

Values, Traditions, and Service



Strengthening Families
Program by Dr. Karol Kumpfer



FAMILY GOALS:

1. Discuss family values; explain why each is important to you and how they will benefit kids. Write them on the handout and find ways to reinforce them.
2. Discuss and establish fun family traditions and ways to give family service; write on handout and post them.
3. Together, discuss how kids can be an "Agent for Change" to help others be alcohol-free.

FAMILY FUN:

Make a Family Shield with four family values. Create a motto that represents those values and write it above the shield. Display it in your home.

POWER PHRASE:

"Our happiness is directly related to adopting pro-social values, giving service to others, and bonding with fun family traditions and happy family rituals."

- Identify, teach, and reinforce pro-social values
- Establish fun family traditions
- Give service to help build and strengthen society

Fun Family Traditions

Creating and celebrating happy family memories



Family traditions are ways of celebrating events or happenings that help kids have fun and feel a sense of identity, belonging, and connectedness. Tradition celebrations can happen once a year, like a family reunion or a holiday celebration, or take place on a monthly or weekly basis like a monthly Sunday dinner with relatives or a Friday night family board game. A monthly “Give Back to My Community” day of service—either by helping elderly neighbors, helping the less fortunate, or picking up trash in the park—helps kids develop empathy and respect for their community. A tradition can also be a “family cheer” to celebrate a success, like good grades; or a group hug for making it through a hard day. Regardless of how your family decides to celebrate or serve, it’s all about happy, healthy togetherness.

Below, write the traditions you already enjoy and ask yourself: “Are our family traditions adequate to produce happy family bonding?” and “Do they reinforce our values?” If not, how can you make them more meaningful? If you would like to create a new family tradition, what events would you like to celebrate? Write down your ideas in the middle column. Add ways to make good health part of your on-going holiday traditions by including physical activity, healthy foods, and new healthy ways to fix traditional foods.

Our Current Family Traditions	New or Improved Family Traditions	Some Ideas to Get You Thinking
<hr/>	<hr/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family game night • Reunion with extended family • Religious holidays; add service to deepen meaning • National holidays: add meaning like hanging “Blessing Leaves” on Thanksgiving “Thankful Tree” • Picnic celebrating summer • Birthday dinners / breakfasts • Sunday dinner with relatives • Friendship day: invite neighbors • Independence Day; make a collage of gifts freedom provides • Make a “Welcome New Baby” book • Father-son outing • Daddy-daughter date • Monthly lunch date with Mom • Saturday special breakfast • Memorial Day: celebrate your heritage by learning of ancestors • Celebrate Grandparents Day with service, a meal or coupon to a restaurant • Celebrate Mother’s/ Father’s Day with “service” coupons • Write love notes of things you like about each other on Valentine’s Day • Celebrate wedding anniversary by doing your own “circle of love” • Hold a monthly “Values” night and serve treats

I Have Power to Do Good

Doing good in my family, school, and community makes me happy



Our brain is “hard-wired” to give feelings of pleasure when we do good. You can increase your feelings of happiness by giving service and doing good to others.

“There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and it will be lost. The world will not have it.”

Martha Graham, dancer

Directions: Make a list below of things you can do in your family, school, and community to make them better and happier.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Shield Your Family by Sharing Your Values

Design a shield and create a motto highlighting your most important values

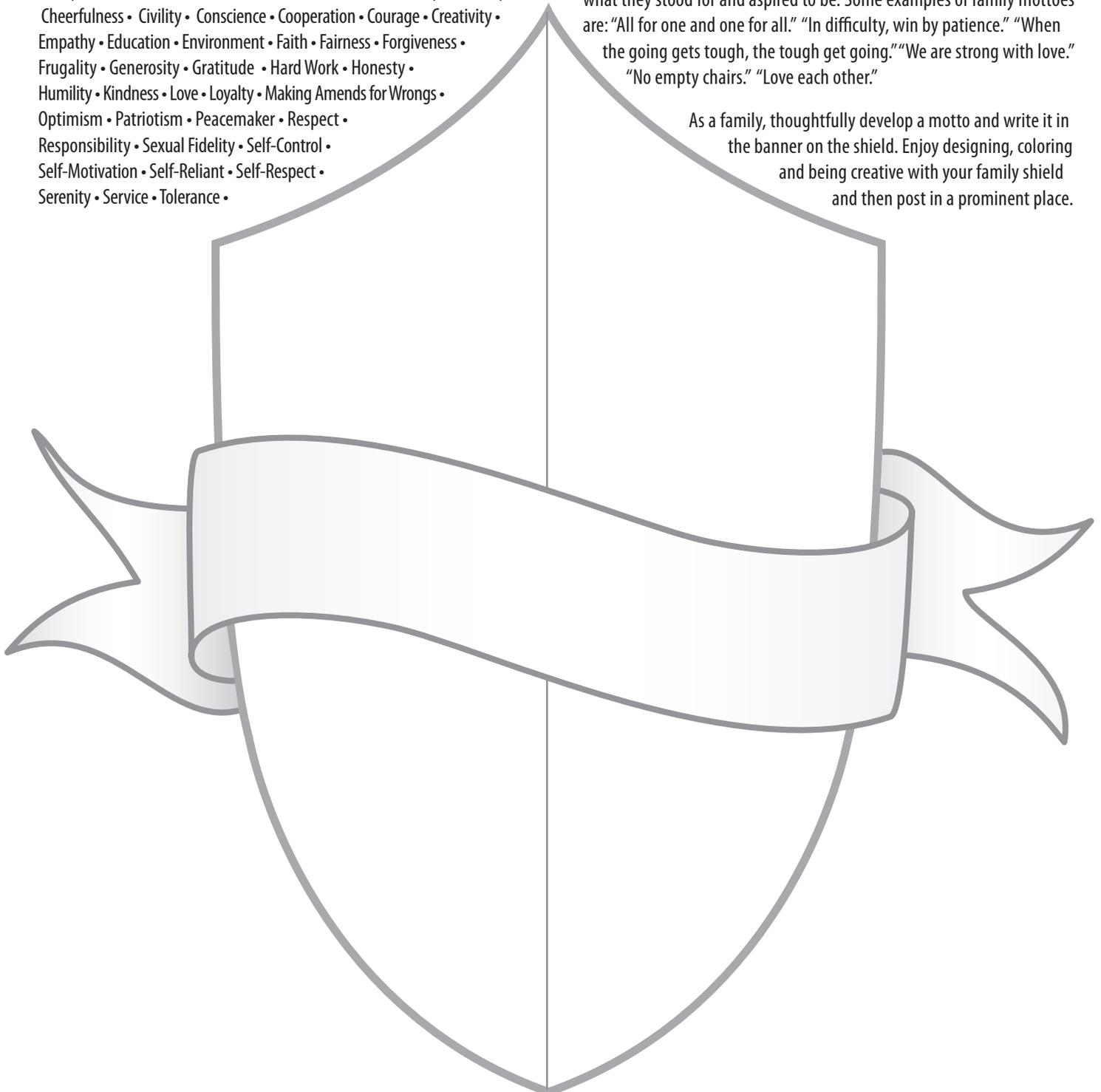


Values are attitudes about life that determine our thoughts and actions. Pro-social values—that benefit self and society—help kids make good decisions and feel happier. Write the values that matter most to your family on the shield. Some to consider are:

- Ambition • Charity • Chastity • Cheerfulness • Civility • Conscience • Cooperation • Courage • Creativity • Empathy • Education • Environment • Faith • Fairness • Forgiveness • Frugality • Generosity • Gratitude • Hard Work • Honesty • Humility • Kindness • Love • Loyalty • Making Amends for Wrongs • Optimism • Patriotism • Peacemaker • Respect • Responsibility • Sexual Fidelity • Self-Control • Self-Motivation • Self-Reliant • Self-Respect • Serenity • Service • Tolerance •

A motto is a brief statement that captures the values and beliefs of an individual or family. For hundreds of years, families have created mottoes and put it on their family shield or crest to let people know what they stood for and aspired to be. Some examples of family mottoes are: “All for one and one for all.” “In difficulty, win by patience.” “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” “We are strong with love.” “No empty chairs.” “Love each other.”

As a family, thoughtfully develop a motto and write it in the banner on the shield. Enjoy designing, coloring and being creative with your family shield and then post in a prominent place.



Keeping the Changes We've Made

5 skills to bond, set boundaries, and monitor to keep kids safe from addiction



1. PRACTICE MINDFULNESS to calm and strengthen your brain by doing breath awareness exercises. (Intro Lesson)



2. HAVE "MY TIME." Daily one-on-one play time with each child, where you focus on giving positive attention and compliments. (Intro Lesson)



3. NOTICE AND COMPLIMENT THE GOOD DAILY Make sure your compliments are sincere, specific, and enthusiastic. (Lesson 1)

4. COMMUNICATE WITH LUV-LISTENING AND RESPECTFUL "I-MESSAGES" Banish the Communication Boulders. (Lesson 2)



5. HOLD A WEEKLY FAMILY MEETING

(Lesson 2)



6. USE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE AND REWARDS TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR.

Teach and reward the behaviors you want, and be consistent in calmly using mild negative consequences for non-compliance. (Lessons 3 and 4)

7. MONITOR YOUR KIDS

and their friends to make sure that they stay in an alcohol- and drug-free environment. (Lesson 9)



Pro-Social Skills for a Successful Life

Building brain power with values and skills



These values and skills will arm your children with life-long habits that are highly respected, valued in the workplace, and create personal satisfaction.

HOW TO TELL THE TRUTH

1. Look at the person.
2. Reflect on your commitment to tell the truth.
3. Answer questions honestly, saying exactly what happened.
4. Don't leave out details to misrepresent what happened.
5. Admit to mistakes; offer to make amends.

HOW TO DEVELOP COURAGE

1. Recognize that fears are generated by thoughts.
2. Keep your self-talk positive ("I can do this...")
3. Decide on your values, why they are important to you.
4. Be willing to take hardship or persecution.
5. Respectfully speak up when you see a wrong done.

HOW TO SET AN EXAMPLE

1. Be humble; recognize everyone has worth.
2. Resolve to live true to your values.
3. Work hard to excel in an area.
4. Be kind and friendly to everyone.
5. When faced with a choice between a "low road" (anti-social behavior) and a "high road" (pro-social ways), always choose the "high road."
6. Encourage friends to do the right thing.

HOW TO BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE

1. Notice something in your home, school, or community that needs to be changed.
2. Research and talk to others about it.
3. Decide on a plan of action.
4. Talk to friends and get their support.
5. Present your idea to those in charge; work to make it happen.

Talking with Your Kids about Sex

Helping youth understand rights, responsibilities, and consequences



One of a parent's most important jobs is to teach children about the rights and responsibilities of sexual reproduction and the innate power they have to create human life. To be effective, parents need to have many open, honest conversations about it throughout a child's life based on their own family values.

Here are three things parents need to share with their kids:

- 1) **How the miracle of human life is created** when two tiny cells, each carrying a man or a woman's unique personal DNA, meet in a woman's body and begin the amazing process of making a human life. They need to know about the female menstrual cycle and how to prevent conception.
- 2) **Sexual activities release powerful "bonding chemicals" in the brain** that create intense euphoric feelings and are designed to create strong emotional ties with a spouse. These sexual experiences become a part of a person's brain wiring. When physical intimacy between loving couples is combined with emotional intimacy and a lasting commitment to their relationship, sex is much more enjoyable, satisfying, and helps create stable marriage relationships.
- 3) **The right to mate and reproduce a human life carries enormous responsibilities.** A stable society depends upon well-raised children who become responsible, law-abiding, tax-paying adults. Because a person's sexual actions can produce human life—those choices are not their "own private business"—they can permanently affect the lives of others. Once a baby is born it cannot be "put back." Children have the right to be born into a family with two loving parents to care for them. When children are born outside of a marriage relationship, they are more at risk for neglect, poverty, abuse, and addiction—forcing the child into unhappy, difficult circumstances. Often, society has to support the child or pay for problems he or she may cause.

Parents need to teach youth that their personal sexual choices can have a positive or negative effect on themselves and society: a positive effect when it serves to bond couples in a loving, stable family relationship that produces children who grow up to become contributing citizens. Or it has a negative effect if it spreads disease, exploits women or children, or results in children born outside of a stable family relationship.

Other Facts to Share with Teens

- Every child has the right to be born into a family and be cared for, as much as possible, by the mother and father whose sexual union gave him or her life. (*UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 7, 1990*)
- Single teen mothers put their children at higher risk to have health problems, live in poverty, be neglected or abused by others, do poorly in school, use alcohol and drugs, run into trouble with the law, and become teen mothers or fathers themselves.
- Children who are neglected or abused often suffer attachment anxiety, which later negatively affects their ability to bond in a romantic relationship as an adult, and hinders their ability to be a responsive caregiver to their own children. Children deserve better than this.
- Two-thirds of teen mothers never finish high school, which means they have to take lower-paying jobs, or be publicly supported on welfare.
- Half of all single mothers receiving welfare had their first child in their teens, before they were mature themselves.
- Only 20% of teen fathers ever marry the mother.
- If a boy fathers a child, legally he is financially responsible for raising the child to age 18. Young fathers can be court-ordered to pay thousands of dollars in child support, and have their wages garnished if they fail to pay.

Factors That Put Teens at Risk for Early Sex and Unplanned Pregnancies

While teens have the ultimate choice over whether they participate in early sexual activities, parents can lower the risk by being actively involved to prevent or minimize the following risk factors:

- 1 **Alcohol or drug use** lowers inhibitions, good judgment, and the ability to care if they make a mistake; often used for date rape
- 2 **Media influence:** Kids who watch "R" rated movies are twice as likely to engage in sexual activities, have unplanned pregnancies as those who don't watch sexually explicit films
- 3 **Negative peer pressure** gives the false belief everyone is doing it
- 4 **Pornography:** damages brain's pleasure center, making it harder to bond with a spouse (or future spouse); addicting
- 5 **Exclusive dating** or dating older boys/men
- 6 **Lack of parental love;** lack of affection from a father
- 7 **Lack of parent monitoring** of activities, dating partners, and time alone—particularly when parents are at work or late at night
- 8 **Abuse:** Sexual, physical, emotional abuse, or neglect