

Sistah Connection

10 Part Series, 2 of 10

Feeling Respected

One to two weeks prior to Group meeting send out postcards.

Day before the series begins call each mom to remind them of location and time. Put bookmarks on the appropriate page in the classroom set of books. Spend some quiet time preparing yourself to present the monthly topic. Gather all the materials needed to present the topic.

Day of group Peer Counselors refer to the “Group Peer Counselor Responsibility Checklist for Group Days” and the “Individual Peer Counselor Responsibility Checklist for Group Days” to ensure group runs smoothly. Start groups 5 min. after the hour. Participants who show up 15 min. after the hour will need to wait until the next group starts.

- **Welcome**
- **Sistah Connection Series:** This is the second part of the 10 group sessions. The Sistah Connection brings new African American mothers together to connect with each other and to embrace motherhood. The series is about learning to take care of yourself so that you are able to meet the needs of your baby and family.
- **Goal of group:** The goal of our group is to encourage African American mothers to be dedicated to exclusive breastfeeding by providing support and help during baby’s first year.
- **Why exclusive breastfeeding:** African American women have the lowest breastfeeding initiation rates (28% vs. 54% for whites) and the lowest breastfeeding duration rates (9% vs. 25% for whites) at 1 year. Because African-American women do not breastfeed the health problems that go along with **not** breastfeeding are high among African Americans. The African American infant death rate is much higher than any other ethnicity and in Riverside County has increased 55% since 1997; infant and childhood illnesses are higher; obesity rates are higher; and certain cancers are higher in African American children and mothers. Because of these health differences the State WIC Program has given our County extra money for this Peer Project. Our Sistah Connection project is designed to help African American women be successful exclusively breastfeeding their babies. Over time we hope to see the health improve for mothers and babies in Riverside County.
- **Explain “safe place”** what is said in this room stays in this room. Encourage new mothers to practice breastfeeding in public while in this group.

County of Riverside Department of Public Health, Nutrition Services

Developed by and adapted from:

California State WIC Special Peer Counselor Grant

Sistah Connection in collaboration with The Children’s Project

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The philosophy of the five critical emotional needs is based on the book
How to Raise Emotionally Healthy Children: Meeting the Five Critical Needs
of Children...and Parents Too! By Dr. Gerald Newmark

www.emotionallyhealthychildren.org

- **Moms introduce themselves and their babies** (Remember their names!).
- **Breastfeeding Spotlight: Facilitator, pick the breastfeeding hot topic for the month from the Sistah Connection facilitators notebook.** (Please review attachment before group day. It is important that we give accurate information. You may want to make a few copies for anyone who might want one.)
- **Healthy Habits Spotlight:** (Distribute the new recipe and give new moms recipes from previous segments.) Has anyone tried a new recipe? How did it turn out? What other recipes do you want for your collection? Is there anything else you want to learn about cooking or nutrition?
- **Introduce “How to Raise Emotionally Healthy Children – Meeting the Five Critical Needs of Children...AND Parents, Too!”** (*Give a book to all new participants letting them know this is their book to keep. Participants should write their names in their books. Participants should bring the books with them to future Peer Group meetings. If participants want to they can make notes in the book.*) Parenting is not something you learn once and master for all time. Children at different ages have different needs and parents must learn to adjust their interactions with them accordingly.

To be a good parent you must be a good learner and our children are our best teachers, IF we take the time to listen to them. The concepts of raising emotionally healthy children are actually very easy. We just need to understand that all children have 5 Critical Needs. Once we understand the 5 needs of our children all we have to do is practice the techniques that meet these needs. During this series we will be practicing the techniques we learn and then we will come back the next month and share the experiences we had while trying the techniques.

Sharing your experience - Last month we learned the technique of making sure our babies and children feel secure. Would anyone like to share how they used this technique? (If no one wants to share, facilitator can start.) Please turn to page 146 “Becoming a student of my own behavior” of you Raising Emotionally Healthy Children book.

Questions to mothers:

1. Were you able to find some time to answer the questions?
2. How did the journaling go for you?
3. Would anyone like to share what they wrote?

(If no one wants to share, read each question and discuss with the group. Or, if no one did the activity state the following)

It takes time to feel comfortable journaling and to find the time everyday to journal. However, journaling is an activity that helps you take care of yourselves so I urge you to find some time each week, then later maybe you will find some time each day.

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Questions to mothers:

1. How does this sound to you?
2. How do you think this will work for you?

- **Facilitate discussion of the FIRST critical need of children “Feeling Respected”.** (*Have mothers open their book to Page 7- 8 and read first 2 paragraphs of “Need to Feel Respected”.*) Let’s talk about this important need.

Questions to mothers:

1. What does respect look like to you? (*saying “Excuse me”; listening when others talk to us; opening up the door for an older person; saying “please” and “thank you”; etc*)
2. What is the opposite of respect? (*ignoring someone who is talking; running in front of someone to get ahead; arguing with someone’s point of view; telling someone they are wrong; interrupting someone who is talking; telling someone he is dumb; etc.*)
3. How do our babies “talk” to us? (*crying; making eye-contact; rooting to eat; sucking on hands; smiling; etc.*)
4. How can we show respect to our babies? (*smiling back; feeding baby when hungry; picking baby up when he cries; talking to baby when changing diaper; etc.*)

(*Have everyone turn to page 12 and read “Summing Up”.*)

- **Practice what we have learned** - This month practice the technique of making our children feel respected. Date the journal entries so that over time you can see your progress. (Pass journals out to those who have not received one yet.)
- **Encourage group to share phone numbers, meet at a park, go out to lunch, etc.** (*Do not go with them.*)
- **Read motto:** “While breastfeeding may not seem the right choice for every parent, it is the best choice for every baby.”
- **Vouchers and one-on-one questions for peer counselors/IBCLC.**

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