

# FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO CONDUCTING THE 4 Rs AND 2 Ss FOR STRENGTHENING FAMILIES (4 Rs & 2 Ss) GROUP

## ABOUT THE 4 Rs and 2 Ss

4 Rs-♦RULES♦RESPECTFULCOMMUNICATION  
♦RELATIONSHIPS♦RESPONSIBILITY  
2 Ss-♦STRESS♦SOCIAL SUPPORT

### THE 4 Rs AND 2 Ss PROGRAM HAS SHOWN:

- Increased family cohesion • Increased within family support
- Increased family communication •Decreased reports of oppositional defiant behaviors •Decreased child inattention • Decreased parenting stress • Decreased problematic parent-child interactions • Families stay in treatment longer

## GROUND RULES

It's best to have group members reach consensus on group rules. Some common ground rules completed in Session 1 but can be changed as new members join or need for rules changes:

- ♦ ONE PERSON TALKS AT A TIME
- ♦ TREAT EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT
- ♦ WHAT IS SAID HERE STAYS HERE
- ♦ AVOID SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS

## CORE COMPETENCIES CHECKLIST

### ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATIONAL TECHNIQUES

- Connects R or S of the day to family's goals
- Uses reflective listening and empathic responding (avoids judgmental and critical comments)
- Emphasizes the benefits of discussing the R or S of the day
- Makes inspiring comments that promote hope
- Expresses appreciation for each participants' efforts

### EDUCATIONAL/TEACHING TECHNIQUES

- Asks questions about main points to assess families' understanding and functioning
- Respectfully assists members to stay on topic with the R or S of the day
- Breaks information down into small segments
- Clarifies ideas via examples relevant to participants' lives
- Uses questions to check on participants' comprehension and to encourage participation

### FAMILY STRENGTHENING TECHNIQUES

- Reframes negative ideas or beliefs towards family and behavior
- Models behavior via activities and/or self-disclosure
- Provides specific feedback to each participant
- Provides positive reinforcing comments to each participant and describes the progress made by each family
- Help families create positive ways of relating to each other in their own families and with other families.

### GROUP SKILLS and GROUP COHESION TECHNIQUES

- Prior to group session, describes the plan for the session with specific goals to reduce any anxiety
- Checks on the outcome of Roadwork each session
- Reviews participants' experiences and knowledge of the R or S of the day
- Leads a discussion about the importance of today's R or S
- Assists participants with the completion of activities
- In session, assists members connection with each other

## CONDUCTING A 4 Rs & 2 Ss GROUP

### THE BEGINNING OF A 4 Rs & 2 Ss GROUP

### Family Social and Roadwork Review

**STATE:** Take a few minutes to settle in and check in with each other.

**ASK:** What was one of the important points you took away from the last session?

**CHECK:** Who completed the ROADWORK? What was your experience?

**STATE:** Today we are talking about an R or S called \_\_\_\_ that starts on page \_\_ of your workbook.

**STATE:** The plan for today includes discussing and sharing information on this R or S, practicing with your family, and trying it at home using the Roadwork.

**ASK:** Let's begin by discussing what experience group members have had with this R or S. What does the R or S mean to you? Why is this R or S important?

### THE MIDDLE OF A 4 Rs & 2 Ss GROUP

### Let's Talk and Let's Share

**ASK:** 'Let's Talk'- Who would like to begin talking about this R or S?

**ASK:** 'Let's Share'- Who would like to share their thoughts or ideas with this R or S? Do you have any questions about the R or S?

**STATE:** One of the goals of the 4 Rs & 2 Ss program is to make sure everyone gets a chance to be heard and relate the R or S to your own family life. The 'Let's Talk' and 'Let's Share' gives us all an opportunity to do this.

### Let's Practice

**STATE:** Another important part of the 4 Rs & 2 Ss group is taking what has been discussed and then practicing with your family and group. It may be helpful for us to go through the practice together to make sure it is clear to everyone. We will be walking around to check in with you to see how it's going and if you have any questions or concerns. Afterwards, you will have an opportunity to discuss what you have learned and practiced.

**ASK:** Who is interested in sharing their experience with the 'Let's Practice' activity? (Group members can also participate by giving suggestions and sharing ideas).

**Note:** Some practice activities are role plays or activities where kids and parents work separately.

### THE END OF A 4 Rs & 2 Ss GROUP

### Roadwork Assignment

**STATE:** Another very important component of the 4 Rs & 2 Ss program is providing families the opportunity to practice the R or S at home to continue positive changes throughout the week. It may be helpful to complete the ROADWORK to improve your family communication and relationships with each other.

**ASK:** What was one main point you took from today's session? What idea was helpful to you?

**ASK:** How do you feel about today's group? Was the discussion and sharing helpful or not? Did we go too fast, too slow or just right today?

**STATE:** I'd like to share my thoughts about today's group.  
**NOTE:** place emphasis on positive feedback and reinforcement (focusing on strengths) for all efforts and behaviors that contributed to the group. Also, direct participants to the 'More to Think About' page.

## GROUP SESSION LAYOUT

**This serves as the agenda for each session.**

~Family Social-use to check in with families while they have refreshments; can be more structured with activities or roadwork check

~Review Roadwork-discuss how families completed the roadwork and problem-solve any issues; serves as summary of last session

~Let's Talk-usually introduces a new topic; use as group discussion and be interactive, not didactic

~Let's Share-discussion or activities on how topic affects their own family

~Let's Practice-family practice activity

~This Week's Roadwork-tasks to be completed during the week; remember to ask about roadwork when doing your mid-week calls

## GROUP SUPPLIES

Worksheets for activities are included in the manuals; however, the following supplies are also required for some of the activities:

- nametags (for the first 2-3 sessions)
- newsprint or white board (to take notes during groups- this helps facilitate discussions)
- markers/crayons pencils/pens small scissors tape
- Session 3: cut out pieces for the game and get dice or use numbers to move spaces
- Session 6: house picture cut up into puzzle pieces
- Session 12: blank sheets of paper ("R signs" - 4 per family)
- Session 13: packets of M&M's

(Note: The session 3 and 6 items are not necessary but a way to save

## ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Families are the experts on their own family.
- Facilitators are experts in the curriculum.
- Focus on family-strengths.
- Meet families where they are.
- Every family member is important.
- Weekly telephone calls are an integral part of the program and the engagement process.

## WEB BASED RESOURCES

McSilver Institute for Poverty, Policy, & Research

[www.mcsilver.org](http://www.mcsilver.org)

Families Together in New York State

[www.ftnys.org](http://www.ftnys.org)

Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

[www.ffcmh.org](http://www.ffcmh.org)

The National Institute of Mental Health

[www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml)

## KEEP IN MIND....

- ★ This program has been designed specifically for school-aged children (7-11 yrs old) who have been diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) or Conduct Disorder (CD)
- ★ Group sessions provide time for families to practice togetherness and communication. They also reduce the stigma associated with raising a child with mental health issues by normalizing each families experience, therefore increasing receptivity to participation.
- ★ Change is a process and does not happen overnight.
- ★ Maintain an *ASKING STANCE* to insure that the 4 Rs & 2 Ss program respects the cultural, religious and personal perspectives of group members
- ★ The **VALUES of CHANGE** include:

**FAMILY CENTERED:** Focus on the family and each individual family member's strengths, talents, interests, values and beliefs.

**INVOLVEMENT:** Family involvement is a key aspect of the 4 Rs and 2 Ss program. Family members (parents, siblings, primary caretakers, etc.) are encouraged to attend all sessions together. Emphasize family to family interactions, focus on strengths and expertise of group members.

**CHOICE:** Focus on family's identifying, evaluating and choosing options.

**HOPE AND GROWTH POTENTIAL:** Belief in each person's potential to learn and grow. Build confidence by supporting step by step progress.

## MANAGING THE 4 Rs AND 2 Ss GROUPS

Group facilitation skills and trusting the group process will benefit facilitators in meeting the following challenges:

- Monitoring and adjusting the pace of each session
- Balancing delivery of content with individual group member's agenda and pace
- Managing children's behavioral challenges
- Assisting group members in managing inter- and intra-family conflict respectfully and safely
- Attending to how each group member/family is doing throughout each session
- Dealing with a dominating group member
- Drawing out members, particularly children, who are not as active in their participation.

Facilitators engage families both individually and as a group to address group challenges as they arise. The group/ground rules will help with this.

Keep children and parents together in the same room, even when children and parents have separate activities to complete.

Facilitators can effectively manage child behavior by assigning them special tasks and by modeling appropriate responses for their parents, such as giving the children positive attention, listening to their feelings, and establishing firm boundaries.