

A pair of hands is shown holding a green paper cutout of a house. The house has a chimney on the right side and four square windows arranged in a 2x2 grid. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting with sunlight filtering through. The hands are positioned on either side of the house cutout, with fingers visible at the top and bottom edges.

A Quick Guide To

# Family Meetings

by Ariadne Brill, C.P.D.P.E.

Special Edition for

Childhood 101

# Quick Guide To Family Meetings

Written by Ariadne Brill

*Adapted from the Positive Discipline Series by Jane Nelsen D.Ed.*

## Goal of family meeting

- Family meetings are a helpful way to improve communication, bonding and family happiness. You can use family meeting time to solve problems but also to have fun together.
- Decide as a family what your goal is for using this tool so that everyone is on board.

## Meeting Leader

- Each week one family member gets to be in charge of running the family meeting.
- The meeting leader helps everyone remember their turn to speak and moves the group from item to item until the meeting is over.
- Younger kids may need help doing this but give them a chance anyways. This is great practice and keeps the kids interested in participating.

## Appreciations & Compliments

- During appreciations each family member is given time to talk and share something they appreciate about each member of the family.
- Sharing sincere compliments is also a great way to start a meeting.
- When you first start holding family meetings, you may want to keep meetings short and end your meeting after this step.
- Once the kids are on board with the idea of family meetings you can introduce the next steps into your meetings.

# Quick Guide To Family Meetings

## Concerns

- During concerns each family member may have a few minutes to share a challenge they need help with. This can be a conflict with another family member or something going on in their life.
- The family decides together which concerns will be talked about at this meeting.
- Help children present their conflicts without blame. (This might take some practice)

## Brainstorming

- Now that one concern or conflict has been chosen for discussion, invite everyone to share ideas and potential solutions.
- Write down any ideas and suggestions, even if they are very silly or simple. It's important that every idea is validated.
- Look over suggestions for something that might actually solve the problem.

## Agreement

- Now that you have chosen a potential solution, agree to try that for the next few days. Make a note to check in with your child in a few days to see if the solution is working.

## Parking Lot

- If too many concerns came up and you didn't have time to discuss it all, write them down. This shows your child that you take their concern seriously.
- See if you can find some one-on-one time to discuss the issue with your child or put it on the agenda for the next family meeting.

# Quick Guide To Family Meetings

Create more connection and cooperation in your family by ending each family meeting with a fun activity.

## Making Plans

- Weekly meetings can be a great time to talk about the week ahead, review schedules and special requests from kids and parents alike.
- You might want to talk about meal plans or discuss anything needed for homework projects, activities or special events.
- It can be fun to use this time to plan things like vacations and holidays too (or plan a special "holiday edition" meeting).

## Make Time To Connect as a Family

- Now that concerns and planning is out of the way, the team leader can propose a fun activity for the whole group.
- Initially parents may need to take the lead on this so kids get the hang of it. Depending on how much time you have, find an activity that you would all enjoy.
- Maybe it's listening to some favorite songs and dancing, looking at family pictures or videos, playing a game board or a quick round of making silly faces at each other.
- **Whatever you choose to do...Have fun!**



Positive Parenting  
CONNECTION  
Cooperation Begins With Trust

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