



WHAT DOES A HEALTHY GROUP LOOK LIKE?

In our work as facilitators and leaders, we work with a variety of groups. Over time, we've learned that not all groups are perfectly functional. We are usually able to identify behaviors that get in the way of the group being as effective as they'd like to be. Yet, in order to help groups build their capacity, we need to know what a functional group looks like.

A Snapshot of a "Functional" Group

In an attempt to paint a picture of a fully functional group for you, we came up with the following 12 characteristics. They seem to build upon each other in a sort of hierarchy where the later ones, which are more outwardly focused, tend to rest on the more inwardly focused behaviors preceding them. There may be more, but we believe these are the key pieces that will go a long way to a group getting what it wants and needs.

1) **Basic Needs met.** Group understands, acknowledges, and manages basic human needs, balancing them with the needs of the group. Needs include considerations for physical comfort, security, safety, and maintenance of an environment that supports these.

2) **Mutual Trust.** Trust is developed and maintained to the extent required to accomplish the tasks at hand. Members are honest and transparent with one another, expressing their personal interests clearly and directly. Group purpose and duration will dictate depth of trust required to accomplish task. Mutual trust is essential to complete communication.

3) **Complete Communication.** Everything expressed is "heard." Everything that needs to be said is stated directly. Environment allows free expression of thoughts, ideas, perspectives, and feelings. Non-verbal or indirect communication is compassionately confronted and resolved. Complete communication deepens trust and lays the foundation for mutual respect.

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<http://www.mcdservices.com/online.html>

MutliCultural Education Services

This site includes literacy activities, health literacy and a section on listening to immigrants. These interactive health literacy exercises provide practice in 4 different skill areas: reading a prescription medicine label, reading an over-the-counter OTC medicine label, reading special warning labels and information about side effects. They also have introductions spoken and printable on these topics in English, Arabic, Hmong and Somali.

Leaders may possess brilliance, extraordinary vision, fate, even luck. Those help; but no one, no matter how gifted, can perform without careful preparation, thoughtful experiment, and determined follow-through.

Rudolph Giuliani

SPOTLIGHT

New Staff Member!

Eric Ulibarri joined the Family Voices staff on Monday, February 28 as a Staff Assistant. He will be taking over most of Priscilla's job responsibilities in the New Mexico office. He comes to Family Voices with a degree in Latin American studies from the University of New Mexico and a variety of work experiences – from an emergency room to an HIV clinic to summer programs for children with disabilities. He also spent time helping his grandfather rebuild a home in rural (?) New Mexico. In his time outside the Family Voices office, he likes to cook, garden and read. Please join us in welcoming him to



ReCap of FV Talk

This information is a summary collected from Family Voices Talk listserv

Weblinks

http://www.familyvoices.org/private/admin/2005Conf/Conf2005_Postings.htm

The Family Voices "One Heart, Many Voices" wishes for our children.

HB 114

Utah Bill for additionally allocation of funds for uninsured children

www.thelittleacorn.net

Resources materials for parents in tracking the clinical aspects of care.

<http://news.newspress.com/toplocal/030305dorms.htm>

Intresting reading Dorm closures in California

factoids

FACT: Children who are bullied are more likely to be depressed, lonely, anxious, have low self-esteem, feel unwell and absent from school frequently, think about suicide and commit suicide.

FACT: Students who are bullied may fear going to school, using the bathroom, and riding on the school bus.

FACT: Research indicates that children with special needs are at a higherrisk of being bullied than other children.

FACT: Children that bully are more likely to get in frequent fights,

vandalize property, steal, drink alcohol, smoke, be truant from school, drop out of school and carry a weapon?

Does YOUR school district have an anti-bullying policy and program in place?

(<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/>)

Did you know March is:

American Red Cross, National Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Eye Donor, Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness, Colorectal Cancer Awareness, Kidney, Nutrition and WorkPlace Safety Month?

Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.

Winston Churchill

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4) **Mutual Respect.** Individuals act with civility toward one another. Honest, respectful, and complete communication maintains healthy levels of energy, motivation, and commitment to the group. Mutual respect makes it safe to look at and improve on weaknesses.

5) **Committed to Growth.** Group installs and maintains feedback loops to support individual and group evolution. Individuals are willing to give and receive constructive feedback. Periodic reviews of process, status of individual members, accomplishments, corrective action plans, etc. assure group corrects problems and continues to improve.

6) **Consensus Container.** Group operating norms and standards are known, understood, and agreed upon by all members. Most groups have a number of unspoken assumptions about their roles, goals, and expectations. If these are not clearly voiced and agreed upon by all members, they can cause confusion. When they are explicitly voiced, they will help form standards of effective behavior, enabling your group to progress on its substantive work with fewer internal unconscious barriers.

To be Continued...

To receive "Friday's Child" on e-mail:
Send an email to

fridayschildnews-subscribe@yahoo.com

To become a member of our family and for more information please visit our website: www.familyvoices.org



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