

## **Module 4**

# **Building A Positive Relationship With My Adolescent**

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## Module Overview

In the past, the measure of good parenting was the final product of the efforts of the mother and the father. Today, it seems that society places a greater emphasis on what good parents tolerate than on what they produce. Society seems to approve of tolerance of all kinds of behavior, but ignores the end product — an uncontrolled adolescent.

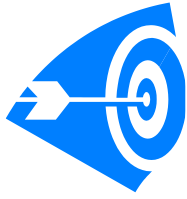
The parenting journey is fun, fearful and sometimes frantic. It winds along challenges and problems; it sometimes tests parents in unexpected ways, but it generally follows some observable ways. An experienced guide can help parents raise well-adjusted adolescents.

This module provides guidelines, tips, practical suggestions on how parents can relate effectively with their adolescents, become highly effective parents, and communicate well with their adolescents.

This Module has three sessions, namely:

- Session 1: Ways to Get Along with My Adolescents
- Session 2: Habits of Effective Parenting
- Session 3: Communicating with My Adolescents

## Session 1: Ways to Get Along With My Adolescent



### Objectives:

By the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. Explain the ways of living effectively with adolescents in the context of their personal experiences;
2. Identify/recognize their strengths and shortcomings in relating with their adolescents; and,
3. Develop a plan for improving their relationship with their adolescents.



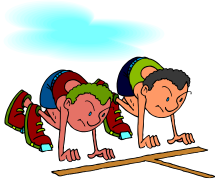
**Time Allocation:** Two (2) hours (suggested)



### Materials Needed:

Meta cards  
Bond papers  
Text message blank forms

### Opening Activity



### Option 1: “Love Ain’t Enough”

1. Introduce the activity by saying, *“Many parents think that being a good parent will come naturally and that parents will not have problems with their children if they love their children enough. This may be true. The issue, however, is how do you show your love? Is love all that is needed to be an effective parent?”*
2. Divide participants into groups of 3 couples in each group.
3. Let them answer and discuss among themselves the following warm-up questions/mini-checklist to determine the quality of their performance as parents.
  - a. Do you spend fun time together as a family by going on vacation, outings, eating out or watching movies/DVDs/TV?
  - b. Do you allow your adolescent to express himself/herself —

1. His/her feelings/crushes/girlfriend or boyfriend?
2. His/her ambitions?
3. His/her secrets?
4. His/her problems/concerns/personal life/academic issues?
5. What is your greatest challenge as a parent?
6. What is the most difficult situation you have faced as a parent?

c. Give them 20 minutes to answer and discuss among themselves. Ask the group to assign a reporter.

d. Lead the group into drawing insights from their sharings.

e. Relate their insights to the KLPs.

### **Option 2: “Drama in Real Life: Love Can Wait”**

1. Post the situation below on the board.

Kim, a fourth year medical student is two months pregnant. Her parents are strong advocates of Responsible Parenting and have been conducting trainings on the topic for years. Thus, when Kim got pregnant, they asked themselves, “Where did we fail as parents?” Since childhood, Kim’s ultimate dream was to be a doctor. She wants to pursue this dream despite her condition and decides not to marry her boyfriend, Gerald.

*Note to the facilitator: You may prepare other similar situations for this activity.*

2. Divide the participants into small groups. Let each couple share their views/opinions as parents. Ask each couple what they would do in such situation by letting them answer the following questions:

- a. How do you feel going through that simulated painful situation?
- b. If that happened to you in real life situation, what would be your reaction/s?
- c. What events in your life have made you feel bad as a parent?
- d. As a parent, what have you realized from the activity?

3. Summarize their answers and link the activity with the KLPs.



## KEY LEARNING POINTS



**POST** the quotation of Frank Clark on the board and read aloud

***“The most important thing that parents can teach their children is how to get along without them.”***

*Frank A. Clark*



**ASK** participants to share their views on the quotation. **RELATE** discussion with the challenges they identified in the Opening Activity.

- During the teen period, it is common for parents to doubt their abilities as parents. Oftentimes, the parents feel that things are no longer working out. It is like they woke up one day to feel this invisible wall and meet this stranger.
  - If you are in this situation and feel this way, you are not alone. (*“You are not alone”/“Hindi ka nag-iisa.”*) Most parents have the same thoughts and frustrations about their adolescents.
- For most parents, adolescence is a challenging time.
  - This is a period wherein they are constantly searching for identity, seeking independence, developing intimacy and establishing individuality.
  - Just as the transformation from childhood to adulthood is a crucial time for adolescents, so is it for parents who are faced with multiple crises and concerns at this stage in their adolescent’s life.
  - The changes that adolescents go through are such that at times, parents may feel they hardly recognize them anymore. At other times, they may fear that they have lost their control over their child.
- Teenagers can be a lot of fun, too! With a little laughter, grace and a lot of prayer, one can survive and even thrive during the teen years.
  - The good news is that as your teen journeys through adolescence, there are guides/tips which can help you and your teen not only to survive adolescence but to enjoy it and even bring you closer together.



**POST** visuals or meta cards corresponding to the 7 major suggestions.  
**ENCOURAGE** participants to give their ideas before discussing the KLPs.

- Here are a few suggestions on how to get along with your adolescents:

### 1. GIVE YOUR TIME.

- Giving your time can mean going to a special event, sharing an activity you both enjoy, getting a job done together or just spending time together, with no particular plans. You can also read books or watch TV together, and then enjoy a meaningful discussion.



**ENCOURAGE** participants to share reactions to the statement (in bold letters).

- **The important ingredient of time together is quality, not quantity.** An hour of positive relationship is worth more than several hours of conflict.
- As parents, you may often feel overwhelmed with all your responsibilities. However, it is important to remember that: the most valuable gift you can give your adolescent is your regular, undivided attention.



**ASK** participants to give examples of how they spend time with their adolescents and what shared activities they have found to be meaningful.

**DEMONSTRATE** by showing how much or how little time a family typically spends together.

- If you are experiencing guilt or in denial, you need to work through that and set aside specific times to be with your adolescents.
- Parents should take time to attend to their adolescent's activities either in school or in the community. The presence of either one or both parents in these activities make adolescents feel they are equally important and special.
- Spend time with each of your adolescent, preferably at least once a week. This will ensure that you bond together will put you in a in a position to effectively influence them.

- Show that spending time with your adolescents is something you value and look forward to. If you are too tired or too busy, they are likely to imitate your behavior. Soon, they may not have time for you either.
- Recent studies have indicated that the biggest threat to family life is LACK OF TIME. Most families suffer from never spending enough time together as a group. Instead of developing close, intimate relationships, many families live under the same roof like unrelated boarders



**ASK participants, “How can you stay connected with your adolescents?”  
DRAW answers from the participants based on their real life experiences or practices.**

## **2. KEEP TALKING. STAY CONNECTED.**

- Teenagers are bundles of emotion. The drama, mood swings, and emotional outbursts drive their parents crazy.
- Create opportunities to talk.
- The teen years are like a roller-coaster ride. Hang on, scream and be prepared to stare danger in the face, but whatever you do, keep your communication lines open. tEven if you have trouble understanding each other, be sure to make time for them to talk with you.
- If your adolescent gets moody and does not want to talk, give him or her some room to be alone – for a while.
- Do not let silence go unchallenged for long periods. Get in there and get them talking. Talk about things that are important to your adolescents. Make sure they know that no subject is off limits. This will make it easier and more comfortable for your adolescent to open up about sensitive subjects like sex, drugs/substance abuse, love, dating, HIV/ AIDS/STIs, and alcohol.



**ASK participants for ideas, opinions or experiences to deepen the discussion.**

## **3. BE CONSISTENT, FIRM AND FAIR.**

- Set fair boundaries, and be consistent in enforcing them. Once a rule is made, get them to agree and follow it. After explaining the reasons, you open the floor for discussions.



Once you are satisfied with the rule, you move forward with your agreement. Agree ahead of time to back each other up and follow through on what you say.

- Parents should remember that there is a difference between “negotiating” and “manipulating”. Manipulation is taking with no legitimate giving. Negotiation is putting together your and your adolescent’s differing points of view or decisions and coming up with one that is acceptable to both of you.
- Decide rules and discipline in advance. Adolescents need clear rules and consistent enforcement to guide their behavior.



**PROBE** how many participants agree or disagree with statement # 4.

#### 4. USE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE.

**Discipline is not the same as punishment.**

- Studies have shown that physical punishments such as hitting, slapping and verbal abuse are not effective. While such punishment may seem to get fast results, in the long term, it is more harmful than helpful.
- Instead of using punishment to correct behavior, adolescents need to learn what behavior is allowed and not allowed, and why. Parents should stress do’s rather than don’ts.



**LEAD** the participants to explain and give examples for each of the reasons for positive discipline using the mnemonic, **N-O-R-M-S**. **REINFORCE** whenever necessary.

- Disciplining your teen is not an easy task. However, it is a necessary step in preparing them for adulthood and self-discipline. It helps them to shape their standards of behavior or **NORMS**.
  - N** urture desired values.
  - O** bserve common rules that everyone lives by.
  - R** ecognize limits, boundaries and natural consequences of their action.
  - M** aintain positive relationships.
  - S** elf-protection.
- The purpose of positive discipline is to form values and teach your adolescents appropriate behavior. This will help them develop self-discipline and choose safe, healthy, positive options.



**POST** visuals containing the **FIVE C's** of disciplining your adolescent. **LEAD** participants to explain and give examples for each of the **FIVE C's**. **REINFORCE** and deepen with your **KLPs** whenever necessary.

- In disciplining your adolescents, it is important to communicate the rules and limits clearly, calmly and consistently. You must also strive to be creative and to remain caring.
- 1. **Be Clear.** Keep rules simple and understandable. Help your teen understand the rules and what happens when they are broken. Set limits but be careful not to impose too many.
- 2. **Be Consistent.** Apply and enforce rules consistently. If you make an exception, make sure your teen understands that it is a special treat.
- 3. **Be Calm.** Choose your words carefully. Address the behavior not the person. For example, you could say: “I am upset that you...” rather than “You are a... because you...”



**ENCOURAGE** participants to give examples of how parents can be creative in disciplining their adolescents. **DEEPEN** discussion and be ready with your own examples and illustrations.

- 4. **Be Creative.** Stay flexible. Some rules may work when the child is young but will no longer be effective for adolescents. Learn to develop age-appropriate rules, limits and penalties. Negotiate and compromise whenever appropriate.
- 5. **Be Caring.** When your teens misbehave, let them know it is their behavior that you dislike, not them. This shows that while you are disappointed with their behavior, you still care for them. This also encourages them to try and do better next time.

- These suggestions may not smooth your way with your adolescent. Some children have deep-seated psychological problems. Separation, abuse, neglect and violence leave deep emotional scars. A child with substance abuse or anger problem or with Attention Deficit Hyper Activity (ADHD) Syndrome may be turning your home into a war zone. In cases of serious rebellion, you may need to seek professional help from counselors or psychologists or gather some trusted friends to pray for your family and even take serious steps of temporarily removing the adolescent from the home.



**ASK participants to share examples of their “light moments” with their adolescent/s.**

## 5. LIGHTEN UP.

- You need not consider every conflict with your teenagers a cosmic battle between good and evil. Give your teens room to make some of their own choices.
- Keep a good sense of humor. There are plenty of times when things get heavy so seize the moments to laugh together.
- Remember when it comes to things, “a cheerful heart is a good medicine”.



**DEEPEN discussion. ASK participants if they have a hard time saying “I’m sorry” to their adolescent/s when they make mistakes. If their answer is yes, ASK them why.**

## 6. ADMIT MISTAKES.

- Saying “I’m sorry” when you blow it is never easy. Saying it to your adolescent is even harder.
- As parents, you want to be always right and in control, refusing to surrender the reigns of authority. Therefore, you often force your adolescents to live with the consequences even when you know you are wrong.
- Parents think that once they openly admit their mistakes or shortcomings to their adolescents, they will lose respect or their authority will be undermined.
- Clear the air. If you are wrong, admit it to your teen and ask for forgiveness. And be specific. Do not just say “I’m sorry”; tell your adolescent what it is specifically that you are sorry for. By doing so, you are teaching them about mutual respect.
- Asking forgiveness will help restore good relationship with your adolescent and nurture respect.
- They will go a long way toward establishing your teenager’s trust in you. They teach both of you that adults need grace as much as adolescents do.



**DEEPEN discussion by asking: “Do you spend time praying for your adolescents or praying with them? What are the things that you pray for them and/or with them?”**

## 7. PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!

- You are never stronger when you are on your knees, helpless before a Supreme Being. You will often find your authority challenged, your judgment questioned and your instructions ignored. You need to pray. Pray for wisdom to know how to parent the child you have been given. Keep praying for/with your adolescent.
- When they start driving, when they are earning their own money and going out with their friends, they start to establish their own identity and seem to be less interested in spiritual things. You need to keep their spiritual connection to a Supreme Being strong by continuing to pray for/with them.



**DISCUSS the simple guide on prayer using the mnemonic, A-C-T-S.**

- A simple guide on how to pray:
  - A** doration (“papuri”/“pagpugay”)
  - C** ontrition (“paghingi ng tawad”)
  - T** hanksgiving (“pasasalamat”)
  - S** upplication (“pagsusumamo”)

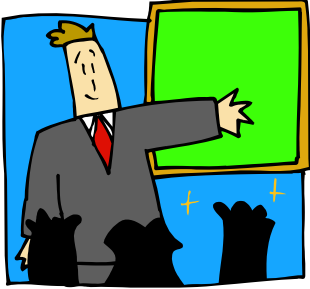


**Based on the KLPs, ASK the participants to make a plan for improving their relationship with their adolescents. ASK for volunteers to share their plans.**



**SUMMARIZE the KLPs by saying:**

***“It is important that parents should reach out to their adolescents. Parents and adolescents can prevent misunderstandings, disagreements, frictions, irritations, incompatibilities or animosities by growing, discovering, exploring, and enjoying each other by being open, spontaneous, honest and truthful.”***



**POST** the quotation of Hodding Carter on the board and **ASK** participants for their views. **SYNTHESIZE** their responses and **END** the session.

**“There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots; the other, wings.”**

*Hodding Carter*



**Closing Activity:**

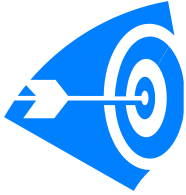
### **“Parents’ Text Messages”**

1. Distribute copies of the **Text Message forms** (*Annex 1*) to the participants.
2. Ask them to complete the message by filling the blank spaces with a word or words that would give sense to the lines.
3. Give them 20 minutes to complete the forms.
4. After the allotted time, ask for volunteers to share their text messages.
5. After the session, they may take home and relay their messages to their adolescents.

*Note to the facilitator: You may also ask the participants to compose their own text messages.*

## Session 2: Communicating With My Adolescents

### Objectives:



By the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. Know the communication guidelines for parents;
2. Communicate effectively with their adolescents; and,
3. Appreciate the importance of communication on their relationships with their adolescents.



**Time Allocation:** Two (2) hours (suggested)



### Materials Needed:

Bond papers

Pens

Copies of the reflection piece entitled, *“To My Adolescent”* (Annex 2)

CD and CD player or cassette tape and cassette recorder for the song or music during reflection time

Meta cards

Pentel pens

### Opening Activity



#### “I Know Him/Her So Well”

1. Ask the participants (per couple) to sit back-to-back.
2. Distribute sheets of papers and pens.
3. Tell them that you will be asking them questions and they shall write their answers on the sheets of paper.
4. To earn a point, couples should have the same answers. The couple/s with the most number of points wins.
5. If the couple has more than one adolescent, let them decide to choose a particular child as the subject for the following questions:
  - a. What is your adolescent’s ambition in life?
  - b. What would your adolescent like to do on a weekend?
  - c. Who is your adolescent jealous of?
  - d. Who is your adolescent’s role model?
  - e. What does your adolescent like most about his/her life?
  - f. What quality in you appeals to your adolescent the most?

- g. What would your adolescent like to change about his/her life?
- h. What quality does your adolescent like about his/her best friend?
- i. What material possession is your adolescent very proud of?
- j. Where would your adolescent like to go for a holiday?

*Note to the facilitator: You may think of other questions for this activity.*



- 6. Relate the essence of the game to the KLPs.

### KEY LEARNING POINTS



**OPEN** the session by asking the participants: “How much time do you spend talking/communicating with your children?”

**ASK** participants: “Do you still treat your adolescents as children by constantly nagging or reminding them about their chores, assignments, responsibilities, and others?” **DRAW OUT** real life experiences from participants and **DEEPEN** discussion.



Communication can be a great form of giving, the giving of self-revealing and the giving of patient listening and understanding.

- Parents’ biggest hurdle in communicating with their children who are on their way to adolescence is their obsession to instruct and constantly remind or nag them, instead of talking and listening to them.
- Parents should stop treating their adolescent like a child, instead they should treat him/her as a young adult.



**ASK** participants: “Do you monitor your adolescent’s internet use, computer games, the magazines they read, music or bands they are listening to?” **DRAW OUT** responses and **DEEPEN** discussion.

- We are currently in an information technology and media-rich world. Adolescents/children are exposed to TV, music, movies, videos, computer games, internet, magazines and other forms of media.



**PROCESS and SYNTHESIZE the responses of the participants and link with the KLPs.**

- Parents should remember that the media and internet access can provide endless possibilities of negative and positive influences in their adolescents' lives.
- The great need of today is lots of conversation; the greater danger of today is the dearth of it because of too much TV, video games, internet use and related technologies. They drive out talk.
- Conversation is the lifeblood of family life, strong child development, marital unity, and deep friendships. Without conversation, all the ills are more likely to happen.
- How much adolescents love conversation. It is the greatest gift a parent can give to an adolescent and a family.
- Communication between parents and children is important at all ages. It will be easier during adolescence if it has taken place consistently during the adolescents' younger



**POST the meta cards or visuals on guidelines for parents on how to communicate with their adolescents.**

**DEEPEN discussion by citing real life situations.**

- Here are some communication guidelines for parents.



**ASK participants to recall or identify some of their “teachable moments” with their adolescent and how they can use these.**

### **1. FIND “TEACHABLE MOMENTS”.**

- “Teachable” moments are daily opportunities that occur when you are with your adolescents. They make it easy to share your messages and values that include values on sexuality-related concerns. Make use of TV shows even if you believe they send wrong message/s by commenting “Say, I think that program sent the wrong message. Let me tell you what I believe.”
- Making the most of “teachable moments” entails taking time and creativity. Planning for and taking advantage of “teachable moments” is far better.



- “Teachable moments” could be found in tender discussions about life while enjoying an afternoon in a fishing boat or in the farm, having spontaneous discussion during mealtime, and a drive through a fast food restaurant. Such moments are better received by adolescents and, thus, much more effective.
- This is being done through spontaneous, open and relaxed discussions.
- The challenge is that parents cannot teach adolescents this way without a lot of involvement and creative time spent with them.



**ASK participants how they can become “ask-able parents”. Note their answers on the board.**

**DISCUSS the qualities of an “ask-able” parent using the mnemonic, C-L-I-C-K-S. RELATE the answers of the participants to the mnemonic.**

## 2. BE “ASK-ABLE”.

- An “Ask-able” Parent is someone who “**CLICKS**” with their adolescent/s.
  - C** an be easily approached for information and guidance.
  - L** istens to their adolescent/s and tries to answer questions patiently and accurately.
  - I** s willing to keep talking until their adolescents are satisfied with the information.
  - C** an admit they do not have all the answers but will try to discover.
  - K** nows what an adolescent is able to understand and what information they require.
  - S** timulates their adolescents to talk, interact and ask questions.
- Some adolescents need an invitation to start talking. You can say, “Tell me about your day in school.” Adolescents are more likely to share their ideas and feelings when others think they are important.
- Reward a question with, “I am glad you came to me.” It will teach your adolescents to approach you when they have other questions.
- You need not wait for your adolescent to ask a question. Many adolescents never ask. You need to decide what is important for them to know and tell them before crisis occurs.



**DISCUSS** the tips on how to be an “ask-able” parent using the mnemonic A-R-T.

— Being an “ask-able” parent is a skill and an “**ART**”.

**A** sk your adolescent what they think about things, issues, happenings, trends or anything they want to talk about. Take the initiative to start a conversation.

**R** ecognize/Find “teachable moments”.

**T** ake time to remind your adolescent that you are there for them if they ever have any questions about anything. When they approach you, always make time for them to answer patiently and truthfully.

### 3. BECOME AWARE OF THE QUESTION BEHIND THE QUESTION.

— The unspoken question, “Am I normal?” is often hiding questions about sexual development, sexual thoughts and sexual feelings. Reassure your adolescents as often as possible.



**ASK** participants if they agree with this statement. **PROCESS** and **SYNTHESIZE** their responses.

### 4. YOU ARE THE PRIMARY SEXUALITY EDUCATOR OF YOUR ADOLESCENTS

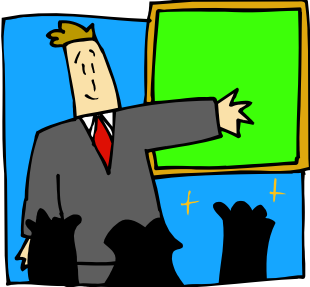


**ASK** participants about their experiences in discussing sexuality-related matters with their adolescent children.

— They want to talk to you about sexuality and to hear your values. Adolescents need, want and value your opinions. They may appear to reject them at times, but this is only an unconscious test to see if you really mean what you say.

— Some of the topics discussed in school subjects include anatomy, reproductive system, puberty, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), fertility awareness and pregnancy which cover mainly concepts and mechanics.

- Adolescents find it uncomfortable to discuss such personal or sensitive concerns or issues affecting them.
- It is in this aspect that parents can play a primary role in addressing sexuality-related issues and concerns of their adolescents by being “ask-able” and maximizing “teachable moments”.



**DEEPEN discussion by asking participants to share topics or experiences (related to sexuality and other non-sexual risky behaviors such as smoking, drinking and drug addiction) that made them feel uncomfortable discussing with their adolescents.**

## **5. REMEMBER THAT IT IS OKAY TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE.**

- It is okay to feel uncomfortable; relax. You can let them know that you are uncomfortable, but you will talk to them anyway because you love them and you want to help them.
- Remember that adolescents often ask questions out of curiosity and not because they want to do something or to engage in the behavior they are asking about.

## **6. LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN.**

- Ask them why they want to know and what they already know. This may help you prepare your answer.
- Be willing to listen to your adolescent’s concerns (at his/her, rather than your convenience) and to take them seriously. It is far better to be told something that you disagree with than to have no communication at all. Always be able to guide without being disagreeable.
- Listen for feelings. There are no wrong feelings. Acknowledge your adolescent’s feelings, then reflect on them.
- Do not interpret; either repeat their words or use similar words to reflect your adolescent’s feelings.



**POST** the KLP statements on the board. **ASK** the participants to reflect on the statements.

**ELICIT** views from the participants.

**REMEMBER THAT FACTS ARE NOT ENOUGH.**

— Share your feelings, values and beliefs. Tell your adolescents why you feel the way you do.

**TALK ABOUT THE JOYS OF SEXUALITY.**

— Tell your adolescents that loving relationships are the best part of life and that intimacy is a wonderful part of adult life.

**REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE TELLING YOUR ADOLESCENTS THAT YOU CARE ABOUT THEIR HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING.**

— You are also sharing your values. This is one of the real joys of parenting.

**KNOW HOW SEXUALITY IS BEING TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS AND IN FAITH COMMUNITIES.**

— Find out what your adolescent's schools are teaching about these topics.

— Other groups can help. It is often helpful when professionals lead talks.



**DISCUSS** the additional tips for parents on how they can enhance their communication with their adolescent/s.

**ELICIT** views or personal experiences from the participants.

**PROCESS** and **SYNTHESIZE** their responses

**The following are other tips that can help parents talk with their adolescents:**

1. Know and practice the messages that you want to share.

— Talk to teens about risks whether it is illegal drugs/substance abuse, driving, pre-marital sex, smoking, drinking alcohol, dating, and others, and the worst that could happen when they indulge in these risks.

2. Try to understand your adolescent's point of view.
3. Provide pamphlets, books, and other age-appropriate, medically appropriate materials to your adolescents. Make sure you find time to explain the information contained in the materials.
4. Stay actively involved in your adolescent's lives.
5. Help your adolescents plan for their future.
6. Be strong in your own ideals, values and beliefs.
7. Talk with respect with your adolescent. Do not make fun of their questions and concerns.
8. Choose the right time and place. Talk to your adolescents when you are not in a hurry and do not seem distracted. Set aside enough time to really connect.



END the session by summarizing the KLPs and PROCEED with the closing activity.

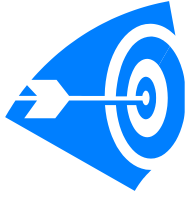


### Closing Activity:

#### “Love Letter Straight From the Heart”

1. Distribute papers and pens and ask the participants to write a love letter for their adolescent/s. One letter for all their adolescent children is fine but a letter for each adolescent is better. The letter shall contain things that the participants would like to communicate to their adolescent/s.
2. Ask for volunteers to read their love letters.
3. Tell the participants that they may give their love letters to their adolescent/s when they reach home.
4. To end the activity, flash the reflection piece, “**To My Adolescent**” (*Annex 2*). Ask a volunteer to read the piece. As he/she reads the piece, play appropriate background music

## Session 3: Habits of Effective Parenting



### Objectives:

By the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. Know the habits of effective parenting;
2. Share/explain practical suggestions on how to be effective parents; and,
3. Reflect on their experiences and gain insights on how to enhance their relationships with their adolescents.



**Time Allocation:** One (1) hour (suggested)



### Materials needed:

- Pentel pens
- Meta cards
- Tape
- Pens
- Bond papers
- Candles
- Matches



### Opening Activity

#### “Let’s Talk”

1. Group the participants into dyads (by two’s). Ask them to choose their partner (should not be their spouse).
2. Tell the partners that they will try to know each other better by telling each other their names, where they grew up, how many children they have, their religion, etc.
3. Ask them to answer each other the following questions:
  - a. From your adolescence, do you have fond memories of your parents? What are they?
  - b. What good habits of your parents do you remember? Name them.
  - c. Have you detected any negative patterns in your life or relationships that you picked up from your parents?
  - d. How can you prevent them from being passed on to your adolescents?

4. Give them 10 minutes to share their answers with their partners.
5. Ask one of the pairs to share their answers with the group.
6. Synthesize their responses and link with the KLPs.



## KEY LEARNING POINTS



**ASK participants: “How did you learn to become a parent?” ASK 2-3 participants to share their experiences.**

**DEEPEN discussion. ASK participants if they know or have used any instruction manual for parenting.**

- Being a parent is not something most of us are taught how to do.
- Some parents rely on books for effective parenting; some use their own parents as models. Others get ideas from observing relatives and friends, or from the TV or radio. For most, it is a combination of trial and error, common sense and gut feel.
- Becoming a parent is one of life’s most important opportunities. It also poses a difficult but rewarding challenge.
- It demands from parents the foundations and the capability to face up to the demands of building happy and healthy family relationships and raising adolescents who are happy, healthy, caring, competent and confident.
- Parenting is a lifetime profession. You are parents for life. It is not a job you can resign from or something you can just leave and give up.
  - It must always be well thought of, made with careful consideration and serious preparation.
  - It should not be left to chance or sheer luck.
- The birth of “Parenting Movement” phenomenon makes parents realize how they are groping for parenting truths that are practical and successful.
- Home is the intended place for passing on the foundation of your value system and of character building.

- It is in the context of the home that the moral backbone and unwavering integrity can be instilled in and taught to children. The Supreme Being has placed this responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the parents, emphasized in the following passages from the Bible and the Koran.



**POST the biblical passages on the board**

***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children.”***

Deuteronomy 6: 5-7

***“Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates.”***

Deuteronomy 6:7-9



**POST the Koran passages on the board.**

- The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said:

**“Everyone of you is a guardian and everyone of you is responsible for his flock. The father is in charge of his household, and is responsible for those in his charge; and the wife is in charge of her husband’s household and is responsible for those in her charge.” (Authenticated by: All Sources)**

**“The right due to the child from his parents is to teach him in writing, swimming, archery and to provide him nothing but what is wholesome.” (Authenticated by Baihaqi).**

**“The right of the child on his parents is to be given good breeding and good name.” (Authenticated by: Baihaqi).**





**POST visuals on The 1987 Constitution Provision on Responsible Parenthood in Article XV – The Family.**

Such responsibility of the parents is also articulated in the Philippine Constitution as provided in Section. 3, which states that: The state shall defend:

- (1) **“The right of spouses to found a family in accordance with their religious convictions and the demands of responsible parenthood;**
- (2) **“The right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development;”**

**Article XV, Section 3  
Par. 1 & 2 of the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines**

— As you guide your adolescent/s in learning about sexuality and marriage, you will want to help them understand the habits of effective parents. When these traits are studied closely, it becomes clear just how complex and demanding it is to keep a family system working in a healthy way. Yet when a family works as a team, it is a wonderful experience and a real asset in solving problems.



**DISCUSS** the habits of effective parenting using the mnemonic, **FOR A SPECIAL START**. **POST** visuals for every **KLP**.

The habits of effective parents can be summarized in **“FOR A SPECIAL START”**



**ASK** the participants, *“In your family, how do you promote/encourage family time?”* They shall be given enough time to reflect on all the questions so they could answer properly.

**F**oster family time.



**ASK**, *“How do we serve others? Why should we serve others?”*

**O**thers should be served.

- We serve others to show our love for Our Supreme Being. We really mean that we love Our Supreme Being when we love our neighbors as we love ourselves.



**DEEPEN** the discussion by asking 2-3 participants how they show this KLP.

**R**espect the privacy of one another.



**ASK** 2-3 participants what rituals and tradition are being encouraged in their family. **CITE** some examples i.e., “pagmamano”, family reunions during Christmas, All Souls Day, and others

**A**cquire a strong sense of family in which rituals and tradition abound.



**ASK**, “*Where do you find the wisdom you need for raising your children?*”

“*Where do you get the joy and patience?*”

**PROCEED** to discuss the KLPs.

**S**upreme Being should be loved deeply. Effective parents love the Supreme Being more than anything else – even their children.

- All the emotional and psychological resources we need for child rearing flow from our relationship with our Supreme Being.
- And if we try to cultivate our relationship with our sons and daughters without cultivating our relationship with our Supreme Being, we will build a house of sand.
- Your friendship with your adolescent will never be greater than your fellowship with God/Allah.



**ASK** 2-3 participants to share suggestions on how parents can promote play and humor with their adolescents.

**P**lay and humor should be promoted.

- Play with them. Family time should be relaxation time with them.



**EXPLAIN** this KLP.  
**ASK** 2-3 participants to share their experiences.

**E**xhibit a sense of shared responsibility.

— Live by example. “Walk your talk”.



**ELABORATE** on the importance of communication in family relationships. **DEEPEN** the discussion.

**C**ommunicate and listen.

— Communication is a two-way street. It is not only the act of communicating but also



**ASK** the participants how they interact with family members.

**I**nteraction among members should be balanced.

— Family discussions and arguments arise. No favoritism. Give everyone a chance to express their feelings and opinions.

**A**dvocate for a shared religious core.

**L**earn to teach your adolescents diligently



**POST** the biblical passages

***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children.”***

— The passage informs us that we do not consider our adolescents as new recruits at boot camp and scream at them. We share the Scriptures/Koran naturally, spontaneously.



**ASK participants, “How do we teach them?”**

***“Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”***

- For example, one of the most important verses for all of us to learn is the proverb: “A gentle answer turns away wrath. (Proverbs 15:1)” If adolescents learn the principle of “under reaction” early in life, they will have an advantage over others throughout their life.
- By sharing it with them, and helping them memorize it. You memorize it as a family and talk about it.
- But it is in their everyday experience that those words come to life.



**ASK for a volunteer to read the passage and encourage the participants to share their ideas, views on the passage.**

***“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”***



**ASK, “How do we train them?” DEEPEN discussion by encouraging participants to share their views.**

- This saying literally says that parents **train up** (“initiate, imbue or dedicate”) **the child in his own way** (“with regard for his own temperament and individual needs at each stage of growth and development”), **when he is old** (“mature”) **he will not depart from it**.
- The saying is both a **promise** that gives hope and a **principle** that explains a reality. The promise is that if we train our children properly, they will not turn away

from our Supreme Being.

- The explanation of reality is that if our children have turned away from our Supreme Being, then there was something possibly wrong with the training.
- Some take this to be an absolute promise. Others think it as a general rule of wisdom that expresses the amount of influence a parent has on his adolescent.
- Another possibility is that if you give an adolescent a good beginning by training him in a manner appropriate to his own distinct needs, then the positive influence of this early training will remain with him for the rest of his life.
- He will never be able to get away from what the parent has impressed upon him. That does not mean that the adolescent will always comply with his parent's influence, but he will carry the memory of their training with him until old age.



**ASK couples belonging to other religions to mention how they call their Holy Book/Bible.**

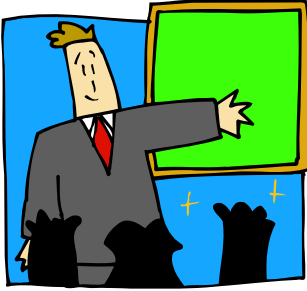
**S** tudy the Word/Bible/Koran daily.

- Effective parents are found in the sentence, “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.”
- If you want to be a good parent, spend time with the final authority, the Bible/Koran, and layer your heart with God's/Allah's Word, meaning:
  - Read and Study It.
  - Memorize.
  - Meditate on them day and night.



**ASK the participants “Do you openly pray and study your Scriptures/ Koran at home?”**

- The job of a parent is to partner with God and must follow Scriptural foundations/Koran, not only family or cultural traditions. None of these will be accomplished without God's/Allah's help and presence in the home.



**EXPLAIN** each of the remaining KLPs and **SOLICIT** responses from the participants.

- Our adolescents see us watching television and reading the newspaper. They see us paying the bills and making shopping lists. But do they ever see us spending our time reflecting on the Word of God/Allah? Do they ever hear us praying?

**T**rust must be developed.

- Trust is a better compliment than saying “I Love You”.

**A**dmit and seek help with problems.

**R**ecreational/leisure activities should be shared/done together as a family.

**T**ake time to support one another.

- Adolescence is the time to plan one’s life and to set goals which reflect proper values.
- This is a difficult process because all adolescents are going through many changes of opinion, emotions and interests.
- Friends must be chosen who have similar moral values; otherwise, the adolescent will face strong pressure to agree with values other than his own. Most teens respect people who have the courage to say “No” and to stand on their own beliefs and values.



**As a reflection for the participants to ponder on, RELATE** the lessons parents can emulate from the characteristics or behavior of the Geese, the Humpback Whale and the Elephant’s trunk.

**ELICIT** views from participants when necessary.

The Geese – commitment and priority.

*Like the geese, we must ...*

Always come home.  
Put our children first.

- Let them know by what we say and what we do that they are our highest priority and tell them often of our commitment.
- Understand that commitment is the most complete expression of our love.
- Frequently reassure our children of our love and loyalty to them.
- If we are married, let our commitment to each other be obvious, letting our children see our affection and see us talking together about them and working together for them. Single parents can devote all their family commitment to their children
- Relish home and enjoy being there more than any other place

The Humpback Whale – constant, open, and emotionally honest communication.

Like the whales, communication needs to be...

- Constant and open
- Approving, encouraging and confidence-giving
- Particularly intense and constant in times of stress, danger or difficulty
- Involve loyalty and teamwork, allowing trust and creating real family synergy
- Tailored for the individual
- A song of interchange and mutual respect and listening

The Elephant's Trunk – fine balance between "tough love" and "tender love".

Like the elephant's trunk, our love needs to...

- Caress and hug them everyday.
- Set clear limits on where they can go and what they can do.
- Shower them with approval and dust them with confidence, but it must also warn them loudly and clearly of danger.



**SUMMARIZE KLPs and proceed to the closing activity.**



## Closing Activity:

### Option 1: “Close To You”

1. Ask the participants to think of practical ways on how they can strengthen their closeness with their adolescent. For example: go to church together, spend more time strolling in the park or mall, cook a new recipe.
2. Ask for volunteers to share their ideas. You may also ask the participants to write their ideas on meta cards and post these on the board.
3. Process and synthesize their responses.

### Option 2: “My Priorities”

1. Begin the activity by saying, *“The degree to which parents care about certain rules and issues is one key to healthy, loving and fruitful family life. Some parents establish too many rules. Others have very few. The purpose of this activity is to help you think about what is most important for you to impose in your family. It will also help you recognize if these priorities are reflected in practice”.*
2. Ask the participants to make a list of the important rules in the house that their adolescent children have to observe/follow.

For example:

- a. watch only appropriate TV programs, movies, videos and music
  - b. no drinking of alcoholic beverages and no taking of prohibited drugs
  - c. choose your friends wisely
  - d. properly discharge responsibilities at school, home and place of worship
  - e. practice good manners and being polite
  - f. implementation of rules on dating
3. Ask them this time to reflect on their values as a parent. Flash the following trigger questions:
    - What are the things your adolescent/s will need to learn from you in order to live their lives well?
    - What lessons, beliefs or values do you wish them to remember from living with you? Make a list of 6 necessary learning goals that you wish your adolescent/s to have and remember.



For example:

- a. Honor your parents.
- b. Be thoughtful and kind to others.
- c. Share what you have with others.
- d. Adhere to your values.
- e. Remember that all have a genuine goal and mission in life.
- f. Remember that every human being has inherent dignity and worth.
- g. You are in this world for a purpose and you were chosen to perform it.

4. Tell them to reflect on the lists that they have made. Flash the following reflection questions:

- Is there a difference between where you are devoting your time and energy and what you think is most important?
- Are your most important learning goals reflected in the rules and issues that you most frequently implement?

5. If there are things or values that the participants think they miss or neglect to teach to their adolescent/s, ask them to make a list of action steps for them to achieve a different balance in their life as a parent.

For example:

- a. Help your adolescent/s to become involved in some service to others.
- b. Meet the parents of your adolescent/s' friends.
- c. Plan family time together (dinner, recreation, discussion, and so on).
- d. Make their time more attractive and inviting than just watching TV. Adolescents should also know that the TV shows you do choose to watch are educational and provide wholesome entertainment.
- e. Worship together regularly because this will help your adolescent/s in their everyday lives but also in times of crisis and grief, which all of us encounter at some point. It also establishes a good habit and emphasizes the importance of the adolescent/s' spiritual well-being.

6. Ask for volunteers to share the lists that they have made.

7. Process and synthesize their ideas.

### **Option 3: "Greatest Love of All"**

1. Ask the participants who among them could lead the group in singing the song, "**Greatest Love All**" (**Annex 3**). The leader shall explain the message of the song and ask the other participants to reflect on the relevance of the song to the session.

2. After singing the song, the facilitator shall ask the participants, "What did you feel while

singing the song?” “What went through your minds while singing?”

3. Process and synthesize their responses.

**Option 4: “Red, Yellow and Green Lights: The Stop Light”**

1. Introduce the activity by saying, “Life is a journey. Going through life effectively is knowing how to read the streetlights. There are Red Lights for STOP, Yellow Lights for CAUTION and Green Lights for GO. Based on our discussions and sharings today, I would like to identify what you think are your RED LIGHTS, YELLOW LIGHTS AND GREEN LIGHTS as you journey with your adolescents.”
2. GIVE each participant 3 pieces of meta cards, colored Red, Yellow and Green.
3. ASK participants to complete the following whip statements and write their answers on the appropriate meta card.

I will STOP \_\_\_\_\_  
(RED Meta Card)

I will CAUTION \_\_\_\_\_  
(YELLOW Meta Card)

I will DO / START \_\_\_\_\_  
(GREEN Meta Card)

4. GIVE them 5 minutes to complete the activity.
5. ASK participants to read their answers individually to the group.
6. SYNTHESIZE main points for RED, YELLOW and GREEN.

# Annexes



## Text Message Forms

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### Message 1:

You are \_\_\_\_\_. The one I'm so  
\_\_\_\_\_ to have and nothing more  
\_\_\_\_\_ to  
\_\_\_\_\_, to \_\_\_\_\_ and to  
love.

### Message 2:

I hope \_\_\_\_\_ someday. I  
wish to \_\_\_\_\_ will come to be.  
And my dream that \_\_\_\_\_ is all I pray  
that you'll be happy is enough reward for me.



## To My Adolescent

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...As Long As We Remain Open With Each Other, We'll Grow Together.

I know sometimes you think I don't understand you,  
but I do remember how difficult being a teenager is.

I know it is not easy working through  
All the feelings you are experiencing,  
And I hope that you will always feel free  
To turn to me about any subject.

Your teenage years should be filled with  
Wonderful experience, and

I want all the times in your life  
To be fulfilling and enjoyable.

I know sometimes you think  
I am being too nosy about your private life,  
Or too often it seems like I am telling you what to do  
But I am not trying to make you feel as if you have  
No dependence of your own space at times.  
And I understand you need room to grow.

But as your parent, deep in your heart,  
I want you to be healthy and happy teenager  
And to have every opportunity in life you deserve.

When I put my foot down or make  
A few rules for you follow  
It does not mean I want to dominate.  
I only wish to protect you sometime even from your own self.

Still, I want us always to be able to work through  
Any of our differences and communicate openly.  
Just as any relationship has its ups and downs,  
So will ours as parent and child.

We have always had a good relationship  
And think we can grow and learn together  
In the entire years ahead if we both work hard at listening  
Respecting each other  
You are very important to me.

I hope I love you with all my heart  
I am proud to be your parent.



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## Greatest Love of All

I believe the children are our future  
Teach them well and let them lead the way  
Show them all the beauty of they possess inside  
Give them a sense of pride  
To make it easier  
Let the children's laughter  
Remind us how we used to be

Everybody's searching for a hero  
People need someone to look up to  
I never found any one who fulfilled that need  
A lonely place to be  
So I learned to depend on me

*Chorus:*

I decided long ago  
Never to walk in anyone's shadow  
If I fail, if I succeed  
At least I live as I believe  
No matter what they take from me  
They can't take away my dignity

Because the greatest love of all  
Is happening to me  
I found the greatest love of all inside of me  
The greatest love of all  
Is easy to achieve  
Learning to love yourself is the greatest love of all

*Repeat 1st and 2nd stanza*

*Repeat Chorus*

*CODA:*

And if by chance that special place  
That you've been dreaming of  
Leads you to a lonely place  
Find your strength in love.

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Murrel Steve. *Heart Parenting*

Murrel Steve. *Heart of Marriage*

Samo Tumangday Miriam. *Home Builders, Enhancing Relationship with your Spouse and Children*