

Family Wellness Associates

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SURVIVAL SKILLS FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

WHAT IS FAMILY WELLNESS?

A Way of Thinking

Mission:

To teach, encourage and support couples, families, individuals, and those who work with them to promote healthy communities. We teach practical skills based on proven principles that strengthen, support, and empower families.

Philosophy:

- The primary responsibility for the development and well-being of children lies within the family.
- Families need new tools to handle the challenges in our present society, and to reclaim their primary role of providing for the healthy development of their members.

Goals:

- To empower people to manage their families in healthy ways.
- To provide quality products and services.
- To focus on health and competence.
- To provide, for families, high caliber trainers from their own community.

Beliefs:

- Families want to get along and need skills to do so.
- Three skills and three specific patterns appear over and over in well-functioning families.
- Families can learn and use these skills and patterns.
- Having skills builds self-confidence and self-esteem in parents and in children.
- Families with skills stop problems before they start.
- Learning together as a family builds family unity.
- Learning with other families builds community.
- Complex theoretical ideas about healthy behavior can be simplified so that they can be used daily. *Family Wellness* has translated these ideas into “rules” that point the direction for each family member.
- Healthy change is built on what already works.
- Each person can learn new skills and act in a different way. Families and communities can build something better together.

A Program

What We Teach:

Survival Skills for Healthy Families is a sixteen-hour Family Wellness program presented to large groups of families and individuals in a series of eight 2-hour sessions. Each session is organized around practical guidelines for healthy family interactions, which are demonstrated and then practiced with the participants.

The eight sessions are titled:

1. Map for Healthy Families
2. Parents as Leaders in Healthy Families
3. Parents as Models in Healthy Families
4. Children in Healthy Families
5. Adult Relationships in Healthy Families
6. As Children Grow: Change in Healthy Families
7. Solving Family Problems
8. Values: Preparing Your Child for Life

How We Teach:

- When families learn together unity is strengthened.
- Simple rules provide a road map for healthy behavior in a family.
- Use of role play to dramatize real life family problems and working through these problems make the rules believable and applicable.
- Coaching shows family members how to act in a new way and experience a success in the moment.
- Families participating together with other families builds community, promotes learning from each other, and expands the support network for each family.
- Culturally responsive and competent *Family Wellness* instructors fit the particular community, language, and needs.
- *Family Wellness* builds on what works.

The Outcomes:

Participants will learn:

- Three basic skills: speak, listen, and cooperate.
- Six steps for resolving conflict.
- Strategies for solving problems.
- Three patterns that healthy families use.

Each family will learn:

- Ways to encourage one another.
- How to build on the strengths within the family.
- Rules for successful family meetings.
- Society's rules about abuse and neglect.

Parents will learn:

- Effective discipline skills.
- How to make rules that are positive and specific.
- How to enforce rules through appropriate rewards and consequences.
- That adults need to agree on the rules and consequences and support each other in enforcing them.
- Actions that help parents stay in charge.
- Alternatives to physical discipline.
- Patterns that develop self-esteem in their children.
- Ways to show love to their children.
- Skills to encourage and support their children.

Children will learn:

- To tell others about their skills and good qualities.
- What they do to contribute to their family.
- Three survival skills to get along at home and with friends.
- Six steps to resolve conflicts.
- Steps for talking over rules with their parents and adults.

Groups of families will:

- Get to know people from other families.
- Know and appreciate their family strengths.
- Talk over and practice new ways of managing common family problems.

The Benefits:

- A road map for families.
- Effective prevention: skills and patterns that help families prevent problems.
- Parents and children who can talk with and listen to each other and work out problems together.
- The structure for families and for the program is easily replicated.
- The program is easily adapted for specific communities (ethnic, language or other special needs).
- The program meets the legal and program requirements for many court-ordered cases (spousal, child, and drug or alcohol abuse).
- Instructors learn skills to work effectively with difficult youth and family issues in a variety of situations (large group, small group, individual; public settings and private settings).

Other Family Wellness Programs:

- *The Strongest Link: The Couple*
- *A Map for Marriage: Before You Say I Do*
- *The Wellness Way for Stepfamilies*
- *Skills and Strengths for Families Affected by Domestic Violence*
- *Dad's for Life: Fathering for Family Wellness*
- *Survival Skills for Healthy Christian Families*