

Sample Agenda for Parenting Class

by Jane Nelsen

As you look at this outline and prepare for your classes, remember to follow the basic training you received in your “Teaching Parenting the Positive Discipline Way” workshop.

The basic class format is:

7:00 – 7:20 Warm-up

7:20 – 7:40 Content (parenting information) During the first class, this time will be used to explain the class format (see below)

7:40 – 8:10 Experiential Activity

8:10 – 8:20 Break and Business

8:20 – 8:50 Experiential Activity

8:50 – 9:20 Parents Helping Parents Problem-Solving Steps

9:20 – 9:30 Reading and Homework Assignments

Post this agenda somewhere in the room so participants will know what to expect and to help everyone keep on track. When things do seem to get off track, it is okay to point to the agenda and say, “We need to stick to the agenda as closely as possible or we won’t be able to cover as much as we need to in order for everyone to get as much help as possible.”

Warm-up

In this outline, the suggested warm-up is to invite participants to share a success story or a challenge they would like help with. Let them know that when they share a challenge, solutions will not be provided at this time. Instead, one of four things will be done:

1. It can be added to the list of challenges in the Two Lists Activity (done during the first class) and can be used in future role-plays.
2. They can sign up for the Parents Helping Parents Problem-Solving Steps segment.

3. They will be told you have already planned an activity that will address this problem (or will plan one) for a future class.

Content

For this outline, the content time will be spent by inviting people to share:

1. The most important thing they learned from their reading assignment.
2. An example of something they tried from what they read.
3. A question they have about what they read.

Point out that if they don't have time to read for some reason, to not worry about it. They will learn from the sharing of others.

Experiential Activity

Feel free to use the suggested activities, substitute with one of your favorites, or use an activity that meets the needs of participants' questions.

Break and Business

This is a great time to decide who will bring cookies next time, or where the class will be held the next time. However, most of the time should be dedicated to allowing parents to relax and get to know each other.

Second Experiential Activity

You may or may not have time for it based on whether or not you go over time in the other segments. However, it is a good idea to stick to the schedule as much as possible so that the class doesn't go off on tangents.

Parents Helping Parents Problem-Solving Steps

Many parent educators have been afraid of this segment of the class format and skip it. Over and over we hear that it is a huge mistake to skip this part. Instead, skip your ego and have the courage to make mistakes. This becomes the favorite part for everyone and can be the time where they get the most help (deep insights) with their personal parenting challenges, and the opportunity to practice new skills.

The First Week

As participants arrive, greet them and ask them to fill out a name card. (Have tag board and marking pens available so they can start the family name card—see activity below.) Give them their *Positive Discipline* book and take care of any other registration tasks needed. (You might ask for a volunteer to help with this.)

7:00-7:10 **Introduce yourself** and tell your story about why you are teaching Positive Discipline and what influence it has had on your life. Ask if any others have some experience with Positive Discipline.

7:10 – 7:30 **Have participants introduce themselves and their children** by name, age, and three descriptive words using the name card they made. Ask them to paste pictures on the name card and bring to every class.

7:30 – 7:40 **Group Guidelines**

1. Ask group to think of guidelines they would like to have in order to create an environment of trust where each can learn and share experiences safely.
2. List guidelines on chart paper as they suggest them. Wait for group to finish first, and then if some important elements are not mentioned, you can suggest them. Be sure to model asking for group consensus. Example: “How about ‘confidentiality’?”
3. List should include: confidentiality • listen • be open minded • be respectful • accepting of differences • conscious of not taking up too much time • OK to pass • brainstormed solutions are just suggestions, not advice • commitment to timeliness and attendance.

The rest of the first class will follow the posted agenda times for the posted agenda (per above).