSION 6
FAMILY ROLES

OVERVIEW:

This session explores family roles as a means of coping with stressful family situations. Many families assume the NO TALK, NO FEEL, NO TRUST rules due to their problems. In this session members are encouraged to break down those rules by trusting group members so they are able to talk about their feelings surrounding the situation. The members will also be able to understand the behaviors of others based on the family role that is played.

ICEBREAKERS:

* Back to Back
* Knots

WORKSHEETS:

* Family Roles
* System Dynamics of The Chemically Dependent Family
* How Teachers Can Help Children Of Alcoholics
* The Fowled Up Family
* Genograms

ART:

* Survival Roles In the Family

GAMES:

* Family roles Presentation
* Family Roles Prop List
* Family Sculpture
* Typical Day In My Home
Divide your group into pairs and have them sit on the floor back-to-back and link arms. Then tell them to stand up. With a little timing and cooperation, it shouldn't be too hard. Then combine two pairs into a foursome. Have the foursome sit on the floor back-to-back with arms linked. Tell them to stand up. It is a little harder with four. Keep adding more people to the group until the giant blob can't stand up any more.

The goal of this exercise is to encourage team work. The members will have to work together to accomplish a standing position.

Kindergarten - Parent.
Activity Summary:

In this exercise the participants hold hands while in a large circle. They will entangle and then untangle themselves in accordance with one group member’s instructions. The goal of this exercise is to visualize how families can become entangled with problems. They can untangle themselves through problem solving and communication.

Time: Approximately 5 - 10 minutes.

Space Required: An unobstructed area without tables or chairs.

Directions:

1. The group leader first asks the participants to stand, form a circle and then join hands.
2. When the group members are in position, the trainer explains that they will be taking part in an exercise in which they must cooperate with one another and follow one person’s instructions carefully.
3. Next, the trainer solicits a volunteer to serve as a problem solver. The volunteer is then asked to leave the room.
4. Next, the trainer asks the participants to walk over and/or under one another’s joined hands so that the group becomes tightly entangled. At no time during the activity are the group members to let go of one another’s hands.
5. When the participants are completely entangled, the trainer asks the volunteer to return to the room and begin to unwind the group members without causing them to unclasp their hands.
6. The exercise continues until the group members, with their hands still joined, are again standing in a large circle.
7. At the completion of the exercise, discuss how families become entangled and what they might do to untangle themselves.
When a problem causes stress within the family system, each person assumes a role as a means of coping. The problem controls the family and gives energy to the behaviors of each member, like the sun gives energy to the planets. The family revolves around the problem, like the planets revolve around the sun.

Hand out for 4th - Parents
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>SURVIVAL CHARACTERISTIC</th>
<th>INNER FEELINGS</th>
<th>QUALITIES TO THE FAMILY</th>
<th>OBSERVABLE BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>FUTURE WITHOUT HELP</th>
<th>FUTURE WITH HELP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY SCAPEGOAT</td>
<td>Hostile, defiant, angry.</td>
<td>Isolated, depressed, hurt, guilt, shame, abandoned.</td>
<td>Child removes focus from the chemically dependent person.</td>
<td>Seeks negative attention, won’t compete with hero, identity problems, learning disabilities.</td>
<td>Begins drinking at early age &amp; more, trouble in school &amp; with law, most likely to go to prison.</td>
<td>Accepts responsibility, ability to reality, good counselors, seeks positive attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASCOT</td>
<td>Immature, humorous, hyperactive, likes to attract attention, fragile.</td>
<td>Insecure, sad, fear, lonely, confused, guilt, anger.</td>
<td>Brings relief through humor and fun, &quot;The Comic&quot;.</td>
<td>Difficulty expressing feelings, learning disabilities, short attention span.</td>
<td>Anxiety, compulsive clown, difficulty with intimacy, immature, marries hero, early drinking.</td>
<td>Mature, responsible, less of a clown, good sense of humor, able to express self, more secure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW TEACHERS CAN HELP CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

The following suggestions can help you understand and respond positively to the survival roles that children of alcoholics often adopt to cope with a chemically dependent parent.

THE SUPER CHILD OR FAMILY HERO

- View the child's perfectionism as potentially destructive.
- Give attention when the child is not performing.
- Validate his or her self-worth and separate self-worth from achievement.
- Give the child the message that it's okay to make mistakes.
- Avoid allowing the child to monopolize conversations or to always be the first to answer a question.

THE PROBLEM CHILD OR SCARFACE

- Reward him or her for taking responsibility.
- Try to develop empathy for the child; avoid feeling sorry for him or her.
- Set limits and consequences and follow through.
- Avoid agreeing with the child's complaints.
- Avoid taking the child's behavior personally.

THE QUIET - WITHDRAWN CHILD OR LOST CHILD

- Make one-to-one contact with the child.
- Point out his or her strengths and talents.
- Encourage the child to work with one other person or in a small group.
- Make a point to call on the child even when he or she does not volunteer.
- Avoid letting others answer for him or her.
- Give the child opportunities to get recognition for his or her creativity.

THE FAMILY CLOWN OR MASCOT

- Let the child know when you disapprove of his or her inappropriate behavior.
- Give the child responsible jobs.
- Encourage appropriate humor.
- Avoid responses such as laughter that confuse the child about what is and is not acceptable behavior or that encourage him or her to continue to act inappropriately.
The Fowled-Up Family

...A Study in Co-Dependency

1. Fride Fowler
   - Cautiously Dependent
   - Fear, Guilt, Shame
   - Use of Chemicals
   - Relief of Pain
   - Addiction

2. Wilma Watergate
   - Primary Enabler
   - Anger
   - Super Responsible
   - Importance
   - Low Self-Worth

3. Cluck Kent
   - Famous Head
   - Guilt Inadequacy
   - People Pleaser
   - Positive Attention
   - Compulsive Drive

4. Rhonda Rebel
   - Scaregoat
   - Hurt
   - Defiant
   - Negative Attention
   - Self-Destruction

5. Shy Di
   - Lost Field
   - Loneliness
   - Withdrawn
   - Escape
   - Social Isolation

6. P.T. Barnhardt
   - Mascot
   - Fear
   - Imperative Clown
   - Hyperactivity

Bill O'Connell

Adolescent Counselor  AUG/SEPT 1989
GENOGRAM

Grandfather  Grandmother  Grandfather  Grandmother

Father  Mother

Youth

A = Alcohol Problems  D = Drug Problems  O = Overeater  S = Tobacco Smoker  DP = Depression  MI = Mental Illness
MV = Molest Victim  J = Jail  P = Prison  SA = Suicide Attempts  X = Deceased  XS = Died by Suicide

1. I can talk to

2. I am most like

3. I have conflict with

4. I like to be with

5. I am distant from

6. I wish I was close to

7. I wish I could talk to, but can't
FAMILY ROLES PRESENTATION

DIRECTIONS:

1. Begin by discussing problems that cause stress in families.
2. Then begin the roles presentation, portraying the effect of a family problem on all members. Behaviors change under stress without coping skills.
3. The facilitator will pick a group member for each role. The problem will represent abusive drinking.
4. Use the Family Roles & System Dynamics of the Chemically Dependent Family worksheet as a guide for this exercise.
5. Each role has a prop to represent the dynamics of that particular person (See prop list on the next page).
6. As you introduce each role, explain the characteristics of the role. In healthy families, members assume roles as a means of developing identity and individuality. In a stressed family, the members assume roles as a means of coping.
7. Introduce the roles in this order: Dependent, Codependent, Hero, Scapegoat, Mascot & Lost Child.

REMEMBER THE 3 FAMILY RULES:

DON'T TALK:
○ Don't talk about the private matters to the family or friends.

DON'T FEEL:
○ Feelings hurt, so hide them from self & others.

DON'T TRUST:
○ Experience says you can not trust family or the outside world.
FAMILY ROLES PROPPROPS LIST

- **Dependent:**
  Holos a beer can, stands on a chair and will lean on the
codependent. This represent the power abusive drinking has over
all members.

- **Codependent:**
  Holos a globe overhead. This represent the responsibility this
member assumes as the result of the partners abusive drinking.

- **Hero:**
  Holos a trophy or award, representing the perfection this member
plays. Perfection Hides the problem from the outside world. It
also draws attention. This member stands next to the Codependent,
since he/she becomes the confidant.

- **Scapegoat:**
  Holos a sling shot or bat, representing the troublemaker. This
member also seeks attention, but looks for it in a negative way.
He/she will not try to compete with the Hero. The Scapegoat
stands next to the Hero, the Hero has assumed the role of
parenting.

- **Mascot:**
  Wears funny glasses and a beanie, or anything funny. This member
keeps people at a distance to avoid the problem. This member tells
bad jokes and is constantly irritating. The Mascot stands next to
the Scapegoat and is always provoking.

- **Lost Child:**
  Hugs a doll or stuffed animal. This member fantasizes the way
he/she would like the family to be. This member stands in the back
of the room. The family forgets he/she is around.

This exercise illustrates Family Roles in a non-threatening way. It allows the
participants to explore all the possible roles within a family in a fun and supportive
atmosphere.

4th grade - Parent
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>On the Outside</th>
<th>On the Inside</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codependent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hero</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scapegoat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mascot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each group member will have the opportunity to sculpt their family. The group members will represent family members. The member presenting their family will choose individuals to represent each member in their family. Family member's will be placed in positions identifying relationship dynamics, personalities and who is close to whom. EXAMPLE: In my family my parents are divorced and I am closer to my mother I would place the person representing my father far away and the person representing my mother close to me. I have a brother who is never home, so I would place him near us, but not close. This exercise allows the group members to picture their family and understand the dynamics within.

4th grade - Parent
The group will act out a typical scene in the home of one of the group members. EXAMPLE: Returning from school, watching TV, eating dinner, taking a trip etc...

QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER:

Who's There?
What's said?
What's going on?
Where are you?

4th grade- Parents