

Parents Taking Action

Group for parents whose children challenge parental authority



Facilitator's Guide

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In this text, use of the masculine is generic and applies to both men and woman.

Parts of this document are from various authors. We use extracts to draw inspiration to devise our activities and create appendices. We quote the author in a footnote, and at the end in the bibliography in order to respect copyright. These extracts are used to complement this facilitator's guide.

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RUNNING OF GROUP MEETINGS

Groups meetings are always run in the same way:

- ❖ **Welcome:** This time is taken to greet the participants¹ and welcome them. It is also used to observe their mood (sad, upset, annoyed, frustrated, etc.) for receiving and giving, as well as sharing with the group. The facilitators can discuss day-to-day matters with the participants to create or recreate an atmosphere of trust and sharing.
- ❖ **Review of what has been learned:** Review the concepts covered in previous workshops.
- ❖ **Specific objectives of the meeting or workshop:** Reminder of the objectives to ensure that each participant can identify what he will learn during the workshop.
- ❖ **Activities related to the meeting:** Individual or group activity taking place before or after brief theoretical contents are given.
- ❖ **Break:** The opportunity to take a break. A snack is provided.
- ❖ **End of the meeting:** This period is used to assess the meeting, review what has been learned, as well as verify the participants' mind-set at the end of the session. An intervention may be required. The facilitator also takes the time to specify the date of the next meeting and what will be discussed. The facilitators thank the participants for attending and for the quality of their participation.

¹ Participants can be children, teenagers or parents.

INTRODUCTION

PROFILE OF THE THERAPY GROUP

Background and context

In 2004, drawing from their experience and their contacts with parents receiving services from the *Centres jeunesse de l'Outaouais* (CJO), some caseworkers point to the need for these parents to be provided with support to cope with their children's behavioral difficulties. At that time, parental skills groups were only offered by the *Centre de santé et de services sociaux* – CSSS (health and social services center), which more or less met the specific needs of parents seen at the CJO. The *Parents Taking Action* group was created as a result of a three-year grant from the *regroupement des Caisses populaires de Hull*. These parents were saying they had problems dealing with their children's behaviors. Most of these children, diagnosed or not, medicated or not, were described as suffering from an attention deficit disorder with or without hyperactivity (ADHD). In response to this, workers responsible for the implementation of measures provided these parents with greater service intensity.

Since then, improvements have been made to the *Parents Taking Action* therapy group. Various activities have been added, but its original purpose has been maintained; that is to promote the parent-child relationship, while helping parents develop skills to exercise their authority.

Goal

Help a parent exercise his authority when he has to cope with children who refuse to obey and who, in fact, suffer from behavior disorders.

Overall objectives



The parent is made aware of theoretical concepts related to discipline and guidance, particularly with regard to child behavior disorders.



The parent applies methods conducive to a harmonious family environment.



The parent develops abilities and skills to improve his child's obedience.

Specific objectives

More precisely, here are the objectives pursued over the course of the workshops:



The parent knows the definition of disobedience.



The parent identifies his child's disobedient behaviors.



The parent identifies the factors (child's and parent's characteristics, family and environmental stressors) which can lead to their child's disobedience.



The parent identifies solutions to minimize the impact of family and environmental factors and, consequently, disobedient behaviors.



The parent learns to make a clear and concise request to his child.



The parent learns five styles of parental discipline.



The parent identifies the style of discipline he uses most frequently.



The parent applies the positive attention technique in the presence of the facilitators.



The parent shares a special moment with his child.



The parent learns the stages of anger in children.



The parent learns to stop his child's unacceptable behaviors.



The parent learns to motivate his child.



The parent identifies ways of taking care of himself.



The parent learns intervention techniques and applies them at home.

Composition of the group

Parents who participate in the *Parents Taking Action* group have children who are users of the CJO and are monitored under the Youth Protection Act. The group is composed of a maximum of 12 parents whose children are between the ages of 6 and 12. These children challenge parental authority, tend to disobey and show behavior disorders. These parents are looking for ways to improve their parent-child relationship. The group is closed, i.e., no parent can join after the first workshop. When necessary, groups are set up according to age proximity, 6-9 years old and 10-12 years old, to take into account the children's development needs.

During the meetings, parents learn educational techniques which they must then put into practice with their children. It is important that keeping the child in the family environment be the life plan for this child. He must live with one or both parents. However, parents will be able to participate to group meetings, even though the child is in a placement, provided that he visits them at home regularly and that an impending return to the natural environment is planned.

Facilitation type

Facilitation "can be defined as the art, by two individuals in the same field or with different but complementary training, to share facilitation of a group. It is a planned method of intervention that is appropriate to the needs of the members of the group and which is applied throughout the process and updated in various practical settings."
[Translation]²

The *Parents Taking Action* facilitators deliver content at the meetings while ensuring that they create an environment which encourages dialogue between participants.

² Turcotte, D. & Lindsay, J. (2001). *L'intervention sociale auprès des groupes* (p. 217). Boucherville: Gaëtan Morin éditeur.

A collaborative approach³, which is an approach that values parental work, prompts facilitators to establish a relationship of equality with the parents. In this regard, parents are viewed as experts of their situation⁴. The participants contribute their experiences and the facilitators their knowledge. Parents are encouraged to find their own solutions to their children's behavioral difficulties by discussing, not only with the therapy group facilitators, but also with the other participating parents. When parents come up with effective strategies, the facilitators take this opportunity to add relevant information and structure the behavioral changes principles pointed out by the parents.

This way, parents feel their views are valued and they are perceived as agents of change to their situation. The purpose here is to give parents the power to act. This method enlists the cooperation of parents to provide solutions. It is through the parents' active participation that experiences are shared and that the problem-solving process takes place.

To maximize participation, the facilitators use the parents' personal experiences. Based on their respective experiences, parents identify situations and solutions to allow them to feel a sense of commitment and motivation towards their parent-child relationship. It is essential that the facilitators be empathetic with the participants in order to have a thorough understanding of their perceptions and experiences, whether these relate to their child, the difficulties they have experienced, the solutions they have tried, etc.

The facilitator may even share his own experiences in order to present himself, not as an expert, but as a parent who sometimes struggles with difficulties in his relationship with his child. This makes the parents feel less judged and more comfortable when sharing their personal experiences. In the past, it has been demonstrated⁵ that directive approaches (teach and confront parents) increase the risk of resistance and

³ Normandeau, S. & Venet, M. (2001). Chapitre 4 : Comment intervenir auprès et par l'entremise des parents. In F. Vitaro & C. Gagnon (Eds.), *Prévention des problèmes d'adaptation chez les enfants et les adolescents : Tome 1 : Les problèmes internalisés* (pp. 141-188). Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Université du Québec.

⁴ Webster-Stratton, C. (1998). Parent training with low-income families: Promoting parental engagement through a collaborative approach. In John R. Lutzker (Ed.), *Handbook of child abuse research and treatment* (pp. 183-210). New York: Plenum Press.

⁵ Patterson, G.R. and Forgatch, M.S. (1985). Therapist behavior as a determinant for client resistance: A paradox for the behavior modifier. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 53(6), 846-851.

non-cooperation. On the other hand, the approaches that support and make the parents efforts easier increase cooperation and give them a sense of self-efficacy and will help to establish a connection between knowing about and adopting behaviors⁶.

The meeting is facilitated in a room with a friendly atmosphere. Chairs are placed around a table to ensure participants see each other, which allows for more free-flowing dialogue. The facilitators are seated in front of the group. At the first meeting, participants are invited to give their opinions on the rules they want to follow in order for the group to function smoothly. The only rule imposed by the facilitators is to respect confidentiality; parents are asked not to repeat personal information concerning the other parents. They are also strongly encouraged to attend every meeting in order to assimilate fully all the educational techniques that will be taught.

At the last group meeting, participants will be given an evaluation form, so they can provide feedback on the content of the meetings and the facilitation process.

A specific process is planned for each meeting; it includes a theoretical part and practical exercises to do at home. Parents are invited to share information about their personal situation, e.g., their communication problems, their blunders as parents, their suffering, their disappointments, their successes and their joys. This type of process leads to discussion between parents and facilitators and makes it easier to assimilate the techniques being taught. Facilitators must strike a balance between listening attentively to parents and keeping to the content of each meeting.

It is also important to explain to parents what the conditions of success are. *Parents Taking Action* is not a "magic" solution. It is hoped that as a result of using the methods taught; children will have better behaviors. Our experience has shown that the parents' motivation and rigorous use of the intervention techniques at home are the mains factors in achieving satisfactory results.

⁶ Bandura, A. (1989). Regulation of cognitive processes through perceived self-efficacy. *Developmental Psychology*, 25 (5), 729-735.

Workshops' agendas

The *Parents Taking Action* therapy group takes place over a period of eight weeks, for two hours each week. It is facilitated according to the parents' availability, either during the day or at night. Usually, parents prefer to attend at night from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

As indicated on page 6 of this manual, facilitation of the workshops is as follows: welcome, review of what has been learned, reminder of the specific objectives of the meeting, new activities related to the subjects discussed and end of the meeting. A snack is provided to participants during the meeting. The welcome and end periods are generally carried out in the same way and cover the same subjects.

After each of the workshops, the facilitators discuss their observations, the way the activities were carried out and any adjustments to be made for the next meeting. They also evaluate the participation of each parent by identify what they have learned or not learned so well, what their state of mind was during the activities, etc. The child's caseworker then gets this information, so he can follow up during his individual meetings with the parent.

Basic facilitation materials

Here is a list of items required at each of the workshops. This list constitutes the basic facilitation materials. Specific materials required for a given workshop will be detailed later, if required.

- Parent's workbook (duo-tang cover and photocopies)
- Pens, lead pencils, erasers
- Reusable adhesive
- Flipchart with markers or whiteboard
- Snack (coffee, cookies, fruits, etc.)
- Poster with the operating rules (drawn up at the first meeting with the participants)

CONCEPTUAL MODELS

The *Parents Taking Action* therapy group is based on three conceptual models: the ecosystemic approach, the attachment theory and the social learning theory.

Ecosystemic approach

In this approach, the symptoms (the disobedient behaviors) appear in the parent-child relationship. It is argued that the behaviors are the result of an attempt to strike a balance between the parent and the child⁷. Good or bad behaviors are maintained by the interactions that reinforce these behaviors. In order to make changes, we not only need to look at the child's behaviors, but also at the behaviors of all individuals concerned based on the system in which they function and the interrelations between the different systems: parent (father or mother)/child, siblings, couple, etc. The behaviors of each individual are based on the system's responses. Therefore, the purpose of *Parents Taking Action* is to propose a change to behaviors by focusing on the parent-child relationship and the interactions between them.

Attachment theory

When a child challenges parental authority, the quality of the relationship may be affected. *Parents Taking Action* teaches educational strategies that focus on positive attention in order to improve the quality of the parent-child relationship. The attachment theory that is presented here is based on several parental skills programs⁸ which, among other things, develop activities whose main objective is a harmonious parent-child relationship. "To do so, these programs propose activities to increase the frequency of constructive parent-child interactions, by encouraging the expression of positive affect as well as comments showing acceptance and empathy⁹." Consequently, parents have to

⁷ Same as note 2.

⁸ Eyberg, S.M & Boggs, S.R. (1998). Parent-child interaction therapy: A psychosocial intervention for the treatment of young conduct-disordered children. In J.M. Briesmeister & C.E. Schaefer (Eds.), *Handbook of parent training: Parents as co-therapists for children's behavior problems*. (2nd ed.) [pp. 61-97]. New York: John Wiley.

Webster-Stratton, C. (1992). *The incredible years: A trouble-shooting guide for parents of children aged 3-8*. Toronto: Umbrella Press.

⁹ Turcotte, D. & Lindsay, J. (2001). *L'intervention sociale auprès des groupes* (p. 147). Boucherville: Gaëtan Morin éditeur.

create situations where they can enjoy being together. The goal of the intervention is to reinforce the parent-child relationship and establish a warm and loving relationship between the parent and the child. This harmonious relationship then has a favourable impact on the child's behavior, a child is more likely to want to please those who make him feel secure and whom he loves.

Social learning theory

The social learning theory claims that children's behaviors are shaped by the people around them, mainly the parent¹⁰. All a child has to do is watch the reactions to his behaviors and the consequences that follow. The child repeats behaviors that are reinforced, positively or negatively. For example, children who challenge authority may not have been given positive reinforcement when learning prosocial behaviors. While children who display disruptive behaviors, such as disobedience or aggressiveness, may in a sense have been given negative reinforcement, because these behaviors were tolerated by a parent who did not set limits.

Parents Taking Action is designed to teach parents positive reinforcement techniques for desired behaviors. Not noticing, calling a time-out or removing privileges are the techniques used for undesirable behaviors. In association with the theory that was taught, the therapy group allows parents to establish a link between their role as a model and the development of positive behaviors in their children. By changing their own behaviors, parents will modify their understanding of their child's behaviors, and this skill will depend in part on their sense of self-efficacy¹¹.

¹⁰ Bandura, A. (1982). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

¹¹ Same as note 5.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKSHOPS CORRESPONDING TO EACH THEME

Theme 1: Analysis of the situation

This theme will be the subject of two meetings where parents¹² will take time to fully understand the situation that causes their child to disobey by conducting their own analysis under the guidance of the facilitator¹³. Is their child always disobedient or defiant? Are there particular circumstances or precise situations, which make a child decide to disobey or not? Parents are led to:



Target situations where the child disobeys and take stock of their feeling of self-efficacy in addressing their child's behavior.



Share solutions aimed at preventing disobedience in various circumstances.

Parents will learn, among other things, that it is essential to encourage desired behaviors in their child because **disobedience** is an **interactional process that involves the parents as much as the child**.

Overall objective

The parents are made aware of theoretical concepts related to discipline and guidance, particularly with regard to children behavior disorders.

Conceptual framework

The ecosystemic approach is used as a reference to show the impact of the family system on the child's behaviors.



¹² In this manual, the group of parents is always referred to as "the parents."

¹³ The term facilitator refers to the two facilitators.

Meeting 1: Disobedience

At the first meeting with the parents, the content of the therapy group as a whole is presented to ensure that they clearly understand the overall objectives. The facilitator points out that **the purpose of these meetings is to help parents with children who challenge parental authority**. *Parents Taking Action* gives parents **intervention techniques** that they will have to use at home; consequently, parents will be "put into action."

Once the context has been set, the facilitator addresses the content of the meeting by presenting the specific objectives.

Specific objectives



The parent knows the definition of disobedience.



The parent identifies his child's disobedient behaviors.



The parent learns the "*Surprise them*" technique and uses it at home.



Specific materials

- Parent's workbook
- Collection of pictures
- Disruptive behaviors questionnaire
- Parenting questionnaire



Agenda



Welcome¹⁴

During this time, in addition to welcoming parents as explained earlier, the facilitator will take the time to introduce himself (name, role, number of years of experience with the CJO, what he likes about facilitating the group, etc.). He thanks each parent for attending. Parents are then invited to introduce themselves, in turn, giving their first name and the age of each of their children.



Icebreaker: Pictures of children

The facilitator places a collection of pictures¹⁵ on a table. It is important that the pictures chosen convey a positive image, i.e., they show children and parents sharing a moment of happiness and not children in crisis or crying. The intent, at this point, is to focus on a positive relationship. The facilitator asks the parents to choose a picture that represents (or is closest to) the relationship they have with their child. The facilitator also chooses a picture. The **purpose** of this activity (which the facilitator does not explain right away) is: **the ability of the parents to describe their child positively**. Afterwards, the parents and the facilitator explain, in turn, what the picture chosen represents for them. (If the facilitator doesn't have children, he can make a connection to a child he knows.) The facilitator thanks each of the parents for sharing the reasons for their choice with the members of the group.



Introduction to the group

Before presenting the content of the meetings planned for this group, the facilitator describes:

- The **overall objectives** of *Parents Taking Action*;
- The **target audience**;
- The **conditions of success**.

¹⁴ Since the welcome ritual is always the same, details of this activity will not be repeated in the following pages.

¹⁵ This collection of pictures must be compiled by the facilitator.



The facilitator explains that active participation of the parents is essential to the individual and collective progress in this group. It is by using their experiences and their skills that the facilitator, and the parents will be able to support each other in their parenting roles and enrich the content.



The facilitator reviews the **schedule of meetings** (page 3 in the parent's workbook) stressing the importance of the fifth meeting where children must be present. The idea being to put into practice what has been learned. (Please note that in the parent's workbook, a column has been added to the table so that the date of each workshop can be indicated.)

Meetings	Topics covered
Meeting 1	Welcome and introduction to the program Objectives, principles and steps Definition of disobedience "Surprise them" technique
Meeting 2	Risk factors related to children's disobedience "Do me a favour" technique
Meeting 3	Making a request "Positive attention" technique
Meeting 4	Style of discipline "Structuring for preventing" technique
Meeting 5	Parents and children meeting
Meeting 6	Positive attention is not enough: the time-out
Meeting 7	Positive attention is not enough: the token systems
Meeting 8	Taking care of yourself! Summary of progress and discussions Achievement and evaluation of the group



The facilitator explains that after each meeting, the caseworker responsible for follow-up with the child and his family will be informed of the parent's **attendance** and of the **quality** of his participation. However, the **content of the discussions remains confidential**, unless these **verbalizations could compromise** the safety and the development of the child under the Youth Protection Act.



The facilitator invites the parents to share their **expectations** with respect to the themes, and the activities suggested for the meetings. It may be things the parent wants to learn (theoretical content) or things the parent expects (related to the attitude of the facilitators or other parents). The facilitator notes the expectations on a large flipchart sheet. This sheet will be posted at each meeting to allow the facilitator to review it with the parents at the end of each session. At the end of the eight meetings, expectations will be reviewed, to ensure that the content and discussions lived up to what was expected.



Then, the facilitator establishes a link with the expectations by asking the parents to decide on **operating rules** for the meetings. The parents identify the rules they would like to follow at each meeting to assist their learning in this group. Experience shows that **the parents** generally expect:

- Mutual respect (participants do not judge one another);
- Punctuality;
- To be able to express their views, one at a time;
- Cell phones to be on vibrate;
- To get a break halfway through the meeting;
- Confidentiality (participants do not repeat to others what is said at meetings).

The facilitator must propose "confidentiality" if it is not mentioned by the parents.

In addition, the **facilitator** may suggest another operating rule:

- Allow yourself to have fun!

It is important that the parents feel good and are relaxed during the meetings in order to create a climate for dialogue. The rules identified by the parents are noted on a large flipchart sheet that is posted at each meeting.

Proposed activities



First activity: Definition of disobedience



It is important to agree on a **common definition** because disobedience is a significant contributor to the behavioral difficulties of the children targeted by this group.



The facilitator asks the parents to give examples of behaviors their children engage in when they are disobedient. He asks, "How do we know that a child is disobedient (observed behaviors)?" He notes the answers on a large flipchart sheet. Then, he validates the parents' answers. Difficult behaviors can include:

- Using foul language;
- Being aggressive or violent;
- Damaging property;
- Lying, stealing;
- Refusing to perform necessary tasks such as getting dressed in the morning, going to bed at night or doing homework;
- Any other behavior mentioned by the parents.



The facilitator then asks the parents to turn to page 5 in their workbook to read the "**definition of disobedience.**" He asks the parents if they agree with these statements. A discussion takes place. Parents can improve the definition given.

DEFINITION OF DISOBEDIENCE

(three typical situations)

The child takes too long to respond when asked to do something. It is considered that appropriate response time is between 10 seconds and 1 minute.

The child stops performing the task he was asked to do without completing it.

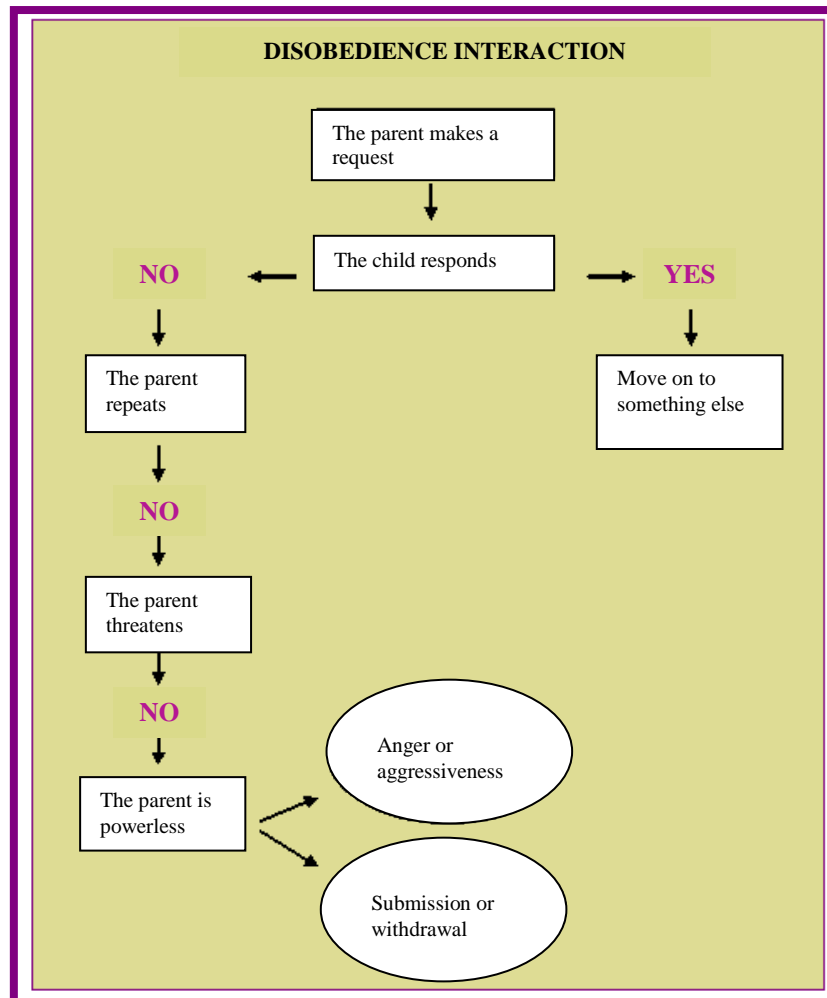
The child refuses to comply with established rules in different situations; e.g., he gets away from his parents in a public place, he lies, he hits other children, he takes food in the refrigerator without asking permission, he insults his parents, etc.



Then, the "**Disobedience interaction**" diagram (on the same page) is presented.

The facilitator reads it and must explain that disobedience in a child is an interactional process that involves the parents as much as the child. Consequently, in order to break the cycle, each party will have to change their way of doing things. During the meetings, parents will be shown that it is possible to avoid being pulled into this escalation that can sometime lead to **anger/aggressiveness** or to **submission/withdrawal**. The facilitator asks the parents if they can place themselves on the diagram, are they:

- In repeat mode?
- Making threats?
- Feeling powerless?



Break¹⁶

A snack is offered to the parents. It is important to provide participants with some time to stretch, have a snack and get to know each other.

After the break, the facilitator introduces the second activity.

¹⁶ Since the break ritual is always the same, details of this activity will not be repeated in the following pages.



Second activity: Questionnaires



The facilitator hands out two questionnaires¹⁷ to the parents which they will have to complete individually.

- Disruptive behaviors questionnaire and results sheet;
- Parenting questionnaire and results sheet.

He explains that the first one, the **Disruptive behaviors questionnaire** allows the parents to **identify their child's profile** and **the signs** of:

- 1) Attention deficit disorder;
- 2) Hyperactivity;
- 3) Oppositional disorder.

The second one, the **Parenting questionnaire** allows parents to **identify their sense of competence** and **how satisfied they are with their parent-child relationship**. In addition, it allows them to determine **five themes of difficulty** they might encounter, as well as one or more difficulties that will be more problematic:

- 1) Understanding the child and the sense of his behavior;
- 2) Interest in the child's activities;
- 3) Communication with the child;
- 4) Motivation of the child;
- 5) Guidance of the child.



The facilitator invites the parents to complete the questionnaires individually. He will provide help and support as required during the activity. Once the questionnaires are completed, the facilitator explains the results of the **Disruptive behaviors questionnaire**.

¹⁷ Cloutier, G. (2012). *Vivre en harmonie avec un enfant qui s'oppose*. Montréal: Éditions Gily.

The parents have to count the number of check marks in each column. The facilitator explains that questions **1 to 8** represent behaviors related to **attention deficit**; questions **9 to 17** represent behaviors related to **hyperactivity**; questions **18 to 25** represent behaviors related to **oppositional disorder**. Without being a comprehensive assessment, this questionnaire allows parents to define the child's profile more precisely.

With respect to the **Parenting questionnaire**, the facilitator picks up the documents to compile the results. These will be given next week.

Please note that the **Parenting questionnaire** will be administered at the last meeting to see if the parents have a better sense of self-efficacy. The results of this questionnaire will be indicated on the **Comparison of the results** sheet. The facilitator will keep this sheet and will record the pre- and post-group results. The facilitator will hand out the sheets to the parents at the last meeting, so they can compare their results.



In that context, over the course of the next meetings, the parents will be invited to find approaches they can take to improve their questionnaires results.



"Surprise them" technique

First, the facilitator explains this principle to parents: each week, they will have to apply a specific technique to help them prevent their child's disobedience.

This week, this technique is called *Surprise them*. The facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 6 of their workbook where they will find an information sheet. The facilitator reads out the information.



End of the meeting¹⁸

At the end of the meeting, the facilitator takes the time to review the concepts covered. He also introduces the theme of the next meeting and thanks the parents for their presence. This is a time where parents, as a group or individually, can ask questions that might have not been answered during the meeting,

¹⁸ Since the end of the meeting ritual is always the same, details of this activity will not be repeated in the following pages.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS QUESTIONNAIRE

From Cloutier, G. (2012). *Vivre en harmonie avec un enfant qui s'oppose*, p. 44. Montréal: Éditions Gily.

This questionnaire constitutes a brief assessment of disruptive child behaviors. For each behavior, indicate with a check mark whether you have seen this behavior in your child and specify if he behaves like this (S) sometimes, (O) often or (VO) very often.

Child's name: _____ **Age:** _____

Name of the person filling this questionnaire: _____

Behaviors		No	S	O	VO
01.	Does not pay attention to details or makes careless mistakes in his school work.				
02.	Has difficulty focusing his attention during his different activities.				
03.	Does not seem to listen when asked to do so.				
04.	Stop listening before all instructions are given; does not finish his work.				
05.	Has difficulty getting organized and planning his activities.				
06.	Avoids tasks that require attention.				
07.	Looses things he needs for his homework or his activities.				
08.	Is easily distracted.				
09.	Constantly moves his hands or feet; cannot sit still on his chair.				
10.	Gets up from his chair when he should be sitting.				
11.	Runs or climbs inappropriately.				
12.	Has difficulty playing or doing things quietly.				
13.	Moves as if driven by a motor.				
14.	Talks all the time.				
15.	Blurts out answers to questions before they are completed.				
16.	Does not wait his turn.				
17.	Interrupts others or intrudes into their conversations.				
18.	Gets angry.				
19.	Challenges what adults are saying.				
20.	Refuses to comply with adults' requests or rules.				
21.	Deliberately annoys others.				
22.	Blames others for his mistakes or misbehavior.				
23.	Is touchy or easily irritated by others.				
24.	Is angry or resentful.				
25.	Is malicious or vindictive.				
Total of each column					

PARENTING QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Taking positive actions

	POSITIVE ACTIONS	0 never	1 rarely	2 sometimes	3 often	4 always
1.	You can guess why your child acts in a certain way.					
2.	You take your time before intervening with your child.					
3.	You listen to your child's point of view.					
4.	You discuss the action to be taken with the other parent.					
5.	You agree with the other parent on the action to be taken.					
6.	When your child behaves properly, you congratulate him.					
7.	You spend time playing with your child.					
8.	You are interested in your child's leisure activities.					
9.	You like spending time with your child.					
10.	You are proud of your child.					
11.	You communicate requests clearly and concisely.					
12.	You speak calmly when you need to reprimand your child.					
13.	You check to make sure your child understood.					
14.	You ensure your child has done what you asked.					
15.	You are consistent in your requests.					
16.	You show your child that you have confidence in his abilities.					
17.	You use a good incentive system, e.g. tokens or other.					
18.	Your child responds well to this system.					
19.	Both parents use this system.					
20.	The method used is working well.					
21.	You can be firm when needed.					
22.	You are determined to see things through with your child.					
23.	Your interventions are marked with affection even when you punish your child.					
24.	Your use of a time-out is efficient.					
25.	Your child responds well to the application of a time-out.					
	Add the numbers in each column					

PARENTING QUESTIONNAIRE

II. Difficulties experienced

	POSITIVE ACTIONS	0 never	1 rarely	2 sometimes	3 often	4 always
1.	You have a lot of difficulty understanding your child.					
2.	You react too quickly to his behaviors.					
3.	You have to repeat your request several times.					
4.	You think your child acts like a "baby".					
5.	Sometimes your child is expelled from school.					
6.	You find your child's company boring.					
7.	You don't know what your child is interested in.					
8.	You worry about your child's future.					
9.	You find your child has the same negative behaviors as his other parent.					
10.	You have to reprimand and punish your child.					
11.	Your child doesn't seem to understand you.					
12.	You are tired of repeating.					
13.	You raise your voice.					
14.	The child also raises his voice to you.					
15.	The situation is so serious that you look forward to your child turning 18.					
16.	You have the impressions that your child isn't interested in anything.					
17.	You don't know how to motivate your child.					
18.	You often get angry at your child.					
19.	You have the impression that your child's behavior prevents creating a good atmosphere at home.					
20.	You and the other parent argue about the child.					
21.	At times, you feel like giving up.					
22.	You lose control of your emotions.					
23.	You threaten your child with severe punishment.					
24.	Your child flatly refuses to obey.					
25.	You need to get out of the house to relax.					
	Add the numbers in each column					

RESULTS

1. PARENT'S FEELING OF COMPETENCE

– **Performance score the parent gives himself**

Total from answers to questionnaire I: _____

Corresponding letter: _____

– **Assessment of the child's behavior score**

Total from answers to questionnaire II: _____ (X)

Subtract "X" from 100: $100 - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

Corresponding letter: _____

A =	80	–	100
B =	60	–	80
C =	40	–	60
D =	20	–	40
E =	0	–	20

2. CHILD'S MOST PROBLEMATIC AREA

Do a separate calculation for each of the five themes of questionnaire II:

1 to 5: Knowledge of the child and of the meaning of his behavior

6 to 10: Interest for the child's activities

11 to 25: Communication

16 to 20: Child's motivation

21 to 25: Guidance

Identify the child's most problematic area by comparing the results to the different themes.

3. SATISFACTION LEVEL – PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

– **Educational actions of a relational nature**

Questionnaire I: Add the answers to questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 25

Result: _____ / 40

– **Assessment of the child's response**

Questionnaire II: Add the answers to questions 6, 8, 12, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25

Result: _____ / (X)

Subtract "X" from 40: $40 - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

PARENTING QUESTIONNAIRE

Comparison of the results obtained before and after applying this method.

Child's name: _____

Name of the person filling the questionnaire: _____

MEASURED ELEMENTS	RESULTS		
	Before	After	Difference in terms of + or -
1. Parent's feeling of competence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Score he gives himself - Assessment of the child's behavior 			
2. Most problematic area			
3. Satisfaction level – Parent-child relationship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent's educational actions - Child's response 			
<p><u>Interpretation:</u> The most significant scores are those obtained by the child. So, an increase of 5 points in that area is a good improvement, while an increase of 10 points or more is a very good improvement.</p>			

"Surprise them" technique

To build a positive parent-child relationship, it is important to emphasize your child's good behaviors.



When your child does something that he is supposed to do, you must provide positive feedback like: "Thank you for doing what I asked" – "Good work!" – "I am proud of you" or simply hug him or give him a wink: "Thank you for doing what I asked."



As soon as you see your child obeying (a rule, instructions, a task, etc.), congratulate him. Be generous in giving positive feedback.



Do not ask for anything, the behavior observed must be spontaneous and at the child's initiative.



Caution! Certain children can react negatively to this type of comments. Don't worry, you should continue and keep trying.



"Surprise" your child every day, at least three times a day.

Words and actions to "Surprise" your child . . .

- ❖ I love it when . . .!
- ❖ It's nice, wonderful, wow!
- ❖ You really are a big boy (a big girl)
- ❖ What you did was terrific!
- ❖ You are improving!
- ❖ I am proud of you!
- ❖ A wink
- ❖ A touch on the shoulder
- ❖ A pat on the back
- ❖ A hug
- ❖ A kiss
- ❖ A high five

Meeting 2: Risk factors

Specific objectives



The parent identifies the factors (child's and parent's characteristics, family and environmental stressors) which can lead to their child's disobedience.



The parent identifies solutions to minimize the impact of family and environmental factors on his child's disobedient behaviors.



The parent learns the "Do me a favour" technique and uses it at home.

Specific materials

- Parents workbook
- Questionnaire results (distribution of the "Comparison of the results" sheets)

Agenda

Welcome

Review of what has been learned¹⁹



In order to confirm how well the parents understand the material presented at the first meeting, the facilitator **reviews the concepts covered** (definition of disobedience, child's disruptive behaviors and "*Surprise them*" technique).

The facilitator starts by saying, "**It is through repetition that we learn!**"

He goes on to ask the parents to **comment on their experience** with the technique. He asks them if they have seen changes in their child's attitude.

¹⁹ Since the "review of what has been learned" ritual is always the same, details of this activity will not be repeated in the following pages.

Then, the facilitator reviews the **Parenting questionnaire** completed by the parents last week. The **Parenting questionnaire** provides a picture of the parent's sense of competence (a letter from A to E), the child's most problematic area (knowledge of the child and of the meaning of his behavior, interest for the child's activities, communication, motivation of the child and guidance), and the degree of satisfaction with the parent-child relationship.

The facilitator specifies that there are no right or wrong answers. The results of the questionnaire simply reflect the parents' opinion. He immediately invites the parents to share their impressions and ask any questions they might have concerning their results.

The facilitator hopes that by participating to the meetings and applying the techniques, the parents will see an improvement in their child's behaviors, as well as in their sense of competence.

The facilitator tells the parents that the same questionnaire will be administered again at the very last meeting (meeting 8), to allow them to compare their results at the beginning of this group and at the end. Has their sense of parental efficacy increased because of what they have learned in this group? In their view, is there an improvement in their child's behaviors?

Proposed activities



First activity: The risk factors



The facilitator explains to the parents that there may be several reasons for a child to disobey. There are **factors** (situations) that can influence whether or not children obey. The facilitator suggests having a brainstorming session on the subject. To do so, the parents are invited to **give examples of why a child disobeys**.

The examples given are written on a large flipchart sheet.

When the facilitator sees that all ideas have been shared, he asks the parents if it is possible for a parent to have a hard time getting his child to obey. He goes on to ask, "Can you think why?" Once again, the facilitator invites the parents to share their personal experiences by asking the following:

- "Give examples of **why a parent has a hard time being obeyed.**"

The examples given are written on a large flipchart sheet.

It is important for the facilitator to make the parents realize that the causes of their child's disobedience can also stem, as is very often the case, from the parent's characteristics. He asks the parents, "Are you surprised?"



Afterwards, the facilitator goes over the **Children's disobedience risk factors** on page 7 of the parents' workbook. There are four categories of factors, as follows:

1) Child characteristics

Child's characteristics

- Health problems
- Biological components (hormones)
- Intellectual or physical disability
- Daily routine
- Attention problem – hyperactivity
- Inappropriate responses to stimulations
- Delays in development (maturation)
- Social integration difficulties (attitude toward their peers)

2) Parent characteristics

Parent's characteristics

- Health problems
- Biological components (hormones)
- Intellectual or physical disability
- Daily routine
- Attention problem – hyperactivity
- Impulsiveness
- Emotional problem
- Parenting style

3) Situational events – Stressors

Situational events – Stressors

- Suffer from a sudden illness
- Financial problems
- Family problems
- Job loss
- Separation – Divorce
- Various losses (e.g., death of a loved one)
- Etc.

4) Environment

Environment

- Consecutive moves
- Change of school
- Housing
- Social support
- Accessibility and availability of services
- Etc.

The facilitator explains that the interaction of several of these factors could lead to difficulties. He points out that it is important for the parents to identify their own risk factors in order to prevent their child from being disobedient and adjust their style of discipline.



Second activity: Parent and child personal characteristics



In order to allow parents to identify their individual risk factors, the facilitator presents the "**Child's personal characteristics**" sheet, on page 8 of the parents' workbook. He invites them to answer each of the questions on their own and then to share their answers with the group, if they want to.



Then, the facilitator asks the parents to make the connection with their own characteristics. He also asks, "As a parent, are your personal characteristics similar to those of your child?"



He sums up the parents-child risk factors, by saying, "Now that we know there are risk factors (parent and child characteristics, events – stressors, environment) that influence whether or not a child obeys and that, as parents, it is very important to take these into consideration, what can we do to minimize their impacts?"

The parents are invited:

- To recall a situation where, there was, in fact, a risk factor that had influenced whether or not their child obeyed;
- To propose a way to intervene differently to prevent such a situation from occurring again.

The facilitator provides the following example to help the parents in their reflection and identification of an approach to prevent disobedience.

Today, Mom had a bad day at work and feels stressed and impatient (risk factors). When sonny comes back from school and dumps his things on the floor, Mom gets mad and starts yelling, which sparks a negative reaction from sonny. He doesn't listen to instructions, becomes aggressive and leaves the room, slamming the door behind him.

The facilitator asks the following question, "**What could Mom have done?**" The answer is quick – rather than losing patience, Mom could have told her child about her emotional state and gotten his collaboration rather than making him angry.



Break

After the break, the facilitator introduces the third activity.



Third activity: The routine



The facilitator starts this way, "One possible solution to ensure that your child obeys is to establish a **routine**." He presents the **Examples of routines** sheet, on page 9 of the parents' workbook.

Child's routine

A.M.:

- Wake up
- Breakfast
- Brush your teeth
- Get dressed
- Pack your lunch and school bag and leave for school

P.M.:

- Snack and homework
- Free play
- Task, e.g., setting the table
- Dinner
- Free time
- Bath (put dirty clothes in your hamper)
- Sleep time ritual

Preteen's routine

A.M.:

- Wake up
- Get dressed and get ready
- Breakfast
- Prepare your lunch
- Brush your teeth
- Pack your school bag and leave for school

P.M.:

- Sports activity
- Snack
- Television or computer
- Dinner
- Homework
- Shower
- Bedtime



The facilitator goes on to say, "A routine is a tool that will make a **child feel secure** and bring him to **anticipate what's coming**." A common situation experienced by many families is the bedtime period : bath, pajamas, tooth brushing, storytelling, sleep time. It is a time where parents are likely to repeat the same instructions and where children disobey. The routine can be **written** or **illustrated** depending on the child's age so he can develop his autonomy.



Then, the facilitator asks:

- "What type of routine do you have with your child?"

After letting the parents think about it, the facilitator asks them to share their routine with the group. He then asks:

- "Would it be possible for you to write on the sheet titled *The ideal routine for my child* (page 9 of the parents workbook) what you consider to be an ideal routine?"

Your child's routine

A.M.: _____

P.M.: _____

The facilitator helps the parents while they are developing their routine. At the end of the activity, the facilitator asks the parents to follow this routine with their child at home.

Finally, the facilitator completes the meeting with the "Do me a favour" technique.



"Do me a favour" technique

The facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 10 of their workbook, and in accordance with the document, begins the technique this way – the more you make positive comments on a child's behavior, the more likely he is to perform it spontaneously. He continues to read the "Do me a favour" technique sheet.



End of the meeting

Child's personal characteristics

1. Does your child have health problems? If so, which ones?

2. Does your child have a physical disability? If so, which one and since when?

3. Was your child's development considered normal? If your child experienced developmental delays, please indicate in which areas.

4. Is your child slow or fast when performing his activities? How do you feel about his attention span?

5. Does he have a tendency to act impulsively without thinking? Give an example.

6. How does your child express his feelings? Is he too emotional or not enough?

7. Does he have difficulty making friends? Why?

8. Does your child have a tendency to withdraw to a corner or is he constantly looking for new sources of excitement?

9. How does your child manage his biological patterns (sleeping, eating, etc.)?

Taken and adapted from *PEDAP* (1997), fact sheet no. 6.

"Do me a favour" technique

The more you make positive comments on a child's behavior, the more likely he is to perform this behavior spontaneously.



Choose moments where your child has nothing special to do to ask him for small favours, e.g., "Could you please give me a tissue?" – "Could you please get my slippers?" These are favours that can be done within 30 seconds.



If your child complies with your request, compliment him on his behavior. If your child refuses to do the favour you asked for, do not reprimand him, say nothing.



It is important that when you ask for a favour, it sounds like a request not an order; e.g., "Could you please bring me a glass of water?" not "Give me a glass of water!"

Theme 2: Parent-child relationship

The facilitator is aware that at this stage, the parents have a better understanding of the meaning of disobedience, and that they know the risk factors which can influence a child's behaviors and make him disobey. For the past two weeks, the parents have worked on finding ways to motivate their child, so he feels valued.

It is now essential to work on the **parent-child relationship** to make it more harmonious. To do so, the facilitator brings the parents to pay more attention to what is constructive.

In this theme, parents will learn how to make an appropriate request to their child and how to apply other techniques that will allow them to spend quality time with their children while noting their accomplishments. They will put these techniques into practice and will get feedback from the facilitators.

Overall objective

The parent applies methods conducive to a harmonious family environment.

Conceptual framework

The attachment theory is used as a reference to show the importance of the parent-child relationship. We want to increase the frequency of constructive parent-child interactions.



Meeting 3: Making an appropriate request

Overall objectives



The parent learns to make a clear and concise request to his child.



The parent learns the "Positive attention" technique and uses at home.

Specific materials

- Parent's workbook
- Two small pieces of card stock, one with the word "parent", the other with the word "child"²⁰

Agenda

Welcome



Review of what has been learned



The facilitator revisits the "*Do me a favour*" technique. He asks the parents to share their experiences on the application of this technique at home. This is about finding out if the technique was used and what were the elements of success, and the challenges encountered.

The facilitator proposes to move to the first activity.

²⁰ The facilitator is responsible for preparing these.

Proposed activities



First activity: Making an appropriate request



The facilitator starts this way, "In order to maximize the possibilities that a child will obey; parents must be clear when they make a request." To better describe the situation, the facilitator does a role-play in which a parent makes requests to his child.

Scenario

The child is watching television. The father is waiting for a last-minute visitor and is stressed. Housework needs to be done. The father asks his child to put away his coat (while he is in another room). In succession, he asks the child (without waiting for an answer to his first request) to go clean-up his room. Seconds later, the father puts a garbage bag close to the door and asks the child to take it outside. Then, the father notices that the child has not responded to his first request, he repeats the request. Angry, the father decides to do the tasks himself, while repeating his second request. He still doesn't get an answer, and then he reacts: he yells at his child.

The role-play lasts two minutes.



After the activity, the facilitator asks the participants to identify the elements that could have hampered the execution of the father's requests. For example, the facilitator says, maybe the father:

- Made too many requests at the same time;
- Did not make sure that his child heard properly (distracted by the television);
- Gave up and did the tasks himself;
- Yelled, etc.



The facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 12 of their workbook and take the "Making an appropriate request" sheet. With help from the group, he reads the document.

HOW TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATE REQUEST

- Be brief (no unnecessary explanations)
- Be clear and concise (like in a good recipe)
- Be positive (describe the behavior to perform not the one to eliminate)
- Be assertive (its compulsory nature is obvious)
- Point out to the child when and how much time he has to comply (immediately or at a particular time)
- Use a respectful tone when speaking to children (no signs of criticism or impatience)
- Ensure that other family members support the request

Pssst . . . Some tips for having a better chance of getting obeyed

- Establish eye contact with the child. Ensure that your child is listening when you are talking to him. Eliminate all distractions.
- Divide the task to be carried out into steps (do not make several requests at once, but establish a sequence, if required).
- Ask your child to repeat the instructions.
- Stay in the room. Supervise your child's activity by checking on him now and again.
- Positively reinforce good behaviors. Compliment your child when he behaves properly.

After reading the document, the facilitator draws the parents' attention to the importance of knowing the difference between the "*Do me a favour*" technique and making an appropriate request. The "*Do me a favour*" technique takes the form of questions and therefore, gives the **child a choice of saying yes or no**. On the contrary, an appropriate request must take **the form of an assertion** and **does not offer the possibility of saying no**.



The facilitator goes on to say, "A parent must know that when he is making a request, there are pitfalls to be avoided." Then, he asks the parents to turn to page 13 of their workbook, where they will find the **Pitfalls to be avoided** sheet. He asks the group to name the different pitfalls to be avoided. The parents are then invited to outline situations they encounter daily with their children.

- ❖ *Criticisms*: In words (avoid the "you should have") or in actions (avoid redoing what your child has done; e.g., asking him to set the table and then setting it your way.)
- ❖ *Bad teasing*: This can create uncertainty in your child because he does not know if you are serious, or if you are joking.
- ❖ *Denial*: Be careful with magic words like "It doesn't matter; it will go away." Using them occasionally may be a good thing, but you have to be able to "tell it like it is."
- ❖ *Exaggeration*: The child may be suspicious of compliments that do not sound right – "You are the most good-looking boy in the world." – be honest.
- ❖ *Label*: It is important to focus on the child's actions rather than on his personality – "Your room is a real pigsty!" rather than "What a mess, tidy your room!"
- ❖ *Threats*: Avoid threats, they may hurt and scare your child – "You'd better be quiet or the police will come and get you." It is better to negotiate with the child and propose something interesting to get him to obey – "If we hurry home, you will have more time to go sliding."
- ❖ *Lack of time*: It is obvious that you cannot comply with all of your child's requests immediately. However, avoid making him feel like he is constantly bothering you. He may think that he is "not important enough" or "not loved."



Continuing along the same lines, the facilitator says, "When referring to what a request is, **it can also include a rule**. For example, it can be '*Sit on the couch.*' It is then an important family rule and it can become a spontaneous request when the child is too active. When a parent **wants to apply a rule, five criteria** must be present." The facilitator reads the "Five Cs of a good rule" on page 13 of the parents' workbook.

THE FIVE CS OF A GOOD RULE

To be followed, your rule must be:

CLEAR

Use simple words suited to the child's age. Your child must be able to understand your rule. It will make it easier for him to follow it!

CONCRETE

The child must understand what is expected of him. The rule must be doable!

CONSTANT

Application of the rule must not be dependent on a given situation or the parent's mood. The rule must be the same everywhere and in all situations. Always the same!

COHERENT

Avoid imposing rules to your child that you don't follow. A rule must be related to the values a parent wants to teach his child. I do what I say!

CONSISTENT

A rule allows a child to learn new behaviors that he will use in other situations. Moreover, if the child breaks a rule, it carries a consequence. Apply the consequence!

After reading the text, the facilitator suggests that parents can post this document on their refrigerator at home and use it as a reminder.



Break

The facilitator proposes the second activity.



Second activity: Worst boss – Best boss exercise



This activity is facilitated by taking notes on a flipchart. The parents will share their opinions out loud. The facilitator replicates the following:

Worst boss – Best boss exercise			
Worst boss		Best boss	
Personal characteristics	Emotions experienced	Personal characteristics	Emotions experienced

The facilitator gives out the following instructions to the parents:

- You must identify the personal characteristics of the worst boss you have worked for in the past (e.g.; a boss who yells, who is never satisfied with the work done, who reprimands you in front of others, etc.).
- Then, you must identify the emotions you experienced based on the different personal characteristics you have just listed (e.g., I felt afraid, incompetent, humiliated, etc.).
- You must identify the personal characteristics of the best boss you have worked for in the past (e.g., a boss who trusts employees, encourages initiatives, congratulates on the work done, etc.).
- Then, you must identify the emotions you experienced based on the different personal characteristics you have just listed (e.g., I feel adequate, competent, proud of myself, etc.).

The purpose of this activity, without spelling it out beforehand, is **to get the parents to realize that their personal characteristics (their words and their actions) have an impact on their child.**

At the end of the activity, the facilitator explains its purpose to the parents by replacing the expression "**personal characteristics**" with the word "**parent**" and the expression "**emotions experienced**" with the word "**child**".

The facilitator draws a parallel and explains to the parents that:

- When the boss yells, the employee is afraid. So, it is reasonable to think that when a parent yells, the child may feel fear.
- When the boss congratulates, the employee is proud. So, it is reasonable to think that when a parent congratulates, the child may feel pride.

The facilitator is aware that this activity can be very emotional for the parents. Why? Because the parents realize that they have experienced certain of these emotions and, by extension, their child too. For example, they now understand that when the worst boss (the parent) criticizes his employee, the emotion experienced (by the child) can be sadness or anxiety. When the best boss (the parent) rewards the work done by his employee, the emotion experienced (by the child) can be recognition.

Finally, the facilitator proposes the following technique, which will end the third meeting.



"Positive attention" technique²¹

This technique is one of the most important of the *Parents Taking Action* group. It allows parents to spend quality time with their children.

The facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 14 of their workbook, where they will find the technique. The facilitator reads the document.



End of the meeting

²¹ Taken and adapted from Cloutier, G. (1997). *Programme de formation PEDAP : pour les parents d'enfants défiant l'autorité parentale. Manuel d'animation*. Montréal: produced and distributed by the CLSC Mercier-Est/Anjou.

"Positive attention" technique

What is positive attention?

The quality of attention we get from a person determines our interest in doing things with her. For example, when we enjoy spending time with someone, we want to be with this person. On the other hand, when we don't enjoy spending time with a person, we try to avoid being with her.

How it works

Play with your child every day	Give attention to the good behaviors and ignore the bad ones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan a time: set a fixed time or when your child is playing. Allow at least 15 minutes to the positive attention technique. • Choose a two-player game: the other children cannot play. • The child chooses the activity, one allowing interaction. No television. • Show your interest and forget criticism. Enjoy watching and commenting his achievements. • Encourage your child. • If your child misbehaves, focus your attention elsewhere. If he continues, stop the activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly encourage your child's efforts. DON'T WAIT! • Say what you like about your child's action – "I like it when you speak quietly." • Do not mix praise and criticism – "You finally cleaned your room; it's about time."

Don't forget!

Ideally, you should apply the *positive attention* technique every day, a minimum of 3 to 4 times a week, or according to your child's personal situation (at every possible opportunity, when visiting, etc.). All you have to do is play with your child and pay attention to good behaviors while ignoring bad ones.

Suggestions of games to put positive attention into practice

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Building sets (LEGO, K'Nex) ❖ Handicraft, coloring, drawing, painting ❖ Puzzle ❖ Scale models ❖ Card castle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Writing a poem or a letter ❖ Memory games ❖ Play a sport (soccer, baseball, etc.) ❖ Play a musical instrument ❖ Board games (Guess Who?, Risk, Trouble, Monopoly, Uno, etc.) |
|---|--|

These games allow your child to be creative, while letting you pay attention to his positive behaviors when he plays.

Meeting 4: Styles of parental discipline

Specific objectives



The parent learns five styles of parental discipline.



The parent identifies the style of discipline he uses most frequently.



The parent learns the "Structuring for preventing" technique and uses it at home.

Specific materials

- Parent's workbook
- Clip from the movie "Yours, Mine & Ours"²²
- Pictures to illustrate the different styles of parental discipline²³



Agenda

Welcome

Review of what has been learned

The facilitator asks the parents to share their experiences with the "*Positive attention*" technique. This is about finding out if the technique was used and how was the playtime period with their children.

The facilitator proposes the first activity.



²² Nathanson M. & Simonds, R. (Producers), & Gosnell, R. (Director). (2005). *Yours, Mine & Ours* [VHS - DVD]. United States: Paramount Pictures (first two scenes of the film)

²³ A brick wall, a hen, a baseball coach, two friends, a ghost (see the styles of parental discipline table).

Proposed activities



First activity: What is your style of parental discipline?



The facilitator starts this way, "When a parent tries to discipline his child, he can use different methods, and he chooses the method according to the situation and the risk factors " (as we have seen before). To illustrate this, the facilitator shows a short clip (5 min, 25 sec) of the film "Yours, Mine & Ours". This clip shows a controlling style (used by the father) and a permissive style (used by the mother). The film serves to highlight two opposing styles of discipline in two different families. It also allows to introduce the subject of the workshop in a fun way.

After the screening, the facilitator asks the parents to exchange views on what they have seen and establish links to their own course of action:

- Did they see themselves?
- Is their style like the father's or the mother's?
- Do they have some of the behaviors they saw in the film?



Following this exercise, the facilitator asks the parents to complete the **Style of parenting questionnaire**²⁴ on pages 15 to 18 of their workbook. The questionnaire has 14 questions and identifies 5 types of styles:

1) **Controlling** parent



4) **Permissive** parent



2) **Overprotective** parent



5) **Uninvolved** parent



3) **Assertive** parent



²⁴ Benoît, J.-A. (1997). *Le défi de la discipline familiale*. Montréal: Éditions Québecor.

The parents complete their questionnaire and the results are interpreted using the grid found at the end. The results will show a **dominant style** and a **secondary style**. Past experience has shown that the words used to define the styles can be very revealing for parents.



Then, the facilitator presents the "Styles of parental discipline" table, on page 19 of the parent's workbook. He explains:

- The key words that define the styles;
- The techniques used according to the style;
- The adverse effects;
- The challenges of the different styles.



The facilitator helps the parents to interpret the results of the questionnaire. Afterwards, he asks them these five questions:

- 1) "Do you recognize yourself in the style of discipline indicated by the questionnaire results?"
- 2) Do you recognize your spouse? Your parents?"
- 3) Did you choose the same parental style as your parents? Why?"
- 4) Are you seeing positive and lasting changes (medium- and long-term and not just short-term) in your child's behavior?"
- 5) Are the emotional ties between you and your child as satisfying as they were a few years ago or as harmonious as you would like?"



Break

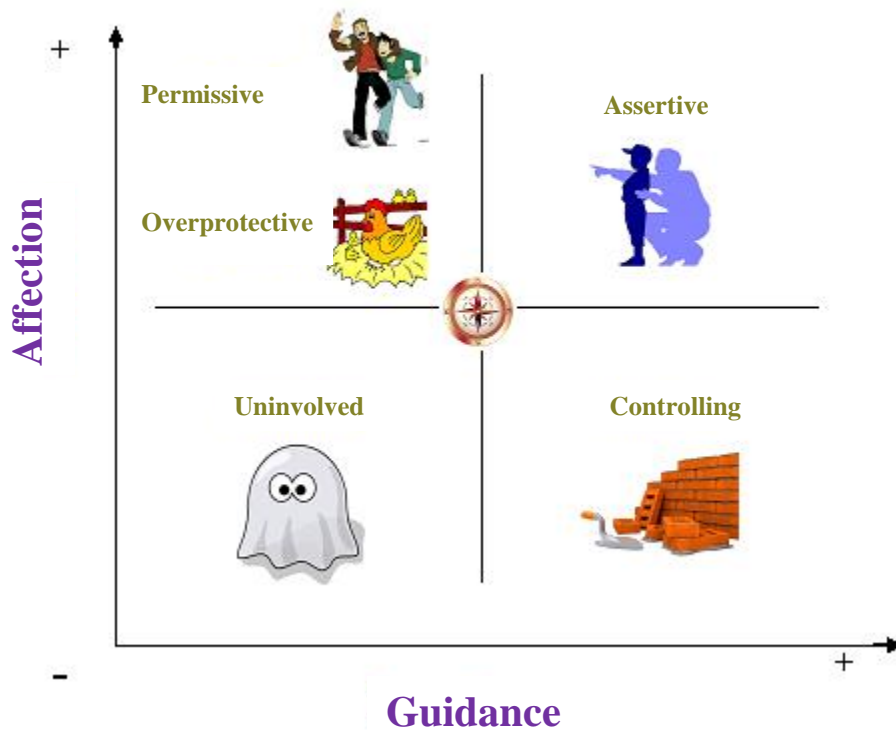
After the break, the facilitator proposes the second activity.



Second activity: What is a style of discipline?



The facilitator replicates, on the flipchart, the parenting styles diagram, which is found on page 20 of the parent's workbook. He repeats that they are five main styles of parental discipline: **controlling**, **overprotective**, **assertive**, **permissive**, **uninvolved**. The facilitator places the five styles along two axes : affection and guidance.



He goes on to explain.

- 1) **Controlling** parent: Little affection and a lot of guidance;
- 2) **Overprotective** or **permissive** parent: A lot of affection and little guidance.
- 3) **Assertive** parent: A lot of affection and a lot of guidance.
- 4) **Uninvolved** parent: Little affection and little guidance.

To conclude, the facilitator adds that what matters is finding a balance between these styles according to the circumstances or the child's age, much like a compass.



He goes on to say that "depending on the circumstances, a parent will adapt and use different styles of parenting." For example, in a dangerous situation, a controlling style may be appropriate. When the children grow up, a permissive style may be more effective. In general, parents must find a balance, while moving, as much as possible, toward an **assertive** parenting style. However, adds the facilitator, in dangerous or stressful situations, parents will use their secondary style.

Finally, the facilitator moves on to the last activity of the meeting with this technique:



"Structuring for preventing" technique

The facilitator asks the parents to free some time to apply the "Structuring for preventing" technique. More often than not, it is when a parent is busy, e.g., when he needs to accomplish a task requiring much time and concentration, that a child will constantly interrupt.

The facilitator continues and asks the parents to turn to page 21 of their workbook where they will find an explanation of the technique. He reads the document with them.



End of the meeting

The facilitator reminds the parents that next week, they will have fun with their children given that the meeting is dedicated to playtime with them. For this reason, children are invited to attend with their parents.

My style of parental discipline

This questionnaire will allow you to identify your parental style. Circle **only one answer** per question. Answer spontaneously and honestly so that you can recognize yourself.

1. You are getting ready to go to the movies (first time in months), but your 6-year-old son makes a scene when you are about to leave.
 - A. You reprimand him before you leave.
 - B. You cancel your evening out.
 - C. You explain the situation to him, show him to wave goodbye in the window, hand him over to the babysitter and leave.
 - D. You leave later and do a last activity with him, hoping he will agree to you leaving so you won't feel as guilty.
 - E. You slip out thinking that it's up to the babysitter to take care of him.

2. Bed time is:
 - A. Quick as a flash.
 - B. Time for pampering.
 - C. A well-organized little ritual.
 - D. Time for negotiations.
 - E. Hell!

3. Your child jumps on the couch:
 - A. You reprimand or punish him.
 - B. You say to yourself that he is too young to understand and do nothing.
 - C. You firmly repeat the rule and intervene if he doesn't react.
 - D. You start a discussion with him.
 - E. You mildly disapprove, but do nothing if he continues.

4. Your 7-year-old child throws a tantrum in a store because he wants a gadget or sweets.
 - A. You punish him immediately.
 - B. You buy what he wants because you feel sorry for him.
 - C. You take him aside and make him understand that if he wants to continue shopping, he has to learn to behave properly.
 - D. You start negotiations to try to reason with him.
 - E. You keep on shopping as if nothing is happening.

5. Your two children are fighting over a game:
 - A. You immediately take away the game.
 - B. You give the game to the youngest child.
 - C. You organize a rotation of the games.
 - D. You tell them to share.
 - E. You let them sort it out.

6. You are divorced, when your children visit the other parent, they only take a quick bath every three days. At your place, they take a bath every day without exception.
 - A. You nag your ex-spouse and the children about it after each visit. You tell them that if they come home again without having taken a bath, they won't get their allowance.
 - B. You call each night to remind them to take a bath because you know your ex-spouse is irresponsible, and your children are not in good hands at his place.
 - C. You clearly explain to your ex-spouse and your children the importance of taking a bath every day and play a game with the children to get them in the tub when they come home.
 - D. You tell yourself that everyone is entitled to their own idea of hygiene and let the children decide to take a bath or not.
 - E. You give up telling yourself there is no point in insisting.

7. Your 7-year-old son has been labelled hyperactive by teachers and school professionals. The latter are asking that the pediatrician prescribes some medication, otherwise he will be placed in a special class.
 - A. You trust school personnel and the pediatrician: you give the medication to the child and insist that he be more obedient at school and at home.
 - B. You think that the teaching staff is so overloaded with work that it labelled your child as hyperactive for no reason.
 - C. You eliminate white sugar, which has a tendency to excite him, and consult a professional for an assessment of the situation.
 - D. You think that the regular program is too demanding. You request a transfer to the alternative school where your child will have freedom of choice.
 - E. This problem is beyond you so you decide to send your child to boarding school.

8. For you, your child is primarily:
 - A. A primitive being that must be tamed.
 - B. A fragile being that must be protected.
 - C. A developing person.
 - D. A tiny adult.
 - E. A whole lot of trouble!

9. Your child interrupts for nothing while you are discussing something important with another adult:
 - A. You tell him to go away.
 - B. You cuddle him while continuing your conversation with the other adult.
 - C. You ask him to come back in a few minutes.
 - D. You stop talking to the adult and give all your attention to your child for as long as it takes.
 - E. You ignore him.

10. When you assign a chore to your youngster:
- A. He always does it, if not, beware of consequences!
 - B. Half the time, he complains and gets away with not doing it.
 - C. Most of the time he happily does it.
 - D. He complains, makes demands and negotiates before doing it.
 - E. He does it sometimes when it suits him.
11. Your daughter is impolite with you:
- A. You give her a lecture or you withdraw permission to go to her friend's house.
 - B. You excuse her by telling yourself that she is tired.
 - C. You ask her to repeat her sentence more politely or to go to her room and cool down before continuing her discussion.
 - D. You reply in the same tone.
 - E. You put up with the impoliteness without saying a word.
12. Your son comes home with a few scratches and a torn sweater, your first reaction is to:
- A. Scold him.
 - B. Run to the hospital.
 - C. Ask "What happened?"
 - D. Find who did this.
 - E. Say "It's no big deal".
13. Your child doesn't want to wear clothing that is appropriate for the season:
- A. You dress him, by force if necessary.
 - B. You appeal to his emotions "Just to make me happy . . . "
 - C. You ask he wears a minimum and let him decide the rest.
 - D. You let him experiment.
 - E. Sometimes you insist, sometimes you give up.
14. You come home from work exhausted. Despite repeated requests, your children (7 and 8 years old) have not put away their coats and their boots, as agreed.
- A. You turn off the television and force them to do this task immediately without grumbling.
 - B. You tell yourself that they probably had a full day too and pick-up their things.
 - C. You take a deep breath to calm yourself, ask how they are doing and insist that they do their chores as soon as possible.
 - D. You don't bother them, finding that life will bring them enough difficulties and respect their choice.
 - E. You complain to your spouse or a friend, without doing anything.

Analysis and interpretation

Which letter did you circle most often?

The "A" = _____

The "B" = _____

The "C" = _____

The "D" = _____

The "E" = _____

The letter that appears most often corresponds to your main style of discipline, the one you use most often.

The letter that is second, in terms of frequency, corresponds to your associated style of discipline; i.e., the one you use once in a while or when your main type is not effective.

A
Controlling

B
Overprotective

C
Assertive

D
Permissive

E
Uninvolved

These styles are not independent, there is a continuum, with every gradation it involves.

Are you considering making changes to your style of discipline?

Here are some questions to ask yourself . . .

1. Do you recognize yourself in the style of discipline indicated by the questionnaire results?
2. Do you recognize your spouse? Your parents?
3. Did you choose the same parental style as your parents? Why?
4. Are you seeing positive and lasting changes (medium and long term and not just short term) in your child's behavior?
5. Are the emotional ties between you and your child as satisfying as they were a few years ago or as harmonious as you would like?

Questionnaire taken and adapted from:

Benoît, J.-A. (1997). *Le défi de la discipline familiale*. Montréal: Les Éditions Québecor.

Styles of parental discipline

	Controlling	Overprotective	Assertive	Permissive	Uninvolved
Key words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control - Obedience - Self-control - Directive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overprotection - Excessive worry - Pity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balance between guidance and flexibility - Support - Respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be friends with and be loved - Indulgent - Hates and avoid conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discouragement - Gradual disengagement - Little assertion - Weakness, wait-and-see approach
Techniques used by the parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interventions +++ - Screams, orders, commands - Sometimes fear caused by threats - Scary stories - Pressure - Constraints - Punishments – Rewards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does everything for the child - Permissiveness - Infantilization - Excuses the child's behaviors - Emotional blackmail to get obeyed - Sabotages the other spouse's discipline techniques by siding with the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Logical consequences - Appropriate routine - Ensures family rules are followed - Guides his child's reflections to teach him to make the right choices - Provides supervision - Positive reinforcement - Relaxes and adapts limits as the child gets older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equal relationship (friends) - Prevents the child from experiencing frustrations - The parents tolerates a lot but eventually explodes - No limit, everything is negotiable - Shared power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No longer intervenes, the parent is in "survival" mode - Limits interactions with his children to a minimum - Buys peace - Rules are presented as suggestions and abandoned when the child indicates opposition - This parent may have tried a number of things without success, which has caused him to feel incompetent
Adverse effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduces: intellectual curiosity, self-esteem and creativity - The parent-child relationship is distant, cold and not very loving - "The child learns to obey not to think." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The parent becomes the child's servant - The child's demands keep growing - Conflict between the two parents - The parent sacrifices his needs and puts the children first and his couple relationship second 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An over-organization of family life - Requires a great deal of rigor and patience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Untimely anger - Incomplete sense of responsibility on the parents' part - Does not prepare his child to cope with life's difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of structure and supervision may make the child anxious and depressed - As a teenager, the child may turn to a 'gang' in a quest for structure
Challenges of this style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop more flexibility - Learn to communicate while considering the child's point of view - Try to restore balance in your emotional relationship with the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give the child more autonomy - Manage your worries - Encourage the child to express himself rather than answering for him 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find the energy and patience each day to apply this style of discipline - Team up with the other parent, never boycott the other parent's discipline (especially not in front of the child) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give the child the benefit of his experience - Establish limits while maintaining good communication - Realize that providing guidance is in the best interest of the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask for help - Restore mutual respect and regain your credibility as a parent



"Structuring for preventing" technique

In keeping with the positive attention technique, we ask that you structure free time. It is often when you have a task to do and don't want to be disturbed that your child will make frequent interruptions to get your attention.



When you know you will need some time without being disturbed (make a phone call, get dinner ready, etc.) explain the situation to your child.



Together, choose an activity the child can perform by himself, without your help (e.g., draw, build a card castle, play with LEGOs, etc.).



To reassure him, let him know how much time you will need (never longer than 15 minutes).



Accomplish your task!



When you are done, congratulate your child and thank him for not interrupting.



If need be, you can create situations to put this technique into practice. Given time, your child may be able to find something to do by himself when he sees you are busy.

When a child bothers you, it is mainly to get your attention. Few parents will stop what they are doing to pay attention to a child playing by himself, but many parents will stop what they are doing to reprimand a child who interrupts.

Meeting 5: Playing with your child

Specific objectives



The parent applies the positive attention technique in the presence of the facilitators.



The parent shares a special moment with his child.



Specific materials

- A variety of board games
- A camera
- "Our family journal" document



Agenda



Greeting period

Given that this is a special meeting where the children are present; the facilitator welcomes them, offers them a snack and invites them to sit in a circle on chairs in order to make them feel comfortable.

Review of what has been learned

Because the children are in attendance at this meeting, there will be no review. The facilitator emphasizes the parent-child relationship.



Welcome

Before beginning this meeting, the facilitator thanks the children for joining their parents. He explains how the playtime will proceed.



Playtime



Earlier, the facilitators have set up the tables so a parent and his child can sit face to face to play. All tables have different game boards; you will need as many game boards as there are children. There will be a rotation every 15 minutes, so that children can play a different game. The goal is not to finish a game, but to have fun and have parent-child interaction.



The facilitator asks the children and their parents to sit at a table. The game begins! The facilitator reminds parents to use the positive attention technique, playing is not enough, they must provide positive reinforcement.



During this time, the facilitators walk around and answer questions, if necessary. In addition, they observe the parent-child interactions to provide feedback at the next meeting. If a parent does not provide enough positive reinforcement, the facilitator can act as a model and congratulate the child.



During playtime, the facilitator takes a picture of each family. This picture, which is a sign of a positive relationship, will be framed and presented at the last meeting.



End of the meeting



At the end of playtime, the facilitator asks the parents and children to help put the game boards away. The facilitator takes this opportunity to thank the children for coming.



The facilitator hands out the document titled "Our family journal" so parents can complete it at home with their child. It is another way of applying the "positive attention" technique.

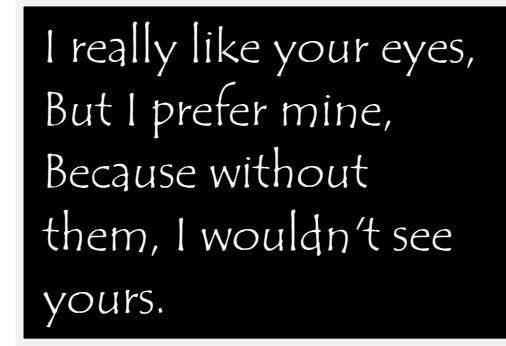
OUR FAMILY TAKING ACTION!



What I like about you . . .!

What makes mom so sweet? What feature of your dad's personality makes him so special to you? Which of your children's habits or characteristics do you find particularly pleasing? Time for nice words!

Write a least three things you like about each member of your family.



What I like about . . .

What I like about . . .

What I like about . . .

What I like about . . .

What I like about . . .

What I like about . . .

Make your life a DREAM ★
and your dream a REALITY

Dream together!

"A dream is a wish you heart makes."

-- Walt Disney

All family members gather in a warm and peaceful setting to sit back and relax. Today's conversation requires to let your imagination soar, be spontaneous and mostly to say all that comes to your mind.

In turn, each family member is invited to complete the following sentence, giving as much details as possible.

Name: _____
I dream of . . .

Name: _____
I dream of . . .

Name: _____
I dream of . . .

Name: _____
I dream of . . .

Name: _____
I dream of . . .

Name: _____
I dream of . . .

The five things I like the MOST . . .

It can be a song or an exotic food, a piece of clothing or a school subject, an animal or a planet. What are the five things you like the most?

To add some mystery, make your list without showing it, then share it by giving clues or offering a choice of answers!



Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

The five things I dislike the MOST . . .

Overcooked spaghettis? Sleepy mornings? Spiders and ants? This conversation will certainly allow you to get to know each other better! Try listing things that the others don't know about you!

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____



Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Name: _____

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

If I was . . . I would be . . .

Each family member identifies the items that best reflect their personality!



If you were a piece of music, you would be . . .

- 1) a tragic opera _____
- 2) an electrifying rock _____
- 3) a heavy metal that moves you _____
- 4) a funny nursery rhyme _____
- 5) a cool hip-hop _____
- 6) a smooth blues _____
- 7) some catchy pop _____
- 8) a soft and comforting lullaby _____

If you were a dish, you would be . . .

- 1) a peppery exotic dish _____
- 2) a very spicy spaghetti _____
- 3) a colorful kebab _____
- 4) a sophisticated gastronomic meal _____
- 5) a crispy red apple _____
- 6) some salted and buttered popcorn _____
- 7) an animated and friendly fondue meal _____
- 8) a comforting chicken noodle soup _____

If you were a historical figure, you would be . . .

- 1) a fearless and blameless knight _____
- 2) a brave cave man _____
- 3) a creative and persevering inventor _____
- 4) a bold and curious explorer _____
- 5) a temperamental and overbearing king _____
- 6) a romantic princess _____
- 7) a funny and absent-minded clown _____
- 8) a heroic woman _____

If you were a car, you would be . . .

- 1) a super fast Formula 1 car _____
- 2) a muddy all-terrain vehicle _____
- 3) a very practical station wagon _____
- 4) a luxury limousine _____
- 5) a sturdy truck _____
- 6) a nice Beetle _____
- 7) a convertible _____
- 8) a shiny vintage car _____



Emotions by the dozen!

In turn, complete your list and have fun explaining your answers to the rest of the family!

Name: _____

- What scares me . . . _____
- What makes me happy . . . _____
- What touches me . . . _____
- What surprises me . . . _____
- What makes me laugh . . . _____
- What upsets me . . . _____
- What relaxes me . . . _____
- What makes me angry . . . _____
- What motivates me . . . _____
- What discourages me . . . _____
- What amazes me . . . _____
- What bothers me . . . _____

Name: _____

- What scares me . . . _____
- What makes me happy . . . _____
- What touches me . . . _____
- What surprises me . . . _____
- What makes me laugh . . . _____
- What upsets me . . . _____
- What relaxes me . . . _____
- What makes me angry . . . _____
- What motivates me . . . _____
- What discourages me . . . _____
- What amazes me . . . _____
- What bothers me . . . _____

Name: _____

- What scares me . . . _____
- What makes me happy . . . _____
- What touches me . . . _____
- What surprises me . . . _____
- What makes me laugh . . . _____
- What upsets me . . . _____
- What relaxes me . . . _____
- What makes me angry . . . _____
- What motivates me . . . _____
- What discourages me . . . _____
- What amazes me . . . _____
- What bothers me . . . _____

Name: _____

- What scares me . . . _____
- What makes me happy . . . _____
- What touches me . . . _____
- What surprises me . . . _____
- What makes me laugh . . . _____
- What upsets me . . . _____
- What relaxes me . . . _____
- What makes me angry . . . _____
- What motivates me . . . _____
- What discourages me . . . _____
- What amazes me . . . _____
- What bothers me . . . _____

Theme 3: Guidance

Over the last few weeks, the parents have fostered positive behaviors in their children and have worked on their parent-child relationship. In the next two meetings, the parents will learn different ways of **dealing with unacceptable behaviors**.

This means that parents will be invited to put into practice educational methods suitable to the child's circumstances and age when he disobeys, even though positive reinforcement was provided. Parents will acquire new skills by applying:



The "time-out" technique;



The "token system" technique.

Overall objective

The parent develops abilities and skills to improve his child's obedience.

Conceptual framework

The social learning model is used as a reference to show the impact of the behavior reinforcement techniques.



Meeting 6: Time-out

Specific objectives



The parent learns the stages of anger in children.



The parent learns to stop his child's unacceptable behaviors.



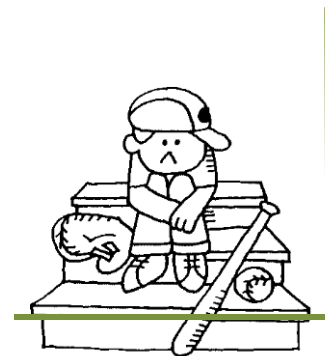
The parent learns the "*Time-out*" technique and uses at home.

Specific material

- Parent's workbook

Agenda

Welcome



Review of what has been learned



The facilitator starts this meeting by asking the parents to comment on their experience during the meeting with the children.

The facilitator revisits the "*Structuring for preventing*" technique. He asks the parents to share their experiences on the application of this technique at home. This is about finding out if the technique was used and what were the elements of success, and the challenges encountered.

Proposed activities

First activity: Preventing aggressiveness and anger



The facilitator starts by saying, "Anger is a normal emotion. From a young age, a child expresses his anger by being aggressive because he cannot talk, these are strong reactions. As he gets older, the child learns to control his anger and his aggressiveness by finding more appropriate ways of expressing himself. It is the parents' role to teach him to choose a way to express himself."



Then, the facilitator explains that there are different stages of anger in children and any intervention that is made must be adapted to the stage a child is in. He asks the parents to turn to page 23 of their workbook so the group can look at the four stages of anger²⁵ and some proposed interventions. While the table is being read, the facilitator encourages the parents to exchange views on some of their experiences in connection with the different stages.

Phases	Contributing factors	What to do
1. The buildup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child is having difficult experiences - It is not the first time - His self-esteem is low - He thinks it will pass - He cannot regain his emotional well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pay attention to the child's personal experiences and be sensitive to his needs - Avoid being impatient or blaming him - Speak calmly - Try to find out what is wrong
2. The spark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child has an impulsive character - He is somewhat negative about the future - He has a "minor" disagreement with the parent - Something hurts him more than usual - Someone raised their voice at him 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Try to defuse the crisis - Find the cause of the problem - Stay calm - Listen carefully to your child - Be sensitive to his pain - Propose an alternative
3. The explosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child starts screaming, throwing insults - He cannot control himself - You become tense, stressed, annoyed - He becomes physically threatening - You fear the worst 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Now is the time for damage control - Look carefully at the child - Take time to listen to him - Wait until he calms down - Avoid making threats - Physically control him if there is a risk of someone getting hurt
4. The aftermath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child knows he has gone too far - He feels guilty - He needs to feel understood - He needs to be treated with indulgence - His self-esteem is at its lowest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once the child has calmed down, discuss with him what just happened - Describe what you saw and how you felt - Then, later talk about the causes of the fit of anger - Look for a solution with the child



[Translation]

²⁵ Cloutier, G. (2012). *Vivre en harmonie avec un enfant qui s'oppose*, (p.116). Montréal: Éditions Gily.



Break

During the break, the facilitator gives **constructive feedback** on the last meeting with the children. He meets the parents individually to give them feedback on the way they use the positive attention technique. He mentions the good things the parents did, as well as their challenges. The feedback is given away from the group and provides the parent with a special opportunity where he feels comfortable and listened to. Receiving feedback is not always easy. So, it is appropriate to ensure that the exercise goes as smoothly as possible. The objective pursued with the feedback is to allow parents to have a view of how they use the techniques and change the way they apply them, if required.

The facilitator continues with the next technique.



"Time-out"²⁶ technique



The facilitator explains that the time-out is a technique used when parents want an unacceptable behavior to stop; e.g., jumping on a couch or yelling very loudly. To introduce the concept of time-out, the facilitator asks the parents:

- "To explain the methods they use to get their child to stop a behavior that is not tolerated."

The facilitator goes on to say, "**Sometimes reinforcement alone is not enough to stop a behavior.** At such times, you have to resort to others means to stop the unacceptable behavior. Today, we will learn the **time-out** technique." The facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 24 of their workbook, to read the description of the "Time-out: 1-2-3 approach" technique.

To make this activity more tangible, the facilitator asks the parents to identify some behaviors that they don't tolerate (e.g., hitting, yelling, swearing, etc.). The facilitator takes the examples given by the parents and uses them to illustrate the time-out technique.

²⁶ Taken and adapted from Phelan, Thomas, W. (2003). *1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for children 2-12*. Illinois: Parent Magic Inc.



At the end of this explanation, the facilitator says that normally, children react to this technique in three different ways:

- They comply;
- They object;
- They are unpredictable depending on the circumstances (some will comply quickly and around the seventh day will object or will object from the beginning and will comply afterwards).

The facilitator must emphasize that this technique will not give results immediately. To become an effective tool, the technique requires that a parent be patient, clear, concrete, constant, coherent and consistent. The facilitator invites the parents to review "*The five Cs of a good rule*".



The facilitator specifies that this technique is used mostly for children less than 10-years old. He adds that children will comply more quickly if the technique is used early in their childhood.



The facilitator goes on to say that the "time-out" can be used with children over the age of 10, with a variant – Suggest that your youth take a "time-in" rather than a "time-out". The "time-in" encourages children to have a moment of introspection, a quiet time which allows them to reduce the intensity of their emotions and look back, by themselves, at what has just happened. Therefore, when a child's behavior is unacceptable, the parent can suggest that he takes a moment in his room to think about the situation while he listens to soft music, writes, draws, etc., so the child can calm down or become less aggressive.



The facilitator continues by reading the 3 rules to follow in public places (also on page 24), he suggests 3 steps.



However, warns the facilitator, it is easy for children to find excuses to get up when they are in time-out. It is also easy for parents to give in. The facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 25 of their workbook and goes on to explain "Some of the excuses to avoid a time-out"²⁷. He makes the parents aware of the excuses and encourages them to enforce the time-out, despite the children's demands. Reading is done out loud for the whole group.

The facilitator ends this meeting by explaining that sometimes it is necessary for a parent to take a time-out for himself to catch his breath and consequently, serve as a model for his child by using this break as a tool.



End of the meeting

²⁷ Cloutier, G. (1997). *Programme de formation PEDAP : pour les parents d'enfants défiant l'autorité parentale. Manuel d'animation*. Montréal: produced and distributed by the CLSC Mercier-Est/Anjou.

"Time-out: 1-2-3 approach" technique

The aim of the 1-2-3 approach²⁸ is to end unacceptable behaviors, while ensuring that clear limits are set, without emotions or complicated situations. This approach encourages action rather than reaction.

Advantages of the 1-2-3 approach

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricts the child's and the parent's impulsiveness • Clarifies the role of the parental authority • Uses the child's self-control ability • Sends a clear message | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes consequences predictable • Limits hard feelings • Is easy to learn • Provides a balance to permissive and controlling parents |
|--|--|

How it works

Before applying this technique, you must explain the 1-2-3 approach to your child. Be consistent, no matter what happens and who is there.

- ❖ When your child acts up, name the behavior that must stop and say out loud "1." Nothing more, nothing less.
- ❖ If the behavior does not stop after a few seconds (approximately 10 to 20 seconds), say "2." If the behavior still hasn't stopped, after a few seconds, say "3." This is the signal that your child must take a time-out. This time-out can take place in the child's room, on a chair meant for that purpose. The length of the time-out is proportional to the child's age. For example, for a 5-year-old, the time-out will be 5 minutes.
- ❖ When the time-out is over, don't mention the situation. No discussion about what happened, unless it is necessary.

Remember!

The time-out technique must be used at every opportunity, no matter when and where you are.

Three rules to follow in public places²⁹

1- Give your instructions to the child before going to a public place (store, movie theater, grocery store, park, etc.).

2- Set up a reward system that will help motivate your child to behave properly (e.g., play together, make his favorite dessert, etc.).

3- Plan the corrective measures you will apply if your child misbehaves. You will count to "3" and if the behavior hasn't stopped, you will call a time-out (on a park bench, in the car, etc.).

Please note that it is important to congratulate your child if he behaves properly.

²⁸ Taken and adapted from Phelan, Thomas, W. (2003). *1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for children 2-12*. Illinois: Parent Magic Inc.

²⁹ Cloutier, G. (2012). *Vivre en harmonie avec un enfant qui s'oppose* (p. 103-104). Montréal: Éditions Gily.

Some excuses to avoid a time-out

- **Asking to go to the toilet, complaining he is hungry or tired.**

Your child must take the time-out asked, before using the bathroom. He will be able to eat or lie down to rest after it is over. If you give in to his demand, he will use this excuse next time.

- **Tells his parent he doesn't love him anymore.**

This is a form of manipulation called "emotional blackmail." It is important not to get caught in this trap. Believe in yourself.

- **Claims he is sick and says he is going to throw-up.**

This is probably a manipulation strategy. Unless your child does not feel well before the time-out, do not get caught up in this little game.

- **Does not want to go to his room.**

If the child is young, you can take him there. If the child is older, give him a choice: take the time-out or lose a privilege.

- **Refuses to leave his room.**

If a child refuses to leave his room, it doesn't matter. Inform the child that the time-out is over, and that he can leave his room whenever he wants.

In different situations, the parent often benefits from taking a time-out himself because he needs it to catch his breath, get his patience back or simply relax. This time-out allows the child to understand that his parent has chosen to take a break as a tool to manage his moods and his emotions better.

Taken and adapted from the *manuel PEDAP* (1997).

Meeting 7: The token systems

Specific objectives



The parent learns to motivate his child.



The parent learns "*The token systems*" technique and uses it at home.

Specific materials

- Parent's workbook
- Two jars and some tokens



Agenda

Welcome

Review of what has been done

The facilitator begins by focusing on the parents' experience with the time-out technique. He asks them to share their concerns and their questions regarding the application of this technique.

Proposed activities

The facilitator introduces the first activity. For this week only, he will begin with the technique because it is complex to explain and requires more time.





First activity: "The token system"³⁰ technique



The facilitator starts by saying, "The token or point system is a rewards technique which motivates a child to adopt good behaviors. This technique is structured and efficient and is not influenced by the parent's mood or the time of day. It complements the positive attention technique".



Parents are asked to turn to page 26 of their workbook, where they will find "*The token systems*" technique. The facilitator explains that a token system can be applied in two main ways:

- A system where you earn tokens; and
- A system where you earn and lose tokens.



The facilitator suggests to parents to get two jars: one for the parents with tokens (buttons, marbles, etc.) and one for the child. He explains that the tokens can have distinctive colors to which the parents can assign different values. For example, a blue token can be worth 1 point, while a red one can be worth 5 points. The child must be introduced to this system. Here is an example of what a parent could say:

I think that you are not rewarded enough for the good things you do, and I would like to change that. So, from now on, each time you do a good thing or you behave properly, you will get a reward. Let me explain, how it will work.



The facilitator moves on, reading the text that follows on token system A (text box):

³⁰ Cloutier, G. (2012). *Vivre en harmonie avec un enfant qui s'oppose*. Montréal: Éditions Gily.

Token system A

(with earnings – tasks and privileges)

- A positive token system is a technique that reinforces a child's good behaviors and acknowledges what he does well. For each task he accomplishes or each time he behaves properly, the child gets one or more tokens. He then gets privileges in exchange for these tokens.
- It is strongly recommended that the child spends a minimum of tokens each day (e.g., 6 a day).
- The parent may give extra tokens if the child had a good day, or if he has accomplished a task exceptionally well.
- A monetary value may be assigned to the tokens for privileges with a cost (especially for older children).
- Additional tokens may be required for any activity needing travelling.



In the same vein, the facilitator says that the parent must sit with the child and establish a list of tasks to accomplish and how many tokens they are worth. To provide a concrete example, the facilitator reads page 27.

LIST OF TASKS

No	TASKS	TOKENS
1.	I get up at (time)	1
2.	I make my bed	1
3.	I am ready on time to go to school	1
4.	I do my homework at (time)	2
5.	I pick up my clothes and my toys before (time)	1
6.	I go to bed on time without complaining	2
7.	I come home at the agreed-upon time	1
8.	I wash at (time)	1
9.		
10.		

The facilitator points out that some of the tasks must be easy for the child to accomplish, so he can earn tokens easily, be encouraged and motivated to continue. However, other tasks are more difficult to accomplish and correspond to the behaviors we want to change (e.g., coming home at the agreed-upon time).

The facilitator explains that each time a child accomplishes a task, he gets the number of tokens indicated. Every day or at a specific moment, the child chooses a privilege on his list and gives back, to his parent, the number of tokens needed to enjoy his privilege.

An example of a list of privileges with the number of tokens required is provided to the parents. The facilitator reads it with them.

LIST OF PRIVILEGES

No	PRIVILEGES	TOKENS
1.	Play outside for an extra 30 minutes	5
2.	Make him his favorite dessert	6
3.	Allow him to go to bed later (30 minutes)	5
4.	Allow him to go play at a friend's house	5
5.	Make a visit to a dollar store	20 + 3
6.	Rent a movie chosen by the child	30 + 3
7.	Invite a friend to dinner	15
8.	Do a special activity (chosen by the child) together	5
9.		
10.		

Caution! Parents must **think through the number of tokens earned each day** and the privileges to be enjoyed because it is essential that the child gets the privileges chosen. In addition, when a monetary value is allowed, it must respect the parents' budget. A good guideline for the management of this system is to ensure that the child cannot spend more than two-thirds of the tokens earned on a given day. This way, a third of the tokens earned can be saved every day and kept to buy special privileges.

The facilitator further stresses that after this system is in place, parents must pay very close attention to the good behaviors, especially in the first week of implementation, so they can reward frequently in order to support the child's motivation.



The facilitator also hands out to the parents blank lists of tasks and privileges (page 28 of their workbook) so they can use them for their child. He encourages parents to create their own lists of tasks and privileges with their child, so he can develop a sense of commitment to this system. In addition, he suggests to use this activity as a game for the positive attention technique.



The facilitator starts a discussion with the group; he asks the parents:

- "What would be the tasks of your child's token system?"
- What would be the privileges of your child's token system?"

The goal of this activity is to make it easier for the parents to transfer their new knowledge to their everyday life. It is an excellent opportunity for the facilitator to help the parents define the tasks in a positive and concrete way. For example: "I will not swear" versus "I speak politely" thereby establishing a link to the concepts already covered.



Break

The facilitator continues explaining the token systems.

Second activity: The token system (continued)



The facilitator explains that once the child fully understands this system, which could take a month or two, **certain behaviors can still be a problem**. He introduces the second token system – on page 26 of the parent's workbook. He read the text that follows on token system B (text box):

Token system B

(with earnings and losses – tasks, privileges and loss)

It is possible that you may have to use a token system with partial loss, when the child has unacceptable behaviors. Specific behaviors are then targeted and the child, in addition to getting tokens for what he does well, could lose tokens if he misbehaves.

- Establish a daily routine with your child and draw a list of privileges to which he will be entitled with his tokens (similar to token system A).
- Identify the unacceptable behaviors you would like your child to change. Explain how many tokens he will lose if he has these behaviors.



The facilitator then explains that a parent can take tokens away as a negative consequence. The idea is not to stop rewarding but to focus on unwanted behaviors that will not be tolerated. This means **insisting that the child gives back**, for any unwanted behavior or disobedience, the number of tokens he would have earned if he had behaved properly. The facilitator gives this example: when the child makes his bed, he gets 2 tokens, but when he doesn't, the child gives back 2 tokens to his parents.

The parents can also add unwanted behaviors such as:

- Aggressive actions;
- Lies;
- Swear words, etc.

The facilitator cautions that a child can react negatively when he is caught behaving incorrectly, the parent must persevere!



To clearly illustrate an example of this token system, the facilitator asks the parents to go to the "Example of a token system" on page 29 of their workbook.

MANDATORY DAILY ROUTINE			TOKENS EARNED OR LOST
GOOD THINGS DONE	TOKENS EARNED	UNWANTED BEHAVIORS	TOKENS LOST

The parents can use it as a template and improve it with their child. The facilitator specifies that as in the previous system, the parents must identify with their child the behaviors that will not be tolerated and the number of tokens or points that will be lost. It is essential that the system include tasks or behaviors that allow the child to earn tokens in order to keep him motivated and encourage him to persevere.



The facilitator starts a discussion with the group, he asks the parents:

- "Which unwanted behaviors would be part of your child's token system?"

The goal of this activity is to make it easier for the parents to transfer their new knowledge to their everyday life.



The facilitator ends this activity by reviewing certain key points. He reads the following:

A few more comments . . .

- Review the tasks and privileges list each month to make the necessary adjustments and corrections.
- Any good behavior is worth a reward. For example, you can use this system to encourage your child to stop interrupting.
- Never give tokens ahead of time. The tasks or the chore must be completed.
- If both parents live together, it is well understood that they must jointly manage this system in order to make it more meaningful.
- Finally, don't forget to smile when giving out rewards and even add a compliment from time to time.

Taken from *PEDAP*(1997). Fact sheet 31.

The facilitator continues with the third activity.



Third activity: Homework

One of the tasks a child must complete is doing his homework. The facilitator points out that this is a task which frequently leads parents to insist and repeat and which can cause conflicts. The token systems can often be used to motivate a child during difficult homework assignments.



Several authors³¹ agree on one point: **motivation**. The facilitator goes on to say that "for a child to be motivated, he must be encouraged while doing his homework." The child's **interest** in the subject, sources of **distraction** in his environment and **encouragements** from his parents are all factors that can influence him to do his homework well. The facilitator asks the parents:

- "To explain what the homework period is like at home;
- How do they face this challenge?"



He then asks the parents to go to the "Homework"³² table on page 30 of their workbook. This table is a reference document for the parents. The facilitator identifies the 7 most common problems related to homework:

- 1) Your child doesn't do his best work.
- 2) Your child refuses to finish his homework.
- 3) Your child forgets to bring homework home.
- 4) Your child takes all night to do his homework.
- 5) Your child doesn't want to do his homework by himself.
- 6) Your child waits until the last minute to do his homework.
- 7) Your child doesn't do his homework if you are not there.

³¹ Canter, L. & Hausner, L. (1995). *Devoirs sans larmes*. Montréal: Les Éditions de la Chenelière.
 Cloutier, G. (1997). *Programme de formation PEDAP : pour les parents d'enfants défiant l'autorité parentale. Manuel d'animation*.
 Montréal: produced and distributed by the CLSC Mercier-Est/Anjou.
 Québec. Department of Education, Recreation and Sport. (2011). *Homework and Studying – Supporting and Guiding my Child*. Québec,
 QC: Author.
 Lavigneur, S. (1998). *Ces parents à bout de souffle*. Outremont: Les Éditions Québecor.

³² Canter, L. & Hausner, L. (1995). *Devoirs sans larmes*. Montréal: Les Éditions de la Chenelière.

Given that this document is rather exhaustive, it would take too long to read it with the group. The facilitator asks the parents to identify the problem (or problems) that affect them most. The facilitator can then read on one or two of them with the parents depending on the group's needs.



The facilitator goes on to say that "one way of **motivating** the child is to reward him." For example, the parent could apply the positive attention technique using a game right after homework is done. In addition, tokens could be given to a child who does his homework well. In specific circumstances, tokens could be taken away for homework not done properly.



In addition, the facilitator emphasizes that **autonomy** is important during homework. He recommends that parents be in the same room as the child, but that they don't do his homework for him. They are there to encourage the child to persevere.



Homework is a good time for the child to develop his sense of **responsibility**. The facilitator explains that this is one of the first situations where the child will have to take responsibility for his actions; i.e., if the child didn't do his homework, he will have to deal with the consequence imposed by the teacher and possibly poor school results. The facilitator recommends to the parents to **explain the consequences to their child and encourage** him to complete his homework because it is not their responsibility. Parents should never excuse their child for not doing homework unless there is an unusual situation like an illness.

End of the meeting



"Token systems" technique

The token system is a rewards technique which motivates a child to adopt good behaviors. This technique is structured and efficient and is not influenced by the parent's mood or the time of day. It complements the positive attention technique.

Token system A

(with earnings – tasks and privileges)

- A positive token system is a technique that reinforces a child's good behaviors and acknowledges what he does well. For each task he accomplishes or each time he behaves properly, the child gets one or more tokens. He then gets privileges in exchange for these tokens.
- It is strongly recommended that the child spends a minimum of tokens each day (e.g., 6 a day).
- The parent may give extra tokens if the child had a good day, or if he has accomplished a task exceptionally well.
- A monetary value may be assigned to the tokens for privileges with a cost (especially for older children).
- Additional tokens may be required for any activity needing travelling.

Token system B

(with earnings and losses – tasks, privileges and loss)

It is possible that you may have to use a token system with partial loss, when the child has unacceptable behaviors. Specific behaviors are then targeted and the child, in addition to getting tokens for what he does well, could lose tokens if he misbehaves.


- Establish a daily routine with your child and draw a list of privileges to which he will be entitled with his tokens (similar to token system A).
- Identify the unacceptable behaviors you would like your child to change. Explain how many tokens he will lose if he has these behaviors.

A few more comments . . .


- ☑ Review the tasks and privileges lists each month to make the necessary adjustments and corrections.
- ☑ Any good behavior is worth a reward. For example, you can use this system to encourage your child to stop interrupting.
- ☑ Never give tokens ahead of time. The task or the chore must be completed.
- ☑ If both parents live together, it is well understood that they must jointly manage this system in order to make it more meaningful.
- ☑ Finally, don't forget to smile when giving out rewards and even add a compliment from time to time.


Taken from *PEDAP*(1997). Fact sheet 31.

How to solve the 7 most common problems related to homework?³³

Problem	Advice
<p>Problem no. 1 Your child doesn't do his best work</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain clearly and firmly to your child how you want his homework to be done. Make him understand that the way he gets rid of his homework is unacceptable. 2. Take away the temptation for him to rush through his assignments by establishing a specific time for doing homework. 3. Encourage him each time he makes an effort to work well. Be specific when praising his efforts. 4. Reward him with privileges, if needed. Use a reward system for at least one month³³ to allow your child to develop a positive attitude towards homework. 5. If everything fails, inform his teacher. You will have to develop a plan together to motivate your child to make more efforts.
<p>Problem no. 2 Your child refuses to do his homework</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make it clear to your child that you expect homework to be completed. 2. Back up your words with actions. In the event that your child rebels against you when it comes to homework, you must exercise your parental authority to make him understand. Do not give in to manipulation. 3. Inform his teacher. Ask him to be firmer with your child. It is important that your child knows that the school is supporting your efforts. 4. Encourage and congratulate your child when he works well. "I am happy to see that you did your work well, this is what I was expecting." 5. Reward him, if needed.
<p>Problem no. 3 Your child forgets to bring homework at home</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make it clear to your child that you want him to bring all of his homework at home. He must ensure that he has everything he needs to complete his assignments. If he did his homework at school during his free time, insist that he still brings it at home so it can be reviewed. 2. Inform his teacher so you know what homework needs to be done. Ask the teacher to sign your child's homework agenda. 3. Establish a specific time for doing homework. The child will lose the habit of "forgetting" homework if he knows that he will have to spend a predetermined amount of time doing school work, whether or not he has "forgotten" his assignments. 4. Congratulate your child when he brings his homework at home. "I am happy that you thought of bringing all your homework at home. I knew you could do it!" 5. Some children are harder to motivate than others. In some cases, it might be necessary to offer small rewards each time your child brings all of his homework at home. 6. If all these steps fail, inform the teacher so that new disciplinary measures can be established at school. The child must realize that both the school, and his parents agree that he is responsible for his homework.

³³ Canter, L. & Hausner, L. (1995). *Devoirs sans larmes* (p. 89-1). Montréal: Les Éditions de la Chenelière.

<p>Problem no. 4 Your child takes all night to finish his homework</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make it clear to your child that he must finish his homework in a timely manner. He must stop taking all night to do so. 2. Ensure homework is done in a calm and appropriate area. You might have to make changes to your child's environment, so he will be able to concentrate better. 3. Make yourself available for help only during the scheduled homework time. As soon as this time is up, stop all forms of assistance, no matter what the difficulty your child may be experiencing. This way, he will learn that your availability has its limits. 4. Congratulate your child when he succeeds in doing his homework in a timely manner. Tell him promptly: "Great, I am happy that you did your homework on time. I am proud of you!" 5. Again, certain children may need a little more encouragement to learn to work without procrastinating. A good way of solving this particular problem is to play "Beat the clock". 6. Be consistent, back up your words with actions.
<p>Problem no. 5 Your child doesn't want to do his homework by himself</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make it clear to your child that you expect him to do his homework alone. Tell him that you are not responsible for getting his assignments done, and that you have no intention of sitting with him all night or of doing his homework for him. Also tell him that you won't be there to answer questions every five minutes. 2. Give help only if your child tries to solve his problem. There are times where your child really needs your help because the assignment is too hard to complete. However, before helping him ensure that he has tried to solve his problem at least twice on his own. 3. When helping your child, break the assignment into smaller tasks so it seems less overwhelming. Help your child recognize he has the ability to get the assignment done. Encourage any kind of effort he makes. 4. Keep an eye on your child when he works by himself, congratulate him: "I am really proud of the way you work by yourself. I knew you could do it!" 5. For children who find it more difficult to work by themselves, a game could help solve this particular problem. 6. Back up your words with actions. If the previous five steps do not give the expected results, it is time to act. You must tell your child that you won't help him, and that he will have to sit in his work space until his homework is done, even if it means staying there all night. <p>Expect your child to manipulate you by being angry, crying or being indifferent. Show him that these tactics don't work with you, he will still have to do his homework alone, otherwise he will have to face the consequences.</p>

<p>Problem no. 6 Your child waits until the last minute to do his homework</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make it clear to your child that you expect him to plan long-term assignments responsibly. No more assignments completed at the last minute! 2. Help your child to use a grid to write down his long-term assignments. Insist that he advises you on the day he is given such an assignment. Together, break the assignment into small tasks and agree on a due date for each one. 3. Ensure that each task is done on time. 4. Congratulate your child each time a task is completed on time. Show your support: "It's great that you have already chosen the book for your book report." – "Wow, you finished reading your book before the date you had set! Keep up the good work!" 5. Reward your child each time a task is completed, if needed. 6. Back up your words with actions. If the child does not meet the deadlines, it's time to impose sanctions. For example, if your child has not read the book he chose for his book report by the date set, remove a privilege (play outside, watch television, etc.) until he has read the book. Unless you impose strict limits, the child won't believe you are serious.
<p>Problem no. 7 Your child doesn't do his homework if you are not there</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clearly state to your child that homework has to be done each night, whether or not you are at home. 2. Ensure the babysitter knows about the routine at home. He must know that the child has a specific work space, that there is a specific time where the homework must be done and that the child is expected to work alone. Of course, the babysitter's involvement depends on your child's age, but it must be clear that you expect him to do his homework as if you were there. 3. Phone your child to ensure he is working. You can call at the beginning and at the end of the time set for doing homework. When you get home, review your child's homework. You will be able to reduce this type of control measure as your child becomes more responsible. 4. Congratulate your child each time he works well during your absence. When you call him at the beginning of the homework period and he is already working, tell him: "I am really happy that you started working right away even though I am not there"! When you get home and see that he has done all his homework, show your approval: "Excellent! You work well when I am not there. Keep it up"! 5. Reward your child, if needed. Sign a homework contract with him that says he will earn one point each time he does his homework well when you are not there. When he has earned a certain number of points, he will be entitled to a reward. This method may be required until the child gets into the habit of doing his homework without any supervision.

Meeting 8: Taking care of yourself

Specific objectives



The parent reviews the concepts covered during the *Parents Taking Action* group.



The parent identifies ways of taking care of himself.

Specific materials

- Quiz flash cards ³⁴
- Parenting questionnaires
- "Evaluation of participant satisfaction" questionnaires
- Framed parent-child pictures
- Parents Taking Action bookmarks
- Certificate of participation

Agenda

Welcome

Review of what has been learned



For this last meeting, the facilitator only reviews the token systems, as the first activity is a quiz that will be used to summarize the concepts covered. The parents who managed to apply the technique are asked to share their experience.

³⁴ The facilitator creates these flash cards.

Proposed activities



First activity: Questionnaire



At the first meeting, the parents completed the "Parenting questionnaire". The facilitator hands out another copy of this questionnaire so parents can complete it again. The facilitators provide help and support as required during the activity.



During the break, the results are compiled and compared with those from the first questionnaire on the "Comparison of the results" sheet kept by the facilitator. After the break, this sheet with the pre- and post-group results will be handed out to the parents.



Second activity: The Quiz!



It is important to summarize all of the concepts covered because it is the last meeting. To do so, the facilitator explains that:

- "In turn, each participant will draw a flash card on which a question is written.
- The participant must answer the question out loud."

The facilitator can help the parents to answer by pulling out the activity sheets from the parent's workbook as a visual aid. In addition, the facilitator can refer to his checklist, if he forgets an answer.

When the parents have answered all the questions, we go to break.

Break



After the break, the facilitator explains to the parents that the results from the two questionnaires have to be compared. We hope to see a difference (an increase) in the results. The facilitator explains that after applying the content of the *Parents Taking Action* group, parents should:

- Have a greater or equal sense of parental competence;
- Have a greater or equal degree of satisfaction with the parent-child relationship.

In addition, the results are a good indicator for the facilitators; it is a way of confirming if after the group meetings, the parents feel that are better equipped to deal with their child's behaviors. The facilitator ask the parents to share their views on the results.

The facilitator moves on to the next activity.

Third activity: Taking care of yourself!



The facilitator explains that it is important for a parent to take care of himself! He must stop for some breathing room. A parent who is rested and not stressed is better able to adequately guide his child.



The facilitator asks the parents to give examples of when they feel the need to take care of themselves and how they do it. The facilitator does not have a magic solution! What can help a parent may not help another. The purpose of this discussion is for parents to share different strategies.



The facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 33 of their workbook for some tips on taking care of themselves³⁵, which they will read together.

It is important that the parents understand that they are not alone in dealing with their child's defiant behaviors. The facilitator points out that oppositional behaviors are not easy and even though the parent has tools to prevent them, he has to rely on a network to support him, if only to vent!

³⁵ Taken and adapted from Lavigne, S. (1998). *Ces parents à bout de souffle*. Outremont: Les Éditions Québecor.



Finally, the facilitator asks the parents to turn to page 34 of their workbook, where they will find some resources that could be helpful.



Moment of recognition!

For this last meeting, the facilitator takes the time to acknowledge the participation of the parents to the group.



First of all, a certificate of participation is given to each of the parents. It includes the name of the parent, the number of meetings he attended and the signature of the facilitators.



The laminated *Parents Taking Action* bookmark, which can be used as a checklist, is also given with the certificate. The facilitator reads it with the parents. The following are a few points to keep in mind:

- Learn to get a good understanding of the situation.
- Use positive attention.
- Know how to motivate your child.
- Make clear, direct and precise requests.
- Know when to be firm.
- Act before you react!



In addition, the picture taken at the fifth meeting is given to parents as a sign of a positive parent-child relationship. With this picture, the facilitator wants to remind parents that they can have fun time with their child.



Finally, the facilitator takes the time to thank participants. They are invited to share out loud their comments on their participation in the group. In addition, the facilitator takes the flipchart sheet with the parents' expectations (drafted at the first meeting) and reads it to confirm with them that these have been met.



End of the meeting and evaluation of the participants' satisfaction



The facilitator asks the parents to fill out anonymously the evaluation of participants' satisfaction. This questionnaire is handed out to the parents and allows the CJO to get their comments, which are used to adjust the content and facilitation of a future group. The facilitator encourages the parents to be honest and transparent in their answers. He provides help and support as required during this activity.



The parents give back their evaluation and leave the group.

Quiz!

Facilitator's checklist

Questions	Answers
1. In your own words, give the definition of disobedience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child takes too long to respond when asked to do something. It is considered that appropriate response time is between 10 seconds and 1 minute. - The child stops performing the task he was asked to do without completing it. - The child refuses to comply with established rules in different situations; e.g., he gets away from his parents in a public place, he lies, he hits other children, he takes food in the refrigerator without asking permission, he insults his parents, etc.
2. Give two examples of disobedience risk factors related to the child's characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health problems - Biological components (hormones) - Intellectual or physical disability - Daily routine - Attention problem – hyperactivity - Inappropriate responses to stimulations - Delays in development (maturation) - Social integration difficulties (attitude toward their peers)
3. Give two examples of disobedience risk factors related to the parent's characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health problems - Biological components (hormones) - Intellectual or physical disability - Daily routine - Attention problem – hyperactivity - Impulsiveness - Emotional problem - Parenting style
4. Give one example of disobedience risk factors related to situational events – stressors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suffer from a sudden illness - Financial problems - Family problems - Job loss - Separation – Divorce - Various losses (e.g., death of a loved one) - Parenting style
5. Give one example of disobedience risk factors related to the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consecutive moves - Change of school - Housing - Social support - Accessibility and availability of services

Questions	Answers
6. Why is having a routine important for a child?	To establish stability and a sense of security. It helps the child to gain autonomy and develop a sense of responsibility.
7. Your neighbour says that she doesn't know what to do anymore to spend quality time with her child. He acts up to get attention, and she doesn't want to be with him. You decide to tell her about the positive attention technique. In your own words, explain to her how to use this technique.	Let the child choose a game. Play together for 15 minutes each day. Comment his achievements and congratulate him. Tell him how pleasant it is to have fun time with him. If the child misbehaves, ignore him. If he continues, stop playing.
8. Give two examples of sentences to encourage your child.	I am proud of you! Well done! I like spending time with you. You are good at this! Etc.
9. Give two examples of actions that provide positive reinforcement to your child.	To stroke his hair To rub his back To wink at him Etc.
10. You want your child to tidy up his room. How do you word your request? How do you go about making it?	Michael, I am asking you to tidy up your room in the next 30 minutes. Ensure you are in the same room as your child and establish eye contact with him. You must stay close and check on him now and again so he knows you are there.
11. Melanie wants to thank her son for doing the dishes. She says, "Thank you for doing the dishes, it helps me a lot, but you forgot to clean the table". Is her thank you communicated properly? Watch out for pitfalls!	Melanie thanked her son properly. However, she did fall into a communication trap: <i>criticism</i> . Avoid criticizing what your child has done!

Questions	Answers
<p>12. You would like your child to do you a favour. How would you ask him to bring you a glass of water? How would you react if he says no?</p>	<p>Danny, could you bring me a glass of water, please? If the child refuses, do not reprimand him. A favour implies that you can say no.</p>
<p>13. When you give your child a time-out, where do you send him? For how long?</p>	<p>The child can be seated on a chair, a stair step, in his room. It doesn't matter where, as long as it is the same each time and the child knows the area. The time-out should last one minute per year of the child's age (6 years-old – 6 minutes).</p>
<p>14. What are the steps to follow when going to a public place?</p>	<p>A) Give instructions to the child before going to a public place (store, movie theater, grocery store, etc.). B) Set up a reward system that will help motivate the child to behave properly. C) Plan the corrective measures to apply if the child misbehaves. Please note that it is important to congratulate the child if he behaves properly.</p>
<p>15. Your child is in time-out. He keeps repeating that he is thirsty, hungry or needs to go to the bathroom. How do you react?</p>	<p>Tell him he has to do his time-out first. Don't fall for excuses! Once the time-out is over, he can have a snack or use the bathroom.</p>
<p>16. Which parenting style do you use most often? Name a challenge for this style?</p>	<p>Controlling: Develop more flexibility; learn to communicate while considering the child's point of view; try to restore balance in my emotional relationship with the child.</p> <p>Overprotective: Give the child more autonomy; manage my worries; encourage the child to express himself rather than answering for him.</p> <p>Assertive: Find the energy and patience each day to apply this style of discipline; team up with the other parent, never boycott the other parent's discipline (especially not in front of the child).</p> <p>Permissive: Give the child the benefit of his experience; establish limits while maintaining good communication; realize that providing guidance is in the best interest of the child.</p> <p>Uninvolved: Ask for help; restore mutual respect and regain my credibility as a parent.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>17. What are the five styles of parental discipline and the pictures that represent them?</p>	<p>Controlling: brick wall Overprotective: hen Assertive: coach Permissive: friends Uninvolved: ghost</p>
<p>18. Why would a token system be used?</p>	<p>To motivate a child to adopt good behaviors and reduce unacceptable behaviors. This technique is structured and efficient and is not influenced by mood, time of day or place.</p>
<p>19. You are developing a token system with your child. Give one example of tasks and privileges you could use.</p>	<p>Tasks: Make your bed Tidy up your room Get home on time Etc.</p> <p>Privileges: Play outside for an extra 30 minutes Invite a friend to dinner Rent a movie Etc.</p>

PARENTING QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Taking positive actions

	POSITIVE ACTIONS	0 never	1 rarely	2 sometimes	3 often	4 always
1.	You can guess why your child acts in a certain way.					
2.	You take your time before intervening with your child.					
3.	You listen to your child's point of view.					
4.	You discuss the action to be taken with the other parent.					
5.	You agree with the other parent on the action to be taken.					
6.	When your child behaves properly, you congratulate him.					
7.	You spend time playing with your child.					
8.	You are interested in your child's leisure activities.					
9.	You like spending time with your child.					
10.	You are proud of your child.					
11.	You make requests clearly and concisely.					
12.	You speak calmly when you need to reprimand your child.					
13.	You check to make sure your child understood.					
14.	You ensure your child has done what you asked.					
15.	You are consistent in your requests.					
16.	You show your child that you have confidence in his abilities.					
17.	You use a good incentive system, e.g. tokens or other.					
18.	Your child responds well to this system.					
19.	Both parents use this system.					
20.	The method used is working well.					
21.	You can be firm when needed.					
22.	You are determined to see things through with your child.					
23.	Your interventions are marked with affection even when you punish your child.					
24.	Your use of a time-out is efficient.					
25.	Your child responds well to the application of a time-out.					
	Add the numbers in each column					

PARENTING QUESTIONNAIRE

II. Difficulties experienced

	POSITIVE ACTIONS	0 never	1 rarely	2 sometimes	3 often	4 always
1.	You have a lot of difficulty understanding your child.					
2.	You react too quickly to his behaviors.					
3.	You have to repeat your request several times.					
4.	You think your child acts like a "baby".					
5.	Sometimes your child is expelled from school.					
6.	You find your child's company boring.					
7.	You don't know what your child is interested in.					
8.	You worry about your child's future.					
9.	You find your child has the same negative behaviors as his other parent.					
10.	You have to reprimand and punish your child.					
11.	Your child doesn't seem to understand you.					
12.	You are tired of repeating.					
13.	You raise your voice.					
14.	The child also raises his voice to you.					
15.	The situation is so serious that you look forward to your child turning 18.					
16.	You have the impressions that your child isn't interested in anything.					
17.	You don't know how to motivate your child.					
18.	You often get angry at your child.					
19.	You have the impression that your child's behavior prevents creating a good atmosphere at home.					
20.	You and the other parent argue about the child.					
21.	At times, you feel like giving up.					
22.	You lose control of your emotions.					
23.	You threaten your child with severe punishment.					
24.	Your child flatly refuses to obey.					
25.	You need to get out of the house to relax.					
	Add the numbers in each column					

RESULTS

4. PARENT'S FEELING OF COMPETENCE

– **Performance score the parent gives himself**

Total from answers to questionnaire I: _____

Corresponding letter: _____

– **Assessment of the child's behavior score**

Total from answers to questionnaire II: _____ (X)

Subtract "X" from 100: 100 - _____ = _____

Corresponding letter: _____

A	=	80	–	100
B	=	60	–	80
C	=	40	–	60
D	=	20	–	40
E	=	0	–	20

5. CHILD'S MOST PROBLEMATIC AREA

Do a separate calculation for each of the five themes of questionnaire II:

1 to 5: Knowledge of the child and of the meaning of his behavior

6 to 10: Interest for the child's activities

11 to 25: Communication

16 to 20: Child's motivation

21 to 25: Guidance

Identify the child's most problematic area by comparing the results to the different themes.

6. SATISFACTION LEVEL – PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

– **Educational actions of a relational nature**

Questionnaire I: Add the answers to questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 25

Result: _____ / 40

– **Assessment of the child's response**

Questionnaire II: Add the answers to questions 6, 8, 12, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25

Result: _____ / (X)

Subtract "X" from 40: 40 - _____ = _____

Comparison of the results obtained before and after applying this method.

Taking care of yourself!

As a parent, it is important to take care of yourself. You must stop for some breathing room. A parent who is rested and not stressed is better able to adequately guide his child.

Here are some ideas for you!³⁶



Accept help from others! When someone offers a helping hand, it is important to accept it. It is also important to ask for help. Your spouse, a relative, a friend, a neighbour, a teacher, a support group or a professional can all lend a helping hand.

An affectionate gesture, a good listener, domestic help! Someone who helps the child with his homework, takes him out for an activity!



Regularly plan a special moment for yourself: an activity, an outing by yourself, something just for you! The parent must remember that "the most important is not necessarily the most urgent." The goal is to do something you enjoy, no matter what it is: movie, handicrafts, massage, walking, aerobic classes, window-shopping, dinner with friends, etc.



Take a time-out! When there is too much pressure, go to another room and take a deep breath: read, listen to music, call a friend, it doesn't matter. Give yourself time! Watch out for signs of stress and defuse the situation – "Better to escape than to escalate!"



Eliminate negative thoughts! Focus on the positive. Keep your successes in mind. Avoid being all doom and gloom!

**You are not just a parent! You are a person with needs, strengths and limits.
Believe in yourself!**

³⁶ Taken and adapted from Lavigne, S. (1998). *Ces parents à bout de souffle*. Outremont: Les Éditions Québecor.

A few resources!

Suggested readings:



Vivre en harmonie avec un enfant qui s'oppose by Gilles Cloutier, Éditions Gily



Ces parents à bout de souffle by Suzanne Lavigueur, Les Éditions Québecor



Homework Without Tears: A Parent's Guide for Motivating Children to Do Homework and to Succeed in School by Lee Canter and Lee Hausner, Harper and Row

Telephone lines:



Première Ressource, aide aux parents

1-866-329-4223 or www.premiereresource.com

A free and anonymous service which provides professional counseling by telephone with a mission to contribute, with a preventive and supportive approach, to the well-being of families, by helping them understand and solve problems related to education and the relationship between parents and children in everyday life.



Ligne Parents (in French only)

1-800-361-5085 or www.ligneparents.com

A telephone response and support service for parents with children 0 to 18 years-old, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Free, confidential and anonymous.



Allô Prof (in French only)

1-888-776-4455 or www.alloprof.ca

Free homework assistance service.



L'AQETA Outaouais (in French only)

819-777-3126 or www.aqetaoutaouais.qc.ca

The AQETA plays a leadership role in ensuring that people with disabilities receive equal opportunities, are allowed to develop their full potential and contribute positively to society.



Le Centre d'aide 24/7

819-595-9999 or www.centredaide247.com (in French only)

Offers services (referral, support and counselling) to individuals and their relatives who are in crisis or distressed, which are aimed at defusing the crisis and initiating a problem-solving process using a community-based approach that seeks to maintain or return the individual to his normal living environment.



Centres jeunesse de l'Outaouais

819-776-6060 or www.cjoutaouais.qc.ca (Web site in French only)

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