

Be a Youth First Family

*Resources from Youth First Social Workers and Programs
for parents and caregivers to use in the home.*

Families

A Quick-Start Guide to Family Meetings

Life can be hectic, and it may seem as if each family member is pulled in different directions due to work, school, social and extracurricular commitments. One way to improve family communication and keep everyone informed is to implement family meetings on a regular basis.

To start, plan to hold family meetings once a week (for at least 20 minutes in duration) during a time convenient for the family. All members of the household who consider themselves family should attend the meetings. Next, determine a location that is free from distraction and a time that works with everyone's schedule. Establish a routine in this location and time each week.

Initially, start with a short agenda that can be lengthened as your routine develops. The topic of the first meeting can be discussing the family meeting or planning a fun family activity for the week. A parent should start off leading the meetings, but later this task can be passed to the children. You can add roles for other family such as secretary or timekeeper.

You may choose to start the meeting with a round of compliments or talking about something from your day you are grateful for. Other agenda items may include calendars or scheduling time, family business, chores, and allowance. Other optional activities include prayer, music sessions, sharing talents or life skills lessons. The family meeting concept allows you to create a family meeting that best fits the personality of your family. To close the family meeting you may decide to share a family treat or special snack.

The goals of the family meeting are not only to improve communication but also to increase family unity, increase family cooperation, decrease conflict, increase mutual respect and love, as well as increasing family organization. Feel free to adapt the outline that best fits your family needs.

**** Information adapted from the Strengthening Families program.**



About Youth First, Inc.:

Youth First's mission is to strengthen youth and families through evidence-based programs that prevent substance abuse, promote healthy behaviors, and maximize student success. Youth First partners with 81 schools across 10 counties to provide 60 Master's level social workers who assess needs, develop and implement prevention plans, and connect students and their families to community resources. Youth First also offers afterschool programs involving parents and caregivers to strengthen families. For more information about Youth First, please visit youthfirstinc.org or call 812-421-8336.