

Family meetings are important because . . .

They increase the sense of togetherness

- Children feel more a part of the family because they participate in the meetings and in the decision making.

They teach co-operation

- Regular family meetings teach co-operation through joint decision making.
- Each person has a say.
- Family conflicts are resolved in a more democratic manner, rather than through fighting, coercion or power plays.
- Problems between family members are more likely to be resolved.

They increase love and help everyone feel good

- By including “positive things” in a family meeting, each family member gets a chance to recognize special things other family members have done that week.
- Special thanks are shared; self-esteem and mutual appreciation is built.
- Fun activities and the sharing of a special food treat at the end or during the meeting also build a positive family spirit.

They decrease last minute crises

- By including “scheduling time,” family members know and share the plans of each family member for the coming week. Special arrangements for babysitters, birthday presents, special lunches, transportation to events or school activities can be made in advance.
- Families today are so active and busy that this section of the family meeting helps create a sense of order, helps the week to run more smoothly and reduces the sense of chaos.

They provide an opportunity for family members to learn from each other

- The family meeting is a place to teach the skills of negotiation, communication and conflict resolution.
- The family learns to operate by more democratic principles, by allowing everyone to have a say.
- The family meeting can also be a forum for everyone to practise communication skills and learn important life skills (e.g., public speaking, time management, conflict resolution and interpersonal skills).