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 writing 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,
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