

Frequently Asked Questions

Preventing and Responding to Family Violence During COVID-19 Learning Series: “Keeping it in the Family”: Addressing Family Conflict in the time of COVID-19, July 21, 2020

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The following are several frequently asked questions from the webinar. [See the webinar recording and slide deck for more information.](#)

Participant Question & Presenters' Response

Q1 *How can you help provide safe and effective group participation for families who are new to a group setting?*

A1 All group participants should have a full assessment conducted to determine risk and protective factors and overall appropriateness for group participation. Not all people will be able to begin group participation right away or at all, and group engagement is only one piece in the continuum of care and support.

Discussion of safety should be a starting and ending point for group members and safety checks at the beginning and end of sessions are good protective measures. Agreeing on safety norms for groups is key to ensure plans are in place before a crisis occurs. This is especially important with the shift to technology-based interactions. Consider developing and agreeing on a safe-word, chat-box text phrase, or hand signal that clients and group members can use if they are concerned about their safety.

Q2 *What are some strategies to encourage fun and safe family time?*

A2 Reviewing and establishing daily routines are key to developing fun and safe family times. Daily routines help reinforce necessary activities like shared meals, regular sleep schedules, and time to accomplish necessary tasks like homework or house chores while minimizing unstructured time when conflict may be more likely.

Families can work together to build their daily routines to ensure that everyone's needs are discussed and prioritized. Working as a family to build a daily routine allows adults to prioritize their needs, as well as the needs of their family, and identify what is working well or what can be improved.

Q3 *How can you help engage all family members in positive shared time and prevent conflicts and disruptions during a time of social distancing?*

A3 Social distancing has increased stress for all family members and has seriously disrupted many, or all, normal family routines. Helping to manage stress and anxiety will increase the likelihood that all family members will engage with one another.

Completing a family sociogram can be helpful in identifying supports that exist and are not being utilized or supports that existed previously but are now gone. Working with families to identify what supports are available can help decrease the stress and anxiety of managing everything alone.

Q4 *The case presentation focused on working with the father. How would you use AF-CBT with moms/non-perpetrators/other family members?*

A4 [Utilizing trauma-informed practices and culturally responsive care](#) allows a clinician to approach family violence with an understanding of their own biases and attitudes about what may be perpetuating the cycle of violence.

Clinicians should address family violence directly and provide support to the whole family to help end this cycle. Safety is always the key concern when addressing family violence. Acknowledging that a person who is committing violence may have a history of trauma or violence can help move to focusing on accessing [supports for the entire family](#).

Other Resources:

- [Children and Domestic Violence: How Does Domestic Violence Affect Children](#)
- [Managing Family Conflict While Home During COVID-19: Intimate Partners](#)
- [Mental Health Resources for Parents and Caregivers during COVID-19 Developed by Mountain Plains MHTTC](#)
- [Online tool for Creating a Sociogram](#)
- [Parenting During a Pandemic: Tips to Keep the Calm at Home](#)
- [Virtual Learning Guide Developed by Pacific Southwest MHTTC](#)

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