



Wonders & Worries

Professional support for children
through a parent's illness.

Referenced Resources

Reflective Listening Handout for Parents

<https://www.wondersandworries.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Reflective-Listening.pdf>

Limit Setting Handout for Parents

<https://www.wondersandworries.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/LimitSetting.pdf>

Family Session In-Home Activities

Family Rock Garden

Goals:

1. Identify the strengths of the family
2. Discuss how the strengths of the family will help them cope with a family member being ill
3. Materials:
 - a. 1 large rock for family or 1 smaller size rock for each family member
 - b. Sharpie (or paints/paint markers)
 - c. Newspaper (or an old tablecloth)

Instructions:

1. Before family meeting, find 1 large rock for the family activity or smaller rocks for each family member
2. Place rock (s) on newspaper (or old tablecloth)
3. Invite your family to write strengths of the family on the rock (s).
4. Invite your family to talk about the strengths they wrote and how these strengths will help your family through the illness impacting the family.
5. Identify a place at your home for your Family Rock Garden which can remind everyone of the strengths which will help them during this time.

Modifications:

Invite your family to write their hopes and wishes on rocks and add to the Family Rock Garden
Families may choose to do 1 large family rock AND multiple smaller rocks for each family member

Feelings and Coping

Goals:

1. Help your family increase communication about feelings surrounding the illness and other aspects of your lives
2. And to help your children identify skills that can help them cope with the feelings, changes and stress that can come with an illness.

Feelings Balloon Game:

Materials:

1. Balloons
2. Permanent Markers

Instructions:

1. Blow up a balloon
2. As a family, brainstorm some feelings that can be written down on your balloon with permanent marker. Examples: happy, sad, embarrassed, guilty, etc.
3. Write down as many feelings as you can come up with on all sides of the balloon
4. Begin a tossing game with the balloon. Toss the balloon from one person to the next. When the person catches the balloon notice where your thumb has landed, read the feeling out loud, and tell a time you felt that feeling.
5. Continue tossing the balloon, with each person taking turns sharing examples of times they felt each feeling.
6. Game ends when most or all the feelings have been shared.

Modifications:

To make more challenging for older kids, can have multiple balloons each with a different feeling on the balloon. Try to keep all balloons in the air, but the 1st one to hit the ground is the one that gets shared by all family members.

Coping Game:

Materials: family's favorite game (Candyland, uno or dice games)

Instructions:

1. Cut out the cards included on the Coping Skills Questions Sheet and place them in a pile face down. (The questions are in a separate posted document).
2. Identify when each member of the family will have to answer a question. Examples:
 - a. Every time someone plays a Wild card or Draw 4 card in Uno, they must also answer a question from the deck.
 - b. Every time someone lands on a red space in Candyland, they must answer a question from the deck
3. Play the game and share your answers with your family
4. Have discussions as you go about what coping skills work best for you, what stress feels like inside your body, etc.