

Creative Conversation Starters!

Dear Family:

The following activities have been created or modified by members of Taylor Consulting Group's team of experiential educators. We believe through intentional experiences and meaningful conversations, communities grow closer and safer for everyone. At the core of all of our programs is creating safer places for children and their adult counterparts. We invite you to use these activities as a springboard for your own creativity! You know your family better than we do—what will get YOU talking, sharing and moving closer together as a family community? Please share with us how you use and modify the activities provided as well as any you might create! Have fun, share an experience, grow closer...that's what it's all about!

60 Second History:

How to play: In pairs, each person shares his/her entire life history in one minute. The other person listens as intently as possible without verbal feedback. Switch roles after a minute.

Talking points: listening skills, honoring another story – especially by allowing him/her to choose the direction without our questions, connecting to others, etc. You may also find that you share/hear something new with someone you have known closely for awhile (all your life in some cases).

Circle Drop:

How to play: Give each person a pool noodle. Each person is to hold his/her noodle with palm flat on one end, the other end flat on the floor standing up. Decide who will give instructions: i.e., let go of noodle, clap once; let go, clap twice, let go & turn around, etc. Increase difficulty if you wish: let go and siblings switch with siblings and parents with parents; let go and parents switch with children; let go switch with someone of a different generation.

Talking points: competition, listening, increasing challenges and complexity of life

Cooperative Drawing:

How to play: Without talking, everyone hold on to a marker. Create a picture that represents your family (the family vacation, what the family is good at, a picture of the family pet, a family portrait, etc.)

Talking points: family leadership, shared leadership, communication, cooperation.

Noodle Jousting:

How to play: Give everyone in your family a medium sized pool noodle and a small slice of a foam noodle (slice 1 ½ inch piece with a bread knife from a larger pool noodle). Hold the medium noodle in one hand like a jousting tool, the small noodle piece should lay flat on the top side of your hand. See if you can knock your family member's small noodle piece off the back of his/her hand, while making sure yours does not get knocked off.

Talking points: How to destress as a family and still have fun/laugh; conflict and aggression; changing strategies with different people (pitting one family member against another); "battling" more than one person (does it ever feel like one family member is being ganged up on by the others?).

Each One Teach One:

How to play: Sounds simple enough. Each person in the family takes turns teaching the other one something. Can be a funny joke, a new word in a different language, a creative way to tie your shoes, something a parent remembers from childhood, something a child learned from a peer, sibling, etc.

Talking points: Every person has something to contribute in the family; children and adults can be both learners and educators; how we teach/learn in this family.

A Sweet Meeting:

How to play: Purchase a large bag of M&M's. All family members pour some into a small cup/bowl/hand. Take turns sharing one thing per color of M&M according to this (or your own) key:

Red:	What is something you're passionate about?
Yellow:	What do you want to be when you grow up?
Green:	How do you define success?
Blue:	What is the best gift you have ever received?
Brown:	What is a positive memory of yours?
Orange:	What do you like to do on the weekends?

Talking points: Commonalities/differences, how do we normally share these things.

Weather Report Check In:

How to play: Each family members takes turns describing his/her day as a weather report. Can substitute: a meal, dessert, movie, car lot, etc.

Talking points: Checking in with one another; supporting each other during difficult times, celebrating during good; anger management; communication.

Interview Circle:

How to play: Have all family members sit in a circle (preferably on the floor). Each family member gets a turn to be a celebrity and a member of the (respectful) paparazzi. When it is your turn to be the celebrity, sit in the center of the circle. The paparazzi then has up to 5 questions to ask you. The celebrity always reserves the right to pass. This rotates on until everyone has had a chance to be the celebrity.

Talking points: Family pressure, communication, learning about one another.

Your Activity: