

Family Workshop Activity Model:

3-MINUTE EVENT INTRO

Draft a brief intro explaining **what** grownups and kids will learn at the event, why this information is important, and how they'll learn about it.

Goals

- Set clear expectations for the event
- Get everyone excited to learn and participate

Activity

Determine the what, why, and how for your event. Then, fill in the blanks in the prompt below to craft your intro.

What will attendees learn? _____

Why are these skills important? _____

How will I teach these skills in a fun way? _____

Thank you everyone for being here! Today, we're going to explore _____[Describe the What]_____. Because when you do this, you _____[List the Why's]_____. This benefits you by _____[Describe the Why]_____, and it helps your child _____[Describe the Why]_____. We're going to learn and practice these skills by _____[Describe the How]_____. Let's get started!

Example

Hello families! Today we're going to explore five fun ways to turn everyday at-home routines into learning moments. When you support your child's learning at home, you enforce key skills they are learning in school, which helps them do even better in the classroom. It helps their language, math, and social skills grow, and it grows your relationship with them. We know how hard it is to take on the role of at-home educator. You're doing an amazing job and this workshop is all about making that job easier. Today in our workshop I'm going to introduce you to some learning games and show you how to transform everyday objects like a spoon and box into super fun learning tools.

Family Workshop Activity Model:

ICEBREAKERS

Plan an activity or discussion for the beginning of the event that warms up the audience and welcomes them to the workshop.

Goals

- Introduce grownups to you and each other
- Get grownups and kids comfortable talking to each other and working together

Ideas

Icebreakers can take many forms. They can be a quick game or activity, or even a simple discussion question. Below are some ideas you can use or build on to break the ice at your next workshop.

Questions:

- What was your favorite subject in school when you were a kid?
- If you could bring one thing to show and tell, what would it be and why?
- Who was your favorite teacher in school? Why?
- What is your favorite school memory?
- What did you want to be when you grew up? What's your job now?
- If you could be any character from a book, who would it be?
- What was your favorite thing to do during recess?
- What was your favorite school lunch?
- What skills did you learn in school that you use every day?
- What is one thing about your school experience that differs from your child's?

Activities/Games:

- This or That?
Ask a series of "Would you rather?" questions. Based on their answers, grownups and kids group up or move to a specific area of the room.
- Last One Standing
Have everyone stand, and then ask a series of yes or no questions. Grownups and kids should sit down depending on their answers. The last person standing "wins"!
- Portraits
Create pairings and give each person 5 minutes to draw a portrait of their partner, then present the portraits to the group.
- Whose Handwriting?
Have everyone write a sentence on a piece of paper. Then all together or in small groups try to guess whose handwriting is whose.
- Bingo
Create a bingo card with traits grownups and kids should look for or questions to ask their peers. Examples: "Likes to read" or "Favorite subject is math."

Example

In this workshop today, you will have the chance to participate in many different ways. But don't worry—I promise to never put anyone on the spot! You can join in whatever way you are comfortable with.

Let's warm up with a little question. If your family could ride an animal all around the world, what animal would you choose and why? Take a moment to discuss with your families, and then we will share.

Family Workshop Activity Model:

IF YOU CAN HEAR ME

This activity requires zero materials to engage and interact with grownups and kids alike.

Goals

- Gain the focus and attention of grownups and kids
- Practice following direction
- Encourage interaction

Activity

- Ask grownups and kids to follow a series of actions, modeling those actions for them as you go. These might include:
 - If you can hear me, raise your hand. (*Raise your hand.*)
 - If you can hear me, touch your nose. (*Place a finger on your nose.*)
 - If you can hear me, make a funny face. (*Stick out your tongue.*)

Example

Okay, families, we will start with a game called "If You Can Hear Me"! Parents and caregivers, this is a game that we play every morning because it helps kids focus, listen, and pay attention, which, as you know, is something they really have to do when they're in school. It also gets kids ready to follow directions. This is a great game you can play at home when you want kids to settle down and focus.

Ok, you can sit for this game or you can stand up.

Get your listening ears on if you can hear me.

Put your finger on your forehead if you can hear me.

Wiggle all 10 fingers if you can hear me.

Pretend to fall asleep if you can hear me.

Now wake up! Great job!

Family Workshop Activity Model:

THE MAGIC SPOON

Show families how everyday objects can be turned into at-home learning tools.

Goals

- Model and provide supported practice for at-home learning
- Build math and literacy skills
- Encourage interaction
- Form connections

Materials

- Spoon

Activity

This activity highlights that families have everything they need to facilitate at-home learning. It requires a spoon, but other objects could be used, such as a pencil, shoe, towel, etc.

Ask grownups to pick up the spoon and then model and practice different ways they can use it to support various skills. Always explain the skills you're building with the activity and why children need those skills to be successful. At the end of the activity, ask parents to come up with several new ideas for using the spoon to promote different skills.

Math Skills

- Have kids count rotations as you stir.
- Use the spoon to measure objects.
- Use the spoon to tap out sound patterns.

Literacy Skills

- Pass the spoon back and forth between the grown-up and the child, sharing rhyming words with each pass.
- Write the letter S on the spoon. Have kids identify the letter and sound, and then send them on a hunt for more things that start with the letter S.
- Create spoon puppets and perform a puppet show to build language skills.

Example

What if I told you that you already have everything it takes to support learning at home? It does not take fancy tools and resources, just the people, places, and things around you. Let me show you.

I want everyone to grab that spoon that's next to you. I am going to show you some ways that you can transform this simple spoon into an awesome learning tool. Let's start with ways to use a spoon to build math skills. The first thing you can do, and you can do this anytime you cook, is count as you stir. We are working a lot on counting this year in the classroom. Counting as you stir helps kids understand that numbers represent things. Let's try it now. Count by ones, twos, fives, or tens.

You can also use that spoon to measure. Let's measure our arms right now. How many spoons long is your arm? Another thing you can do with a spoon that builds math skills is tapping or drumming out a pattern. Patterns are key to math and we will work on them all year.

Let's say we wanted to build literacy skills. You could pass that spoon back and forth as you say words that rhyme with spoon. Or, you could put a letter on that spoon to build letter awareness. Then, challenge your child to travel all around the house, finding things that start with that letter. This is a great way to build sound awareness and awareness of the alphabet.

You could also turn that spoon into a puppet. Puppets seem like pure fun, but playing with puppets helps kids build language skills and get more comfortable expressing themselves.

Now it's your turn. You come up with another game you can play with a spoon.

Family Workshop Activity Model:

CALM DOWN CUBE

Build a Calm Down Cube to help children work through frustrations at home or school.

Goals

- Build social and emotional learning skills like self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills
- Encourage interaction
- Form connections

Materials

- Box
- Marker

Activity

Make a Calm Down Cube that will help kids work through frustration, calm down when overwhelmed, and focus when distracted.

Brainstorm strategies that help kids calm down and focus when they are dealing with tough emotions. Write one strategy on each side of the box for a total of six strategies.

Examples

- Mountain climber breathes
- Listening to music
- Wiggle breaks
- Humming
- Playing with a fidget
- Counting to 10

When a child is feeling frustrated, throw or roll the Calm Down cube on the floor and do whatever strategy it lands on. Grownups are encouraged to join in and complete the strategy alongside their child.