



CREATE A FAMILY GROUP CONTRACT

Time taken: Around 30 minutes

Materials needed: A great big piece of paper or dry erase board and writing utensils

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills practiced: respectful communication, group awareness, and active listening

Steps:

- **Bring everyone together in a device-free space**
- **Introduce the activity**
 - » Define a group contract as a tool, created in part by each member of the community, that gives each person a voice, and helps establish norms for effective communication
- **Create your contract using The Tree Model**
 - » Draw a large tree with roots, a trunk, and branches with leaves
 - » Things written among the branches represent positive outcomes (games, laughter, smiles, singing and dancing)
 - » Things written among the roots are qualities that are essential for creating the positive outcomes (empathy, 'I statements,' self-responsibility)
- **Or, Create your own model**
 - » Help your kids pick something fun that represents your family to create a unique model
- **Spend some time brainstorming**
 - » No suggestions are rejected. Encourage each person present to add to the contract
 - » Designate roles like scribe, moderator, and snack provider
 - » As facilitator it is important to model positive communication
- **Have each person sign the contract and display it in a prominent place**
 - » This is a legally (not really!) binding contract
 - » Promote accountability by displaying it in a common space and referring to it during disputes
 - » In the tree model, have everyone sign the trunk. Each signature is a promise that delivers the much needed "nutrients" from the root area to the leaves and branches.
- **Discussion Questions**
 - » How did it feel to add something you cared about to the group contract?
 - » What are some things you can do if you feel someone (including yourself) is not honoring the contract?
 - » Why is it important to create and sign a group contract?
 - » How does it feel to work together to create this document?

The group contract is an essential part of a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum. Make your contract unique to your family, and share the results with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) using @cfimoab and #coyotescorner, or by email education@cfimoab.org

Happy distancing,

Canyonlands Field Institute

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