

Make Parenting A Pleasure Second Edition Curriculum **Key Concepts and Goals**

Session 1 — Our Values and Goals

Key Concepts

- A close, nurturing, and responsive relationship is the single most important factor affecting children's well-being.
- One of the most powerful ways we can strengthen our relationship is with *Positive Attention through Play*.
- When we let our children take the lead in play, we send the message, "you have good ideas, and I enjoy playing in your world."
- Making descriptive comments during play expands children's vocabulary, teaches communication skills, and strengthens the parent-child relationship.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Understand the underlying themes of the *Make Parenting A Pleasure* series.
2. Experience a safe and welcoming environment where they can seek support, share their experiences, and learn more about parenting.
3. Agree on *Group Agreements*.
4. Understand that caring for themselves as parents, managing the stress in their lives, and learning ways to strengthen the relationship with their children will have a lifelong effect on their children's well-being.

Session 2 — Caring for Ourselves

Key Concepts

- When parents care for themselves, they have more to give to their children.
- Parents' self-care models a skill that will benefit children for a lifetime.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Explore their experiences, feelings, and values related to self-care.
2. Consider what types of self-care activities they will incorporate into their lives and make a commitment to doing a self-care activity at least once before the next session.

Session 3 — Special Time

Key Concept

- *Special Time* with parents will nurture children's growth and help them feel secure, confident, and loved.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Understand that *Special Time* with children will help them feel secure and confident and reduce children's attention-seeking behavior.
2. See that they can fit *Special Time* into their routine activities.
3. Identify a routine time that will be *Special Time* for their children.

Session 4 — Understanding Stress

Key Concepts

- Unwanted stress can harm our health and relationships.
- There are simple ways that we can reduce the negative effects of stress.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Understand the unhealthy effects of unwanted stress.
2. Learn some simple approaches for calming the stress response.

Session 5 — Stress Busters

Key Concept

- Using *Stress Busters* will help us handle stress more effectively.

Goal – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Learn how to notice, breathe, and respond in ways to reduce their stress.

Session 6 — Who is My Child?

Key Concepts

- Children have a unique combination of temperamental tendencies; each tendency has both strengths and challenges.
- We can provide experiences for our children that encourage healthy development in areas of strength and challenge.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Become more aware of and appreciate their children as individuals.
2. Understand that each temperamental tendency has strengths as well as challenges.
3. Learn how to create experiences that help their children learn to appreciate their strengths and develop confidence and skills in areas of challenge.

Session 7 — Family Helpers

Key Concept

- When parents prioritize their own and their children's basic needs during stressful times, they protect their children by helping them feel safe, healthy, cared for, and rested.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Understand the importance of prioritizing their own and their children's basic needs when life is stressful.
2. See the value in their *Make Parenting A Pleasure* group as a part of their support network.
3. Learn the benefits of including *Family Rules and Routines* in daily life.
4. Create a new *Family Rule and Routine*.

Session 8 — Communication

Key Concept

- The way parents interact with children has powerful effects on children’s development and on the parent-child relationship.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Understand the dynamics and application of *Positive Attention*.
2. Explore both positive and negative forms of communication and the effect these types of communication have on children and on the parent-child relationship.
3. See the important effect “serve and return” interactions have on children's development.
4. Make a commitment to practice responsive “serve and return” interactions with their children.

Session 9 — My Child’s Emotions

Key Concept

- Supporting and encouraging children’s emotional development gives children skills that will benefit them for a lifetime.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Become more aware of their own emotional responses to situations.
2. Understand upsets from a child’s point of view.
3. Learn how to handle upsets more effectively.
4. Explore ideas for encouraging healthy emotional development.
5. Gain *Emotion Coaching* tools to teach children important skills in handling emotions.

Session 10 — Discipline is Teaching

Key Concept

- Discipline teaches children what they need to learn in order to get along in the world.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. View discipline as an opportunity to teach their children.
2. Consider their children's development, individual differences, and their own values when deciding how to intervene in teaching and learning situations.
3. Learn how to think through a problem behavior to identify what the parent wants to teach and how to begin.
4. Use *The Four Questions* to develop a plan to help their child learn needed skills.

Session 11 — Strategies for Effective Discipline

Key Concept

- Parents can learn and use principle-based strategies for effective discipline.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. More fully understand *The Four Questions*.
2. Learn strategies to positively influence their children's behavior.
3. Recognize the importance of giving attention to desired behavior.

Session 12 — Reflection and Celebration

Key Concept

- The parenting skills, strategies, and ideas from the *Make Parenting A Pleasure* series will help parents support their children's healthy development for a lifetime.

Goals – By the end of this session, parents will:

1. Recognize the progress they have made, the skills they have learned, and the goals they have met over the series.
2. Celebrate the completion of the *Make Parenting A Pleasure* program.