



It's All About Time

Leader's Guide

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Lesson Objectives

As a result of participation in this program, participants will be able to:

- Identify challenges to spending time together in building family relationships.
- Learn the importance of positive family time to developing a strong family.
- List at least five specific ways they plan to commit to family time in their own family life.
- Plan a family meeting to discuss the family's ideas for sharing family time.

Lesson Planning

- Study and learn the information and ideas presented in the leader's guide and member's guide.
- Plan a lesson introduction, which may include the roll call activity questions or an optional activity exercise.

- Prepare copies of the Family Time Discussion Exercise and the "Brainstorming Family Time" worksheet.

Handouts

Materials to be made available should include:

1. **Leader's Guide** – one per club;
2. **Member's Guide** – one per member;
3. **Optional activity handouts** – one set per club, including the Family Time Discussion Exercise or the Brainstorming Family Time Worksheet;
4. **Evaluation** – one per member.

Time Schedule

Introduction (5 minutes)

Roll Call Ideas:

- Ask the questions: (1) What are some experiences in sharing time as a family that have been meaningful to you?
(2) What are your biggest challenges to sharing meaningful family time?
- Share a meaningful personal experience either with experiencing positive family time together or creating new/unique opportunities for family time.

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Presentation of key concepts (10-20 minutes)

Why Is Family Time Important?

- Be sure to present this information in your own words.

Learning activity (10-20 minutes)

Family Time Discussion Exercise or Brainstorming Family Time Worksheet

Lesson review and program evaluation (5-10 minutes)

Key Concepts – Why Is Family Time Important?

To say:

How important is it to spend time together in a positive way as a family? Scientific research on building family strengths has shown consistently that “working and playing together” or “spending positive family time” or “a willingness to spend time together” is among the most critical factors in developing strong family ties. In addition, it is not uncommon for a child to ask a parent to “spend some time with me” or for a spouse to express a hope for “more time together.” Time is the fabric of human existence and perhaps the most meaningful gift one person can give to another. But how do you manage to create family time today when competing with the demands of work, education, entertainment, or other interests?

A father shared the story of sitting down after a day’s work in his favorite chair and reaching for a book. To his surprise, the book had disappeared — in fact, a whole stack of books was gone! He complained to his wife and young sons, asking them if they’d seen his books. His two boys answered yes and responded that they’d hidden the books.

When asked why, they said “so you can’t read them — and we’re not giving them back till you promise to spend some time with us!” The father got the message: It’s one thing to say you value family time, but it’s another to actually give time to your family.

Families come together to share time in different ways based on their habits, needs, and abilities. Family time is not a single type of experience. The idea of family time has been defined as a shared experience that creates memories and results in positive feelings of togetherness. Family time can be planned and scheduled by family members or it can be spontaneous and unplanned. What seems important is that the family members willingly share time and try to protect their time together so the distractions are not too great. So, how does your family spend time together? How would you do things differently in creating time for your family relationships?

Going Through the Lesson

Lead discussion on “Barriers to Family Time Together”

Discuss in your own words the following

1. Balancing Work and Family
2. Hurried Family Life
3. The Intrusive Consumer Culture
4. Distance from Family Members

What is the experience of participants with such challenges? How do they feel about them? How do they adjust to them?

Lead discussion on "Ideas for Sharing Family Time"

Discuss in your own words the following

1. Recreational Time
2. Learning Time
3. Work Time
4. Communication/Leisure Time
5. Family Unity Time

Lead discussion and idea sharing on issues related to grandparenting and family time.

Use the NDSU Extension Bulletin FS-562, "Focus on the Little Things: Grandparent-Grandchild Relationships," as a basis for sharing ideas about grandparenting and family time. Another resource is NDSU Extension Bulletin FS-547, "More than Cookies and Milk."

Learning Activity – Family Time Discussion Exercise or Brainstorming Family Time Worksheet

To say:

Sharing family time makes it possible for family members to communicate with each other, build common memories, and develop their love for each other. Each family shares time together in its own way and based on the needs of the family at a particular time. But a commitment to shared family time sends the message that building family relationships will be a priority in the family. Thinking consciously about how family time is shared and setting goals to create positive experiences together can help families in developing close and lasting personal relationships.

To do:

Have participants engage in a learning activity:

- a. Family Time Discussion Exercise, or
- b. Brainstorming Family Time Worksheet

Discuss the goals they would like to set for sharing family time.

Do lesson evaluation

Conduct the lesson evaluation that is provided.

Ideas for club activities

- Sponsor a series of opportunities for families to come and share time together in activities that are positive and enjoyable.
- Prepare and distribute a list of ways for families to protect and share their time together that families can implement.
- Brainstorm other ideas!

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