



UNIT SEVEN

Family Night

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Family Night Overview

(20 minutes)



Purpose

To provide peer educators with a general overview of the topics to be discussed in the unit



Materials Needed

- A copy of *Family Night: Overview* handout for each peer educator



Directions

Step 1

Distribute copies of the handout, *Family Night: Overview* to each peer educator. Have students go around, reading aloud one paragraph at a time.

Step 2

Discuss the following question.

1. Why is it important that both teens and parents talk openly about sex and sexuality?

Step 3

Have students turn to a partner and share any experiences they have had talking to a parent or guardian about sex and sexuality. Lead a discussion with the large group by asking the following questions:

1. By a show of hands, how many people report having no experiences talking to a parent or guardian about sex and sexuality?
2. What makes it hard to talk to parents or guardians about these issues?
3. What positive experiences have some people had talking about these issues with a parent or guardian?

Overview

Studies show that teens who feel they can talk with their parents about sex are less likely to engage in high-risk behavior than those who do not feel they can talk with their parents. At the same time, research demonstrates that *most* parents do *not* talk openly with their children about sex. This can be attributed to their own discomfort with the topic and not feeling equipped with accurate information. Both teens and parents report that they want to have honest discussions with one another about a range of topics including sexuality, but don't know how to begin.

Hosting Family Night provides an opportunity for parents and teens to talk to one another about issues such as privacy, trust, sex, friends and independence. The event begins with thought-provoking skits followed by small group discussion. The overall goal is to decrease some of the fears and discomfort surrounding conversations about sex and sexuality.

Parents who have attended Family Night have indicated that because of their participation they are more likely to initiate a conversation about sexuality with their child and are more comfortable having that conversation.

The following unit includes activities that encourage you to think about what you feel is important for parents to know about teen sexuality. Also included are several resources to help you plan and prepare for your Family Night.

Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe two reasons why it's important to host Family Night
- Understand the ways in which working with adults is different than working with peers
- Describe three messages you received about sex from your family, peers, the media, and your religious/cultural background
- Offer three recommendations for how parents/guardians and teens can talk about sex and sexuality

Take Home Messages

As peer educators, you will also be expected to make sure Family Night participants understand the following Take Home Messages:

- It is important to understand how one's own values and attitudes regarding sexuality influence the messages parents give their children.
- Teenagers want and need guidance from parents/guardians and other trusted adults regarding decisions about sex and sexuality.
- Communicating with parents/guardians and other trusted adults is important in preventing sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, and pregnancy among teenagers.

Preparing for Family Night

(40 minutes)



Purpose

To plan and prepare for Family Night



Materials Needed

- Newsprint and markers



Directions

Step 1

Explain to students that Family Night is a workshop designed to both showcase Teen PEP at your school and get parents/guardians more comfortable with having discussions about sex and sexuality with the teens in their lives.

Distribute copies of *Talk to Me: A Family Night Workshop* to peer educators and go around, reading it aloud as a class.

Step 2

Discuss the following questions.

1. How is Family Night similar to other workshops we have done? (*The format is similar: introduction, skits, small groups, large group activities, closure*)
2. How is Family Night different from other workshops we have done? (*Family Night is the only workshop where adults are participants, there is a panel discussion, and it takes place in the evening and involves refreshments and a break*)
3. Who should be invited to Family Night?

Sample responses

- Parents/guardians of Teen PEP members
- Outreach participants and their parents/guardians
- Potential peer educators
- School administrators
- Faculty
- Community members
- Board of Education members
- Parent-teacher association members
- Local politicians/representatives

4. Why is it important for teens and their parents to attend Family Night together? (*To establish a healthy practice of open communication about sexuality issues in a safe environment*)
5. What does Teen PEP at this school have to gain from hosting a successful Family Night? (*Parent support, faculty and administrative support, community support, possible funds if someone chooses to help pay Teen PEP expenses as a result of participating in the workshop, recruitment of new applicants*)

Explain to students that a successful Family Night is a great way to get support for Teen PEP in your school and that preparing for it is a group effort, just like other outreaches.

Step 3

Remind students that working with adults will be different than the experience they have had so far working with their peers. Be sure to discuss the following points:

- Your parents/guardians and other family members will not be in your small group so you do not have to worry about feeling uncomfortable leading a discussion with your own family.
- Adults may be more talkative than their peers during activities.
- It will be important to keep the group on task and moving through the activities. Don't be afraid to stop a conversation that has gone off topic. Use your facilitation skills, such as summarizing and moving on, as you would in any workshop.
- While the discussion may guide itself, it is still important to have some follow up questions to keep the discussion on track.
- During the "Where Do We Learn About Sex?" activity, the adults in your group may be very interested in the messages you received as well. Feel free to share the messages you received.

Ask students if there are any concerns or questions they have about working with adults and address each before moving on.

Step 4

Assign parts as a class like you would with any other workshop. Make sure all students get at least one part. Do not split the class into performance teams for this workshop. Move on to the next activity and continue preparing for the workshop the same way you have prepared for other outreaches, with rehearsal time and small group practice.

See the *Things for Advisors to Consider* on the next page and be sure to have done the background work needed to prepare for *Family Night*.

Things for Advisors to Consider

In preparing for *Family Night*, it is important to be organized. The following will help advisors coordinate the evening:

Logistics

- Coordinate the date and location with school administrators. Be sure to avoid scheduling *Family Night* on a date where other major activities are taking place.
- Get all appropriate building permits and security for after-hours events.
- Be sure transportation is available for people to get to the school.
- Organize on-site babysitting services for participants who have children under the age of 12.
- Order or arrange for refreshments.
- Develop and submit press releases, invite local media.
- Secure a volunteer to take photographs.

Materials

Please see *Talk to Me: A Family Night Workshop* for lists of all materials needed for the workshop

Invitations

Visit www.TeenPEP.org for *Family Night* invitation templates. You can fill in your own information and print them right from the website.

If you do not want to use the templates on the Teen PEP website, feel free to design your own invitations.

Publicity

In the following *Spread the Word* activity, peer educators will brainstorm ideas for publicizing the event. This involves a homework assignment for which they can be graded.

Agenda

On the following page is an agenda for advisors to use during *Family Night*. The times provided are suggested and you can start and end at whatever time works for your school.

Talk to Me: A Family Night

7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Sample Agenda for Advisors

- 7:00 p.m.** **Participant arrival; coffee**
- 7:15 p.m.** **Large Group Welcome**
- Advisor Welcome
 - Round of Questions
 - Presenter Introduction
 - Workshop Introduction
- 7:30 p.m.** **Skits**
- Stop the Madness
 - Homework
 - Parties
 - Privacy and Trust
 - Meaningful Sex
 - Not MY Son!
- 7:45 p.m.** **Small Groups**
- Where Do We Learn About Sex?
- 8:15 p.m.** **Break (Refreshments)**
- 8:30 p.m.** **Large Group**
- Processing: Where Do We Learn About Sex?
 - Questions and Answers: Student Panel
 - Teachable Moments
 - Skit: Just a Moment
- 9:15 p.m.** **Closure and Evaluations**
- Final reflections
- 9:30 - 10:00 p.m.** **Refreshments**

Spread the Word

(25 minutes)



Purpose

To brainstorm ideas for publicizing Family Night and assign tasks to students



Materials Needed

☐ Newsprint and markers



Directions

Step 1

As a group, brainstorm responses to the following question: *How can we publicize Family Night?*
See sample list that follows

How Can We Publicize Family Night?

- Posters in school
- Flyers in community
- Facebook event
- Evite
- Announcements in school
- Announcements at outreach workshops
- YouTube video
- School website/email list
- Mailed invitations

Step 2 Homework

Assign students to do one of the suggestions from the brainstorm to help publicize Family Night. For example, several students can make posters, a student can create flyers to hang around school, another can create a Facebook event, students can work together to create a video, etc. This should be done as a homework assignment. Be sure to approve everything before it gets sent out or posted publicly.

Where Do We Learn About Sex? Review

(20 minutes)



Purpose

To review the *Where Do We Learn About Sex?* activity for use with adults



Materials Needed

- A piece of newsprint with heading *Where Do We Learn About Sex?* and the phrases “3 Messages from” in each of the four corners
- The *Where Do We Learn About Sex?* poster for the workshop



Directions

Step 1

Remind students that they participated in this activity on the retreat and that they will be facilitating this activity with parents/guardians and others at Family Night. The purpose of the activity is to examine what messages participants received about sex and sexuality.

Discuss the following questions.

1. What categories went in the four corners of the index card? (*Write answers on newsprint in the four corners: Parents/family, Peers, Media, Religious or cultural background*)
2. What was the question in the middle of the card? (*What messages would you like your children or future children receive about sex and sexuality growing up?*)

Step 2

Show the class the poster for the workshop and explain that the peer educator assigned to introduce the activity will show this poster to the participants at Family Night to help them fill out their cards.

► Sample Index Card

<p>3 Messages from Parents/Family</p>	<p>3 Messages from Peers</p>
<p>What messages do you want your children to receive?</p>	
<p>3 Messages from Media</p>	<p>3 Messages from Religious/Cultural Background</p>

Step 3

Tell students that after the participants fill out their card, they will be dividing them into small groups to discuss the activity. The small groups will be co-facilitated by two peer educators.

Discuss the following questions.

1. How do you think the responses of adults will be different from your responses when we did this activity? How might they be similar?
2. Which categories do you think might change from generation to generation? (*media messages, peer messages*) How might they be different?
3. What is the value of doing this activity with adults and teens together? (*they can listen to one another and increase their understanding about sexual pressure growing up; they can hear from one another the messages that are valuable for young people to hear from their parents*)

Preparing for the Family Night Panel

(30 minutes)



Purpose

To help familiarize peer educators with the possible questions that may be asked during the panel discussion for Family Night



Materials Needed

- A copy of the *Tips for the Family Night Panel* handout for each peer educator



Directions

Step 1

Explain to students that the panel discussion at Family Night has the potential to be the most powerful part of the workshop. How they respond to the questions is critical to the success of the workshop. Distribute copies of the *Tips for the Family Night Panel* handout to each peer educator. Go around, having students read one tip at a time.

After reviewing the handout, ask students if they have any other questions or concerns about the Family Night panel discussion. Be sure to respond to each question/concern.

Step 2

Using the following questions, hold a practice panel discussion. Explain to students that these questions are commonly asked at Family Night and give them time to practice their responses. Give constructive feedback about their responses.

1. What can adults do to make conversations about sex and sexuality easier?
2. What messages do teens want to hear from adults about sex?
3. What do you think adults need to know when it comes to teens and sex?
4. What are some of the pressures teens face regarding sex?
5. How big of an issue is alcohol and drug use among teens?
6. Are most teens having sex?
7. Do a lot of teens have casual sex?
8. What would you tell a peer who came to you and said they were thinking of becoming sexually active?
9. How has being a part of Teen PEP had an impact on you personally?
10. As a peer educator, what have you learned that you didn't know before?
11. What would students miss if Teen PEP wasn't at your school?
12. What is your favorite part of Teen PEP?

Tips for the Family Night Panel

- **Speak loudly and clearly.**
- **Know your audience.** Remember that many people in the audience are adults. They will be curious about what teens are doing. While you should not lie to them about what teens are doing, you also do not want to scare them. For example, you can be honest and say there are drugs and alcohol available at parties, but be sure to include the fact that teens do not have to drink or use drugs if they do not want to.
- **Share the load.** Not every peer educator should respond to every question. If you do not have something new to say, don't feel you have to respond. There is no need to repeat each other.
- **Be mindful of the time.** The panel has a limited amount of time assigned to it and the purpose is to get through as many questions as possible. Advisors may not call on you even if your hand is up. Do not take this personally, as they will need to move on to other questions.
- **Beware of sharing personal information.** Since the questions will be asked about teens in general, they should be responded to about teens in general. There is no need to share your own personal experiences during the panel discussion, except when asked about your experiences as a Teen PEP peer educator.
- **Trust your advisors.** During the break at Family Night, your advisors will go through the questions and pick the most appropriate ones to ask. There will not be personal questions asked so there is no need to worry that you will be put on the spot to talk about your own behaviors.