Facilitator Guide

8 MORE Reproducible Handouts!

SOBER COACHING YOUR TOXIC TEEN

Michael J. Marshall, PhD
Shelly Marshall, BS CSAC
Facilitator Guide for

*Sober Coaching Your Teen*

parental support groups

Best Practices for Parental Support Groups Dealing with a Drug Crisis
Track One: Prevention
Track Two: Parents as Sober Coaches

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Michael J. Marshall, PhD & Shelly Marshall, BS CSAC

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Tips: What you need to facilitate these groups

- Workbook, *Sober Coaching Your Toxic Teen* (for each participant)
- Chalk board or flip board.
- Access to a Copy machine
- OTC drug testing kit
- Computer Internet access for your group (one or two laptops OK)
- Pens or pencils and paper
- A jar or basket
- Cards and paper for writing assignments
- Tape (to mark the floor such as masking or duct tape)
- Recovery favors (such as serenity prayer medallions, electric rubber wrist bands with a recovery message, coffee mugs with your center’s logo, frame a copy of the Parent’s Bill of Rights) to give away to “winners” of different group activities.
Managing your Parental Support Groups

You have two tracks for your support groups. The first track is for parents whose children might be in trouble, oppositional, at high risk for addition. Track One places the emphasis on prevention and is for the parent who suspects something is wrong but there is no clear evidence that their young person is actually a drug addict or alcoholic.

**Track One for Prevention is suitable for:**
- Private boarding schools for troubled youth (for parent’s support group)
- Tough love-based clinical and community groups for parents
- School-based programs for families
- Social service programs that teach parenting skills
- Court ordered drug abuse prevention courses for parents

Track Two is for parents and primary caregivers whose young charge is clearly in trouble with alcohol and other drugs, and the parent needs to/wants to stop enabling. It is for parents who want to be part of the solution in recovery and not part of the problem. Track Two teaches the parent to become the ‘sober coach’ of their young person and not the one who makes it easy for them to keep using.

**Track Two for Crisis Management is suitable for:**
- Court ordered courses for the parents of kids in trouble with drugs
- Parents who want to get their young person into treatment
- Treatment centers teaching parents how to support the young person post treatment
- As an adjunct to Families Anonymous or Parents Anonymous support groups
- In clinical settings for treatment of co-dependency with parents who are dealing with a drug crisis

**Before the first session,** give each participant their copy of *Sober Coaching Your Toxic Teen* and instruct them to read Section One (first four chapters).

**Begin each session** by having one of the participants read the Section introduction and then discussing each member’s initial reaction to the emphases explored in the section.

You can divide and use the chapters and handouts any way that works best in your situation. However, following the break down in this Facilitator Guide will produce 6 weeks of support group programs for each track. They should be about an hour and half. If wanted, you can expand the program to a 12 week course by shortening the session to an hour and dividing the activities in half.

Focus on the rights of the parents, showing that by doing what is best for the family unit, everyone will be healthier, especially the troubled child. Have them read the ‘Parents Bill of Rights’ as often as every group until they are comfortable taking care of themselves.

**End each session** by having participants write down the next week’s assignment.
Group Activity: Have each parent go around the room and take turns reading one right from the parents bill of rights. After the reading, have parents pair off and discuss what rights they do not claim for themselves.

Group Discussion: Instruct one parent to read Amy’s letter (page 4). Go around the room and have each participant describe how “safe” or “unsafe” they feel about their children.

Exercise: Pass out copies of “The Winning Hand:21 Questions for Parents.” (page 5) Have parents answer each question. If there are two parents there, have them answer separately and compare answers when done. Instruct participants who have a significant other at home to have their partner answer the questions later with no input. When finished, they should compare their respective answers. Often, partners see different aspects of the problem and can illuminate the situation when comparing answers.

Instruction: Explain that if they do discover drug use with their child, there are guidelines to follow. Go over the ‘Dos and Don’ts’ and define why the Dos fall into the ‘acting’ category and the Don’ts fall into the ‘reacting’ category. (page 9)

Exercise: Have parents read the ‘Strong Indicators’ and the ‘Weak Indicators’ (pages 18-19) and put a check next to any that apply to their children. If they are truly in prevention mode, then they should have more checks in the “weak” column. If they have too many in the ‘Strong’ column, they need to reconsider their track.

Instruction and Pop Quiz: Go over the definitions of use, misuse, abuse, and addiction. (pages 16-17) then give a pop-quiz, asking them to write the definition for each. As a group, review the answers.

Weekly Assignment: Read Section Two, Chapters 5 through 9. Have each participant find a favorite slogan to bring the following week that might relate to their feelings or dealings with their young person.

Focus On:

the participants understanding that addiction can happen to their family. No family is immune because of religion, money, or status in the community. Addiction is an equal opportunity disease and some very sick kids come from some very healthy families.
Session One. Participants should have read all four chapters in Section one of their Sober Coaching workbook. Begin by having one participant read the introduction to Section One (p 1) and have a brief discussion on the differences between acting and reacting.

Ask each participant to describe a time when they have “fired” at the problem before “aiming.”

Group Activity: Have each parent go around the room and take turns reading one right from the parents bill of rights. After the reading, have parents pair off and discuss what rights they do not claim for themselves.

Instruction: Have an over-the-counter urine drug screening test available to demonstrate how they work. Drug testing is a way to alleviate suspicions, confront the addict, and monitor behavior. Facilitate a discussion on the use of drug screening your own kids (pages 6-7).

Exercise: Have participants ask themselves, Am I panicking? Am I over controlling? Instruct them to make a miracle list as if a genie would immediately grant all their wishes. After they make their list, explain they cannot make it happen because there is no genie. Next have participants journal a worst case scenario. What actually occurs, will probably be somewhere in between these two extremes. Explain the ‘cause, control, cure’ slogan (pages 11-13) and finish with a participant reading the passage about children from The Prophet (page 13-14).

Instruction: Using a flip chart or chalk board, explain why addition is a biological disease. Be sure to write ‘Infectious disease’ and ‘functional disease’ and have participants name examples of each as you list it for them. Be sure to explain that chemical dependency is a primary disease (pages 15-16).

Exercise: Have parents read the ‘Strong Indicators’ and the ‘Weak Indicators’ (pages 18-19) and check any points that apply. If they don’t put many checks in the “strong” column, you may be dealing with denial.

Weekly Assignment: Read Section Two, Chapters 5 through 9. Have each participant find a favorite slogan to bring the following week that might relate to their rights as a parent.
**Group Activity:** Tell each participant to share the slogan they found (from last session's assignment) and each explain to the group how it applies to them personally.

**Exercise:** Ask participants to question themselves: What is the fear regarding my child that has the greatest hold on me? Have them place a check next to the common fears listed in Chapter 6 (p. 27-28) that apply to them. Once checked, ask each participant to describe one way fear has become their enemy (p. 28).

**Group Discussion and Discovery:** With a flip board or a chalk board, have your group call out questions they would like answered by someone in a support group they would consider joining. List them on the board as they call them out. Questions might be, “What are the goals of your support group? Who is appropriate to use it? When and where are the meetings? What is the format of the meetings? What does it cost? Can I bring a friend to the first meeting so I do not have to go alone? Do you provide any free or for sale literature?”

**Exercise:** Ask participants to write a list of what they most worry about, the thoughts that drive the worry, and finally a realistic counter thought that reduces the worry level. Here’s an example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I worry about</th>
<th>The thought that drives the worry</th>
<th>Realistic counter thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My son hanging out with a drug crowd and getting into trouble</td>
<td>He might not be able to get into a good college or worse, go to jail</td>
<td>The worst is not likely to happen, but if it does I am now learning skills to cope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The poor role model my addicted daughter is to her younger sister</td>
<td>She has always looked up to her older sister and this might influence her to use drugs</td>
<td>I am learning new skills, gaining a new support system, and creating a foundation to make healthier choices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weekly Assignment:** Read Section Three, Chapters 10 through 15. Refer back to the questions on the board and have each participant call a support group, ask the questions and report back to the group next session.

**Focus On:**

dealing with feelings, especially fear and its counterpart, anger. To be able to “move through” and release our fears, we must first acknowledge them. Our fears remain our constant companions throughout our lives, if we stay in denial of them.

**Notes:**

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Session Two. Participants should have read Section Two. Begin by having one participant read the introduction to Section Two (p 22). Ask participants to describe normal emotions and how dealing with a child in crisis feeds the negative emotions. Have them share one time when they “lost it” with their child in the last six months.

Group Activity: Tell each participant to share the slogan they found (from last session’s assignment) and explain to the group how it applies to them.

Exercise: Ask parents to review the ‘Stages of Addiction and Parental Reaction’ chart. Instruct them to identify which stage applies to them and list three examples of a parental reaction they have engaged in (p 23-24).

Team Activity. Have the group (depending on size) break into triads or quartets. Ask them to compare their lists and vote on one example as the “most drastic” parental reaction of the team. Instruct the teams to come together and each team winner presents their ‘drastic’ reaction. The group then elects the ‘grand pooh ba’ of parental reactions. Present them with an award certificate (located in back of guide). This exercise promotes feelings of identification (I am not the only one) and helps lighten the serious atmosphere.

Exercise: Have participants write a list of what makes them feel guilty, the thoughts that drive the guilt, and finally a realistic counter thought that reduces the guilt level. Here’s an example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I feel guilty about</th>
<th>The thought that drives the guilt</th>
<th>Realistic counter thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My son’s addiction</td>
<td>Didn’t spend enough time with him when he was young</td>
<td>Although I had to work a lot, my love and devotion was never in doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not seeking treatment for his depression before he turned to drugs</td>
<td>I should have recognized the signs of his depression</td>
<td>Even professionals have a hard time distinguishing between hormones and teen depression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instruction: Cover the basics of local support groups your participants might use (p 31-32). Make sure to give them a list of the contacts you have in your area and explain how to find them on the Internet.

Weekly Assignment: Read Section Three, Chapters 10 through 15. Suggest that each parent find a local support group (or online group if they prefer) and bring the information to the next session to share with others.

Focus On: inappropriate guilt over the cause of their child’s addiction. Accepting blame and guilt not only damages the parent, making them less effectual, but it gives excuses to the addict making it harder for them to effect change in their lives.

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Session Three. Participants should have read Section Three. Begin by having a parent read the introduction (p 36) to the group. Remind them that the York’s (founders of ToughLove) were psychiatrists and found that “soft” love allowed children to spin out of control. Have members describe what they think “soft” love might be.

Group report: Each parent should have contacted at least one community support group and asked the questions from the last session. Each parent takes a turn reporting to the group the answers they received.

Instruction: Explain to the group how to use “I messages” (p 41-42). Using “I messages” in communicating doesn’t accuse the young person of being bad or wrong, and therefore increases the chances that they can hear the parent. The “I messages” focus on how the speaker feels and communicates those feelings. Tell parents how they can use “I messages” with each of the three scenarios on page 42. Explain that good communication is not a magic bullet but a way to get heard. The adolescent has to decide how they react.

Activity: Pass out the “I message” cards (located in back of guide). Have each parent fill out at least two. Collect them and place in a box. Call for each parent to pull one out, read aloud, and have the other parents critique each response. Go around until all are critiqued.

Group Discussion: Direct each participant to think a few minutes about oppositional behavior in their child. Taking turns, have them stand and name two ways their child has been oppositional and their reaction to it. Describe what the power struggle was. Ask if their reaction made it better or worse. Invite feedback from everyone on a tactic that might work using the examples on page 50.

Instruction: Explain operant conditioning—the B. F. Skinner Rat Principle (p 54). Begin a discussion about how parents have let kids walk all over them Ask volunteers to explain why setting a boundary or a limit and then “giving in” only reinforces the lack of respect for family rules. Have each give a personal example.

Affirmation: Go around the group and ask each parent to finish this sentence: “I am a good parent because ________________________________.”

Weekly Assignment: Read Section Four, Chapters 16 through 18. Instruct each parent to fill out the contact form for their child’s friends (p 46). They are to call one of their teen’s friend’s parent and ask them to coordinate the leisure time of the kids with each other.

Focus On:

recognizing that parents have emotional limits and that their children should be expected to support the parents just as the parents support the child. Living in a family is a two way street and letting consequences teach lessons also encourages mutual respect.

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**Session Three.** Participants should have read Section Three. Begin by having a parent read the introduction to the group (p 36). Remind them that the York’s (founders of ToughLove) were psychiatrists and found that “soft” love allowed children to spin out of control. Have members describe their fears about using “tough love” techniques.

**Group report:** Each parent should have contacted at least one community support group. They each take turns reporting to the group what they found and what their contact for the support group is.

**Role playing:** Explain to the group how to role play. Direct them to team up in dyads. Assign one of the examples of enabling to each pair (p 37) and have them play out the situation for the group. Example: 1. One participant will play a parent in denial and the other will be a concerned best friend pointing out why there is a problem. 2. One participant will be the parent trying to keep their child home from a drinking party and the other will play the teen who pleads to go. 3. One participant is an angry parent because their child stole prescriptions from them and the other is the belligerent teen. The point is to show what enabling is, not how to stop it.

**Exercise:** Have participants fill out personal examples on the enabling form (p 38). Follow this with a group discussion about why they use enabling behaviors. Ask each parent to set limits for themselves and explicitly state what they are going to do differently. The group should give feedback on the advantages and disadvantages of possible responses each member shares. (Next week they do the “Let go” worksheet.)

**Exercise:** Make a list of natural and logical consequences (p 43-44) for at least 2 of your child's transgressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transgression</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addict comes home at 2 AM with alcohol on the breath after having borrowed your car for a date</td>
<td>You will not be able to use my car again for _____ weeks (logical consequence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addict crashes their own car while high</td>
<td>You will have to take the bus to work now. (natural consequence)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Affirmation:** Go around the group and ask each parent to finish this sentence: “I am a good parent because I __________________________.”

**Weekly Assignment:** Read Section Four, Chapters 16 through 18. Make list of first responders (p 55) you can use. Call at least one person from your list and explain what a first responder is. Ask if you can use them in the case of an emergency. Grandparents are good choices.

**Focus On:** not rewarding behavior that makes it easy for the young person to continue to use and abuse drugs and the family. Also emphasize allowing members of their support group to assist and support in being a first responder when trouble arises.
**Prevention Track**

**Session Four.** Participants should have read Section Four. Begin by having one participant read the introduction to Section Four (p 58). Ask for a volunteer to define the slogan “Hate the behavior; love the child” and how that may help a parent to see things more clearly.

**Group Report:** Taking turns, each participant reports on the results of calling one of their teen’s friend’s parent. Was the parent cooperative or stand-offish? Will they feel comfortable doing this with most of their son or daughter’s friends? If not, why not and what might the alternatives be?

**Instruction:** Using a pre-prepared list of local prevention services, go over what each organization can do. Allow participants to use a computer to access a few of the prevention online resources (p 62) and print downloads. Emphasize the importance of joining at least one prevention organization as an active participating member. If they claim they do not have time, ask them how much time they will have when their children go to jail, drop out of school, go to the emergency room in the middle of the night, etc.

**Worksheet:** Pass out copies of the Parental Enabling “Letting Go” Worksheet page 3 (in the Handout section of Sober Coaching) and take 15 minutes to fill it out. Once finished, ask parents to share one entry and explain how they are learning to let go. Ask, “How do you feel about letting go? Do you fear that letting go will backfire? When you stop enabling, what are the consequences?”

**Task:** Using a flip chart or chalk board, have parents call out what they think their bottom line would be when they might consider kicking them out? Placing them in a brat camp? Calling the police? Examples: *I will not pay my teen’s fines. I will not hire an attorney for them. I will not tolerate violence.* Write their answers on the board. Instruct participants to cross their arms. Then ask them to reverse the way their arms are crossed. Have them sit for 1 minute. Ask how it feels. It should be awkward and uncomfortable. Discuss how change feels uncomfortable but doesn’t mean it’s not good or doable. Ask how they can change even when it’s uncomfortable.

**Activity:** Pass around the ‘Parent’s are People’ Jar (content located in back of guide). Have each parent pick one out to share with the group. Ask them to express how it may apply to their situation. Is it comfortable or uncomfortable to admit reality and claim rights?

**Weekly Assignment:** Read only Chapters 21 and 25. Direct parents to get on the Internet and begin doing searches regarding the solutions to the problems they see with their child. Be very clear that they are to do this search BEFORE they do their reading assignment. Have them bring a list of what they searched for.

**Focus On:**

using the prevention resources on the Internet and in the community. Most parents say they will use them and simply don’t. Explain that by the time parents know they need this, it is too late. Don’t let your parents fall into this trap—have them join at least one prevention group.

**Notes:**

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Session Four. Participants should have read Section Four. Begin by having one participant read the introduction to Section Four (p 58). Ask a volunteer to define the slogan “Hate the disease; love the child” and how that may help a parent to be more effective in dealing with addiction.

Group Report: Taking turns, each participant reports on the results of finding first responders. If they had trouble explaining what a first responder was, they are not clear about that point themselves. Start a discussion to ensure that each parent gets a clear picture of what a first responder does and how to use them.

Instruction: Using a prepared list of local addiction services, go over what each organization does best. Allow participants to use a computer to access a few of the online resources (p 62) and print downloads. Emphasize the importance of educating themselves about state law relating to underage drinking and parental responsibility. Look up Medscape to access prescription drug information. Using the resources on the Internet will provide fast information and 24/7 support. If they don’t have a computer at home make an assignment to go to their local library and familiarize themselves with using public access to the Internet.

Worksheet: Pass out copies of the Parental Enabling “Letting Go” Worksheet page 3 (in the Handout section of Sober Coaching) and take 15 minutes to fill it out. Once finished, each parent shares one entry and explains how they are learning to let go. Ask, “How do you feel about letting go? Do you fear that letting go will backfire? When you stop enabling, what are the consequences?”

Activity: Pass around the Slogan’s Jar (content located in back of guide) and have each parent pick one slogan to share with the group. Have them express how it may apply to their situation.

Exercise: Ask everyone what the worst case scenario would be for their addicted child. Once someone says “death,” pass out blank sheets of paper. Have them draw a line down the middle. In the first column, ask them to write who or what they would blame if their child died of an overdose after they asked them to leave home following the “enforcing boundaries or bottom line” philosophy of tough love. In column 2, ask them to write who or what they would blame if the child overdosed in his or her bedroom. Discuss the ramifications.

Optional Instruction: Go over the Intervention guidelines if it is appropriate for this group.

Weekly Assignment: Read Section Five, Chapters 19 through 21. Have group members make one outside community meeting this week. They can team up and attend the meetings together if they like.

Focus On:
having them let go of the illusion that they are in control and can “fix” addiction. Hitting bottom means they finally understand. Using their new skills and joining a support group can help them realize that sometimes loving their addict means letting them go.

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Discussion: Continue with the discussion on why parents look at the problem when they want the solution. What search phrases did they use before reading their assignment? Was it solution oriented or problem oriented? Do they think their tools for finding the solution to problems will improve if they change their perspective? Why?

Group Affirmation: Pass out paper. Ask for a volunteer to read the pledge aloud for a parent concerned about drug abuse (86). Instruct the volunteer to read every pledge aloud and wait for at least 30 seconds while each parent processes the information. On their paper, they must rate their ability to follow that pledge using a scale of one to five. Five is the most likely to follow the pledge and one the least. Each member takes the pledge they are least likely to be able to follow and fashions an affirmation they can say to help reinforce their ability to stick to it. Have members help each other write their affirmations. Take suggestions to write on the flip chart or chalk board on where or how to use the affirmations (examples: say it on your way to work, write it on your mirror with soap, put up a screen save on your computer.)

Activity: Create a line from 10 to 12 feet (with tape) on the floor. Place a sign on each end, “Said to myself often” and “Never said to myself.” Read these questions (one for each round) 1. Why isn’t my child more like___(Fill in the blank). 2. Why can’t I reach my child? 3. Why me? Participants are invited to position themselves closer to the end that best describes how often they have used that question. The facilitator then “interviews” people along the line, asking them why they are standing where they are. End each interview asking them to rephrase the question with a “What can I…” or How do I…” solution oriented question.

Pledge: Pass out the pledges (located in the back of this guide). Ask each participant to turn to the person on their right. They take the pledge with each other, reading them out loud and then signing the certificate. They each sign as the witness for their team member. The pledge is to be put somewhere important. (example: framed and hung in the office, slipped into the pages of the family holy book, folded and tucked into a wallet).

Weekly Assignment: Read Section Six, Chapters 22 through 24. Direct parents to go home and ask their young person 3 questions: What do you most value about me? What do you most admire about me? What do you wish I would do more? Write down the answers. Make no judgment and do not contradict their replies.

Focus On:
follow through. Learning new ways to relate to our children and letting them go is easy. What is hard is to break old patterns and follow through. Emphasize learning to become solution oriented by asking the right questions and following through with what they believe.
Session Five. Participants should have read Section Five. Begin by having one participant read the introduction to Section Five (p 74). Get everyone's best guess as to how their child will (or is) responding to treatment and why or why not they think this is a good thing.

Group Report: Ask for volunteers to share their impression of the community support group they attended last week. If any of them failed to make the meeting, begin a discussion on priorities. Give an analogy as if their child had cancer. If there was a community support group for parents of cancer victims and their physician said they needed to attend, on a scale of one to ten, how would they rate that “prescription” as a priority. Explain that if they could not make a physical meeting, an email support group from Families Anonymous would qualify.

Pop Quiz: Instruct parents to list everything they can do to contribute to a recovery environment at home. Then have them list everything they do to make it harder. They receive one point for each item listed on page 81. If they come up with additional items, they receive another point but if they miss items a point is deducted. Have some small gift for the winning parent(s). Example: logo coffee cups, support medallion, recovery wrist band.

Activity: Anatomy of Treatment. Separate participants into groups of 4 or 5. Present each group with the picture “Anatomy of Treatment.” Allow them to examine it for 3 minutes and write down as many treatment issues and recovery concerns they can identify. Instruct the group to discuss the topics, fears, and misconceptions about treatment facilities. Some of the topics depicted are: Fear of sexual predators, professional’s ineffectiveness, bad peer influences, ‘way-out’ spiritual views, anger toward parents, etc. If the mentioned points do not emerge, the leader may want to highlight them.

Instruction: Go over the signs of relapse for participants. Taking turns, have parents read each relapse sign (p 94) and see if they can relate these to their son or daughter. Using the flip board or chalk board, have the group brainstorm choices they can make for dealing with these signs of relapse. Be sure they mention using first responders, grandparents, 12-Step support, and consequences.

Pledge: Pass out the pledges (located in the back of this guide). Ask each participant to turn to the person on their right. They take the pledges with each other, reading them out loud and then signing the pledge. They each sign as the witness to the pledge. The pledge is to be put somewhere important. (example: framed and hung in the office, slipped into the pages of the family holy book, folded and tucked into a wallet).

Weekly Assignment: Read Section Six, Chapters 22 through 24. Make a list of the ‘elephants’ in the living room that no one talks about. Let them know that they will not be required to reveal them.

Focus On:
the inability to predict how treatment will turn out. Treatment success rates are comparable to different forms of cancer. Even tough rates are low, you would never consider not treating a cancer victim. It is the same with alcoholism and addiction.
Group Report: Taking turns, each participant will report on the results of asking the question from last week’s assignments. Ask parents to describe how the answers felt. Did they get any insight into how the child sees them or what they want from their parent? Were the answers what they expected?

Instruction: Describe a healthy family meeting. Family meetings should be regularly scheduled and cover family business, family problems and solutions, and implement policies such as the “Family Drug Policy” (p 102). Members can take the time to discuss the week’s schedule: Who needs to be where and when? Who is taking the car? We also discuss family policies: Could we change the day I clean my room? I don’t agree with the 10-minute phone rule. Could we discuss it? Information about family meetings or family night can be gleaned from the Mormons who recommend the practice. (Check Wikipedia or Google it). Explain that if the family has already practiced problem-solving skills together, future difficulties may be easier to handle.

Role Playing. Family Drug Policy: Direct participants to fill in the Family Drug Policy (p 102) and adjust the statements to suit their family. Break into groups of 3 or 4 and role play. (ie the “parent” presents their drug policy and the others play their children making objections or comments. They must accept feedback and comments as they would be expected to in a family meeting. Take turns with each member presenting the policy (about 5 minutes each). Follow with the entire group reporting any difficulties and how they handled it.

Complete the Sentence: Ask for a volunteer to read aloud the last paragraph from page 101 and the first paragraph from page 102. Taking turns, instruct group members to complete this sentence: “With zero tolerance, there are certain substances I am willing to tolerate my kids experimenting with, they are __________________________. Discuss the more extreme answers.

Final Assignment: Tomorrow, Next Week, Next Month, Next Time. Pass out the cards you have made from the form located in the back of this guide (p 20). Have each participant fill out as many as they can. Divide them into groups of 3 to 5 and have them “process” their answers. Participants must be able to think of new behaviors they have learned and how they will continue to practice what they have learned. The members will process with each other for closure. Be sure to mention resistance to change and support from community groups.

Focus On:
healthy family functioning and what that entails. Does this mean dropping everything for the children and nurturing the kids to the exclusion of self? Or does this mean providing self-nourishment so that the parent can give from a healthy perspective?

Notes:
______________________________________
______________________________________
______________________________________
______________________________________
______________________________________
Session Six. Participants should have read Section Six. Begin by having one participant read the introduction to Section Six (p 96). Ask everyone to share how they feel about “living for their children” and what message they believe society gives them.

Group Report: Back to Back. Ask participants to find a partner (not a spouse) and sit back-to-back in their chairs. Direct them to take the least threatening ‘elephant’ in their living room and describe it. If they are not comfortable talking about their family elephant then they simply listen to their partner. The partner may respond non-verbally, but not verbally. Allow about five minutes for each partner. At the end of the activity ask them to turn and face each other and discuss how they felt about just listening for five minutes.

Instruction: Describe a healthy family meeting. Family meetings should be regularly scheduled and cover family business, family problems and solutions, and implement policies such as the “Family Drug Policy” (p 102). Members can take the time to discuss the week’s schedule: Who needs to be where and when? Who is taking the car? We also discuss family policies: Could we change the day I clean my room? I don't agree with the 10-minute phone rule. Could we discuss it? Information about family meetings or family night can be gleaned from the Mormons who recommend the practice. (Check Wikipedia or Google it). Explain that if their family has already practiced problem-solving skills together, future difficulties will be easier to handle.

Role Playing. Family Drug Policy: Direct participants to fill in the Family Drug Policy (p 102) and adjust the statements to suit their family. Break into groups of 3 or 4 and role play. (ie the “parent” presents their drug policy and the others play their children making objections or comments. They must accept feedback and comments as they would be expected to in a family meeting. Take turns with each member presenting the policy (about 5 minutes each). Follow with the entire group reporting any difficulties and how they handled it.

Affirmation: Go around the group and have each parent speak out loud and fill in this sentence: I am a good sober coach for my son or daughter because I _______________________.

Final Assignment: Tomorrow, Next Week, Next Month, Next Time. Pass out the cards you have made from the form located in the back of the guide (p 20). Have each participant fill out as many as they can. Divide them into groups of 3 to 5 and have them “process” their answers. Participants must be able to think of new behaviors they have learned and how they will continue to practice what they have learned. The members will process with each other for closure. Be sure to mention resistance to change and support from community groups.

Focus On:

healthy family functioning and not making the whole family dance around the elephant in the living room, the addict. Focusing only on the addict deprives the other children and the marriage, causing imbalance. When family welfare come first, it will last.

Notes:

______________________________________
______________________________________
______________________________________
______________________________________
______________________________________
The

______________________________________
(name of parental support group)

Here by names

______________________________________
(name of duly elected winner)

Grand Pooh Ba of Drastic Parental Reactions

Signature of Parent                   Date
______________________________________

Group Leader                          Date
______________________________________

The

______________________________________
(name of parental support group)

Here by names

______________________________________
(name of duly elected winner)

Grand Pooh Ba of Drastic Parental Reactions

Signature of Parent                   Date
______________________________________

Group Leader                          Date
______________________________________
**Session THREE**

**“I MESSAGE” FORMULA CARDS FOR SESSION THREE: PREVENTION (P 5)**

"I Message"

"I feel ___________ when you

____________________________________

because it seems like __________

____________________________________

I want you to/or I want to ______

____________________________________

"I Message"

"I feel ___________ when you

____________________________________

because it seems like __________

____________________________________

I want you to/or I want to ______

____________________________________

"I Message"

"I feel ___________ when you

____________________________________

because it seems like __________

____________________________________

I want you to/or I want to ______

____________________________________

"I Message"

"I feel ___________ when you

____________________________________

because it seems like __________

____________________________________

I want you to/or I want to ______

____________________________________
Parent’s are People (Prevention Track-p 7)

Instructions for use in Session Four: Copy this page and cut out each statement. Put them in a jar and pass out for the “Parent’s are People” activity.

Even though I am a parent I am growing and changing.

Even though I am a parent, I have needs that are uniquely mine and have nothing to do with my kids.

Sometimes I am patient and sometimes I am not.

The “shoulds” and “should nots” of family life drive me crazy. Do my kids feel that way?

When I blame, problems do not get solved and conflicts get worse.

I am pretty good at seeing someone else's faults.

Who I am is very much a part of our culture. I barely notice where my thoughts and feelings come from.

Even though I don’t always feel comfortable in my role as parent, I find myself defending my kids and myself.

I had kids for a lot of reasons but being a guilty parent was not one of them.

I am not super parent.

I can’t fix my child. I want to, but in my heart I know I can only do what is best for me.

I can’t be the perfect spouse, friend, colleague, neighbor, child, or employee. What makes me think I can be a perfect parent?

When I do the best I can, that good enough. When I don’t do the best I can, that’s good enough.

I feel accused by the experts no matter what I do.
Letting Go Slogans (Coaching Track p 8)

Instructions for use in Session Four: Copy this page and cut out each statement. Put them in a jar and pass out for the “Parent’s are People” activity.

If you don't take care of yourself, why should anyone else?

Today, take care of yourself. Tomorrow you can worry about them.

I didn’t cause it; I can’t control it; I can’t cure it.

Change is a process, not an event.

Change only happens when the pain of holding on is greater than the fear of letting go.

Don’t waste time thinking about what thinking can’t change.

Controlling life isn’t the answer, it’s the problem.

I won’t let my overdoing be my undoing.

It’s not: Don’t take it out on your kids, it’s: Don’t take it in.

I matter.

I must know my no’s.

Letting go is not caring for, but caring about.

Denying parent’s chorus: It’s not that bad, yet.

Detachment is neither kind nor unkind.

Don’t romance the “What if…”
AS A PARENT CONCERNED ABOUT PREVENTION I PLEDGE:

▪ not to do for my child what they can do for themselves
▪ not to write excuse notes for school or work that are not truthful
▪ not to excuse away inexcusable behavior
▪ not to bail him or her out of self-made jams
▪ not to blame friends, school, or the “system” for the failures and problems of my child
▪ to allow my child to experience natural consequences for their behavior
▪ to provide support and information, without violating my own rights or the rest of the family
▪ to use “I” messages when talking about how they treat me and the family
▪ to offer choices to my son or daughter rather than demand compliance

____________________________________  _____________
Signature of Parent                        Date

____________________________________  _____________
Witness                                  Date

Session Five Pledge (Prevention Track—p 9)
Session Five Pledge (Coaching Track—p 10)

AS A SOBER COACH I PLEDGE:

- to join a support group for the family and friends of the chemical dependent
- to attend all the parent education groups provided by the treatment center or clinic that my child goes to and familiarize myself with self-help groups available
- to recognize that their sponsor (from their self-help group) works with them on their personal program of recovery and that I work to encourage a lifestyle in the home and family that promotes recovery
- not to place myself in competition with their sponsor
- to make every effort to help my child get to their own support group (without attending meetings with them unless invited)
- not to restrict meetings or ground my child from sober-planned activities as a punishment
- not to play the game of “you are too young to be a real alcoholic” because……
- not to accept unacceptable behavior or excuse inexcusable behavior
- to set boundaries about what is allowable while living in our home and what is not
- to make one of those boundaries the restriction of associating with a known drugging and drinking crowd
- to always recognize that my child’s recovery activities have the highest priority, for without recovery, there is nothing else.

Signature of Parent  Date  Witness  Date
**TOMORROW** I will handle ______________

______________________________

(name problem or issue in your family or with your child)

much better because in this course I learned to______________________________

______________________________

and to keep up my good work I will continue to

______________________________

______________________________

and ________________________________

______________________________

**NEXT WEEK** I will handle ______________

______________________________

(name problem or issue in your family or with your child)

much better because in this course I learned to______________________________

______________________________

and to keep up my good work I will continue to

______________________________

______________________________

and ________________________________

______________________________

**NEXT MONTH** I will handle ______________

______________________________

(name problem or issue in your family or with your child)

much better because in this course I learned to______________________________

______________________________

and to keep up my good work I will continue to

______________________________

______________________________

and ________________________________

______________________________

**NEXT TIME** I will handle ______________

______________________________

(name problem or issue in your family or with your child)

much better because in this course I learned to______________________________

______________________________

and to keep up my good work I will continue to

______________________________

______________________________

and ________________________________

______________________________