

Family meeting role play

- Mom:** It's 7:00 on Sunday evening, so let's get together for our family meeting. Anna, you're our chairperson tonight, aren't you?
- Anna:** Yes, I am. So—our family meeting is coming to order. Peter, will you please review our meeting rules?
- Peter:** Well, we say something good that happened to us and we get a snack!
- Anna:** OK. We start with something good. Mom, you start.
- Mom:** I got through the entire week and didn't smoke a cigarette. That's three weeks now, and no smoking.
- Anna and Peter:** Way to go Mom! I'm really proud of you.
- Peter:** I got to ride my bike around the school yard.
- Anna:** Our junior choir was chosen to go to the festival. OK. Next part. Does anyone have something we need to talk about?
- Peter:** I want to go to the park with Anna and she won't let me. She says I'm in the way.
- Anna:** No way you're coming with me. You're too slow.
- Peter:** I am not! You are!
- Mom:** Anna, Peter—remember, use the “I feel” statement.
- Anna:** I feel stupid when I have to take Peter to the park because my friends won't play with me when he's around, because I always have to watch out for him.
- Mom:** It sounds to me like the problem isn't getting him there, but being responsible for him once you're there.
- Peter:** I'm big enough now. I play on my own or I play with Dominic.

SESSION 6 FAMILY MEETINGS PRACTICE AND FAMILY JOBS
FAMILY MEETING ROLE PLAY (CONTINUED)

Mom: I think the park is a good place for Peter to play, but he does need some supervision. Anna, I can understand that you and your friends don't want to be responsible for Peter the whole time. What choices do we have?

Anna: I can take him but he can't stay with me.

Peter: That's OK.

Anna: I guess that's OK.

Mom: Thank you, Anna. That's very fair.

Anna: The next item is schedules. I have junior choir practice on Wednesday until 5:00.

Mom: Then I'll need to meet you at school to take you home. Peter, do you remember what you have this week? It's an activity you did last year. This will be your first practice time for this year.

Peter: T-ball!

Mom: That's right. It's on Wednesday this year, so we're going to have to rush getting supper that night. Any suggestions?

Anna: Soup?

Peter: Macaroni and cheese?

Mom: OK. Those are great suggestions. We can rotate between them. How are our new chores going? [Holds up the family job chart.]

Anna and Peter: OK, I guess.

Mom: Actually, I think you both did a great job. Anna, the bathroom sink stayed really clean; and Peter, you kept the front hallway tidy. I didn't trip once this week!

Anna: Next meeting, we can plan my birthday party. If no one has anything else, this meeting is adjourned.

Guidelines for family job chart

- In every family, each member has certain jobs or responsibilities. Some things we do for ourselves (e.g., making our lunch) and some things we do for the household (e.g., feeding the cat). Some things we do every day (e.g., brushing our teeth), while some things we do only once or several times a week (e.g., cleaning the hamster cage, shopping for groceries or laundry).
- We have different jobs according to our ages. Children's main job is to do their school work and to play. They are also usually given special family tasks. It is the way we work co-operatively together—taking care of each other and of our household—that ensures our family life goes well.
- The family job chart may be used to plan one week at a time, or several weeks at a time.
- Review the family job chart weekly at the family meeting.
- Family members decide on jobs and job responsibilities together, through discussion and negotiation.
- Jobs should be age appropriate; always keep in mind what is reasonable and manageable for the child's age and size (gender need not be an issue).
- Decide as a family on possible rewards for family co-operation; some may be individual rewards, while others may be family rewards. Rewards can range from compliments to a shared family activity. Individual rewards may include check marks, stickers or small prizes.
- Do not use the job chart to take away rewards that have already been earned.

Family job chart

Date: _____

Family member	Job	Description (What, when, where, how often)	How did we do?
	<i>Example: Feed the cat</i>	✓ Every day ✓ Fresh water and food ✓ Let Mom know when cat food is almost gone	
	<i>Set the table</i>	✓ For dinner: dishes, cutlery, napkins and glasses	
			Our rewards Walk to the corner store together to get an ice cream.

Strengthening Families for the Future