
SESSION 3: FACILITATOR GUIDE



Digital Check-Ins to Keep Connected

Challenge Growth



Overview

This guide equips you to lead the third 30-minute videoconference or teleconference call with parents and guardians. It focuses on Challenge Growth, one of the five key elements of strong parent-youth relationships, according to Search Institute research. (Visit www.searchinstitute.org/developmental-relationships.)

In this session, parents and guardians will . . .

- Check in with each other, providing mutual support;
- Learn the core ideas included in “challenge growth” within the Developmental Relationships Framework; and
- Be oriented to activities they can try at home that will introduce new ways families can push each other to be their best selves and learn from their mistakes.

Preparation

1. **Invite parents/guardians** to participate. Be sure they have access to the equipment (computer/phone).
2. Review the parent sheet, quiz, and recommended activities so you can talk about them with families.
3. Send the **Challenge Growth Guide for Parents and Guardians** to each participant (See the distribution ideas in the quick-start guide).
4. **Review the Learn About It** section on www.KeepConnected.info for background about [what it means to “challenge growth.”](http://www.KeepConnected.info/what-it-means-to-challenge-growth)
5. **Review the Session Guide**; adapt the session as needed to fit the participating families.
6. A couple of hours before the session, send a reminder with the web link and/or phone number for the session.

Session Guide

30 Minutes

1. **Gather:** Start the videoconference or phone conference. Welcome parents or guardians by name as they come online. While they’re gathering, informally ask about their kids (but don’t reveal, or ask them to reveal, confidential or sensitive information).
2. **Check-in:** Ask for a high and low from the past week (or since you met last).
3. **Review:** If they have participated in another session, ask if they’ve taken a quiz, tried an activity, used a discussion question, or done something else that was inspired by the discussion or topic. What did they try?

What went well? What didn't? Congratulate them for the effort. Ask them what they might try differently the next time if something didn't go well.

4. **Introduce the topic** by saying something like: *One of the important ways we grow through relationships is by helping each other challenge growth. We all benefit from others who expect more from us, stretch us to improve, and help us learn from our mistakes and failures. Challenging growth focuses on the ways people seek to bring out the best in each other. Today we will discuss the many ways we can challenge growth in each other.*
5. If you're using **videoconference**, show the [Challenge Growth](#) video from the Keep Connected website.
If you're using a **voice conference call** (not video), say something like: *Challenging growth is a critical part of building relationships but it is most effective when the relationship is built on a foundation of care. How we chose to challenge each other to grow matters. Research shows that there is a fine line between pushing too hard and not pushing hard enough. It is important to push just beyond what someone can naturally and easily do but not so hard that it is beyond what is possible. Here are the four actions that challenge growth:*
 - Expect my best – *Expect me to live up to my potential.*
 - Stretch – *Push me to go further.*
 - Reflect on failures – *Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.*
 - Hold me accountable – *Insist I take responsibility for my actions.*
6. **Conversation:** Discuss these questions as a group, giving each person who wants to contribute time.
 - Throughout our lives as parents, we've had to challenge our kids to take on new challenges and grow. What have been some of the most rewarding times you've had in challenging growth? What have been some of the hardest?
 - Challenging our kids to grow can be tricky. On the one hand, pushing our kids to take on challenges helps them grow. On the other hand, we hope they will work on goals because they want to. How do we live with that tension?
 - Who are the people who challenge you to learn and grow as a parent? What do they say or do that really helps you keep going, even when it's tough?
 - How often has your child had the experience of working hard at something and eventually succeeding? How can we ensure the young person has that experience in the future?
 - What do you say and do when your child makes a mistake? Are there things you could do to encourage your child to see mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow?
7. Introduce the **Challenge Growth Guide for Parents and Guardians**, which you distributed before the session. Share your screen to show them the guide if you're able and have time. Walk through the elements (Check It, Try It, Talk About It), highlighting some of the activities families can choose to do in the coming week (or until your next session). If you have expectations about using the activities, be clear about them.
8. Ask parents if they have questions, ideas, or concerns. Encourage parents to partner with each other to give each other encouragement, tips, or just a nudge with getting started as they're doing these activities with their families.
9. Encourage a few parents or guardians to volunteer, in just one sentence, some ways they have been challenged to grow through these sessions or their family time at home, even in small ways. (Model what you mean by sharing first.) It could be anything from using technology to interacting in the group to thinking

about aspects of a relationship. As participants mention challenges, affirm effort or growth you've seen. Acknowledge that it's hard but ultimately can be rewarding to push toward goals with others supporting you.

10. Thank parents again for their participation, and let them know when you'll get back together again.

Follow Up

- **Send a text or email to participants**, thanking them for participating and reminding them about the next session. Also send a link to the family quiz (<https://keepconnected.searchinstitute.org/family-relationship-quiz/>) and resend "Session 3: Guide for Parents and Guardians: Challenge Growth" in case some need another copy. Remind them of the time, date, and place for the next session.
- **Provide feedback on** what worked, what didn't, and how to improve this session on this [brief survey](#).