

Family Code

Building Activity



ETHICS — A theory or system of moral values pertaining to what is good and bad, right and wrong, the principles of conduct governing individuals or groups.

FAMILY CODE — A simple set of rules a family lives by; repeated often; each member of the family is held accountable to follow the code.

PREVENTION DOSAGE — The number of times a youth receives prevention science messaging, information, and parental expectations about high-risk behavior.

As early as developmentally appropriate, around 3rd or 4th grade, parents and their children can participate in the creation of their very own Family Code. Once the Family Code is created and proudly displayed somewhere in the home, parents can refer to it often and in a variety of ways as their child develops. This tool will help increase the prevention dosage or the number of times a youth receives prevention messaging.

Materials	Activity
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Poster board2. Markers, Crayons, Pencils, or Pens3. Notebook paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Host a family meeting to create a Family Code.2. Let each family member know that their contribution to the Family Code is important.3. With notebook paper in hand, begin the brainstorming session.4. Ask each family member what values they would like to represent the family. Some values are listed here. Use the Internet to search for others, if needed.5. Narrow down the list to 3-5 core values that best represent the aspirations of the family as a whole.6. Next, make a list of risky behaviors each member of the family feels strongly about saying 'no' to.7. Write sentences that combine the core values and high-risk behaviors your family would like to prevent, like the example on the next page.8. Combine the Family Code text with a drawing or graphic that represents your family unity, such as a family tree or coat of arms.9. Proudly, display the poster somewhere in the family home.
<h3 data-bbox="332 1291 479 1344">Values</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Connectedness● Health● Balance● Courage● Determination● Feelings● Honesty● Gratitude● Openness● Resiliency● Responsibility● Sobriety● Support● Trust	

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Family Code

Example



Consistent education, plus behavioral expectations changes behavior. When Brain-Savvy Parents consistently integrate education on risky behavior into their Family Code conversations, the preventive effect compounds over each developmental stage. This provides children with a sense of family unity and sets behavioral expectations that kids will hear often enough to commit to memory. The combination of family unity and prevention message repetition has a powerful effect on shaping a youth's attitudes and intentions regarding future risky behavior engagement.



To maintain an effective prevention dosage, bring up the Family Code at the following times:

- ⊗ During family dinner discussions.
- ⊗ Before situations when youth may engage in high-risk behavior such as sleepovers or dances.
- ⊗ After seeing drug or alcohol use or sexually explicit activity normalized on media such as TV, movies, or social media.
- ⊗ On days that are designed to bring awareness to specific risky behavior, such as World Suicide Awareness Day or National Eating Disorders Month