

The Picture Activity

Directions for Use of the “Family Picture”

1. Inform the audience that they will see a picture. Ask them not to discuss it with anyone (or post any information if using virtual PD technology. Tell them that all you want them to do is LOOK at the picture.
2. After about a minute, leave the picture on the screen and ask participants (either by voice or by chat box) to answer the following directive: “In a word or a few words, tell me what you see in the picture.” It is IMPORTANT, that you ask the question this way...do not lead the audience to any conclusions about what they see.
3. Either keep a running list of responses or, view the responses in a chat box. When you get 8-10 responses, stop. Read the list to your audience.
4. At this point, you will see that all or the majority of responses are negative (i.e. chaos, lazy mother, disengagement, neglect, poor nutrition, danger, etc.) Read the list back to the audience. Ask this question: “What do all of the items on the list have in common? (The answer is that they are negative). IT IS POSSIBLE THAT YOU WILL GET A COUPLE OF POSITIVE COMMENTS IN THE FIRST ROUND. IF THAT HAPPENS, simply rephrase the question to “What do MOST of the items have in common?”
5. The audience will realize that they have picked out everything that is negative. Once they say “negative”, give them this direction: “Please look at the picture again, this time in a word or a few words, can you tell me what you see in the picture that is positive? Answers will range from curlers in mom’s hair, television, heat, electricity, a home food, toys etc.)
6. Once the audience comes up with a list of positives, ask the final question: “Why didn’t you come up with these positives the first time I asked you the question? Be ready! You will get people who say that “we are trained to fix things” or “we are trained to see the negative” or “the danger jumps out at me.” Allow the audience to share their opinions.
7. Then, use this script: “The minute you saw the picture, each one of us did the same thing. Do you know what we all did when we saw the picture? (The answer is “we judged it.” Someone will get the answer. If not, tell them “the answer starts with a J.” They’ll get it then.
8. Emphasize to the group that we judged it based on our beliefs, our values, our experiences, our assumptions...all being the definition of CULTURE.
9. Emphasize that in order to bring about the success we desire, we are going to have to see the positives in all families, in all situations. We have to commit to establishing relationships with all families that are in all situations, regardless of how challenging it might seem, or failures we have experienced in the past.



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