

Promoting Collaboration and Conflict Resolution in Families



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The purpose of these recommendations is to strengthen children's social-emotional skills necessary for team work and harmonious family relationships; particularly collaboration, conflict resolution, and kindness towards peers.

Collaboration

Collaboration begins with having a sense of belonging to a cohesive group or family. The following projects help children to see themselves as equally important components of a whole group or family.

Collective Tree Mural

The adults paint a tree trunk and branches on a large piece of paper or poster board, and explain to the children that this is the family or group, in which each child is a very important leaf for the tree to grow healthy and beautiful. Every child paints his/her hand print with their favorite color on the branches of the tree. The adults explain that we are all part of the whole tree, and in order to grow strong and healthy we need to give the tree love, friendship, sunlight, water, etc. Children paint symbols for those elements around the tree. The creation is hung on the wall. When the children are having disagreements, the adults remind them of the concept of being a tree together and the love and friendship that makes them grow healthy.

Similarly, other murals can be made regularly with collective themes, such as a boat with the children and adults as pirates, a garden with the adults and children as flowers, the universe with the children as planets/stars/comets, etc.

Collective Family Quilt

Each person decorates a paper square for a collective patchwork quilt. The adults pre-cut squares from construction paper of the same color, approximately 8" x 8". They give one square to each child to decorate, using markers and small collage materials. Adults collect the decorated squares and tape/attach them on a bed linen, in the fashion of a patchwork quilt. The adults and children discuss how each person made a beautiful contribution to the art piece. The quilt is displayed on the hallway for appreciation.

Family/Group Song

Adults facilitate the creation of a short song that is unique to the family/group, though it can original lyrics sang to the tune of a popular celebratory song. The lyrics can describe positive qualities of the children, their preferred activities, and perhaps incorporates their names. The children provide their ideas for the creation of the song, so that they have a sense of ownership and pride. The song can be sung daily as part of the routine.

Stone Soup

The traditional fable of Stone Soup is a wonderful story about sharing. The adults read the story to the children and discuss how the community benefitted from sharing. Adults can invite other families in the community to make stone soup together, by bringing a baggie of one chopped up vegetable, a clean rock, and herbs and/or spices (you can assign things to bring for a well-rounded soup or let the families bring whatever they like for a mystery pot). As a group, adults and children make a pot of stone soup in the kitchen and taste it. Another version of stone soup could be fruit salad or vegetable salad.

Collaborative Board Games

Board games that are not competitive and build a sense of team are rare, and tend to be for older children. The following games are appropriate for preschool age children, and also appealing to elementary school age:

- The Yoga Garden Game (www.theyogagarden.com and Amazon).
- Hoot Owl Hoot, by Peaceable Kingdom (Amazon)
- The Bears and the Bees Card Game by Grandpa Beck's Games (Amazon, age 8+).

Conflict Resolution

Adults teach conflict resolution as part of the daily routines when the children naturally have disagreements between them. When children have a conflict, adults prompt them to create solutions, rather than giving them a solution immediately. When children cannot find a solution, adults suggest possible solutions from the cue cards shown below, and allow the children to choose the solution. It may be useful to have the solution cards on hand or pasted on the wall at the children's level, as a reminder.

When children are sad or angry due to the disagreement, it is helpful to first assist them with calming down by breathing deeply for 3-5 minutes until they are ready to dialogue.



Solution Cue Cards

Source: <https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/family-engagement/>



Share



Comparte

Trade



Cambia

Wait and take turns.



Espera y Toma Turno

Get a Timer



**Busca un
Contador de Tiempo**