

## In This Session

### Learning Objectives

- ▶ Discover the importance of routines and how to set them up for success.
- ▶ Introduction to the Family Routine Guide.
- ▶ Identify strategies for making transitions successful.
- ▶ Plan for when routines go well.

### Agenda

1. Welcome (2 min)
2. Reflect on Apply It and Try It (10 min)
  - a. Activity 1: Affirmations (4 min)
3. Components of a Successful Routine (20 min)
  - a. Activity 2: Family Routine (5 min)
4. Introduction to the Family Routine Guide (7 min)
5. Prevention Strategies (5 min)
  - a. Visual Supports (12 min)
  - b. Choice (5 min)
  - c. Embed Preference (5 min)
6. Tips for Transitions (25 min)
7. When Routines Go Well (2 min)
  - a. Activity 3: Apply It and Try It (10 min)
8. Closing (2 min)

### Family Materials

- ▶ Positive Solutions Family Handbook
- ▶ Resources
  1. Helping Children Transition Between Activities
  2. Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions
  3. Scripted Stories
  4. Family Routine Guide

### Facilitator Materials

- ▶ Ground Rules from Session 1
- ▶ Chart Paper, Markers, Tape
- ▶ Power Point
- ▶ Positive Solutions Family Handbook
- ▶ Family Routine Guide
- ▶ Sample Scripted Stories
- ▶ Sample Visual Schedule

### Icon Key



Chart Paper



Role Play



Group Activity



Discussion



Family Handbook



Apply It and Try It

# Welcome

Post “Ground Rules” developed in the first session.



## Show Slide 1: Session 4: Positive Solutions for Families – The Power of Routines

Welcome back to *Positive Solutions for Families*. This is our fourth session together – The Power of Routines.



## Show Slide 2: What's Happening Today?

We have some great new resources to share with you today as we focus on routines. We will focus on learning how to set up a routine for success and how to structure routines and transitions to prevent challenging behavior. As we go through the material today, you will learn new strategies to use with your child.

# Reflect on Apply It and Try It



## Show Slide 3: Apply It and Try It Review

Before we begin, let's talk about your Apply It and Try it activities. Last time we were together, you left with two activities to try at home. One was to start observing your child when there was challenging behavior to see if there were patterns that gave you clues about the “why” or function of your child's behavior. Our second activity was to develop rules for home. Let's start with the observing behavior activity. Does anyone want to share? What did you learn by observing your child?

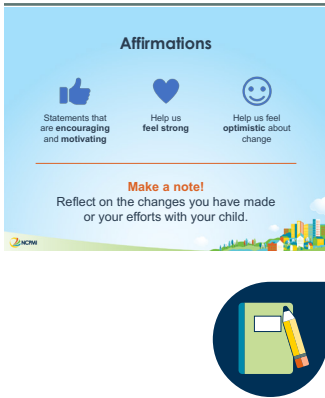
*Encourage participants to share and respond to any questions. Remember to encourage participants to make connections with each other and invite them to respond to one another. After a participant responds, you might say something like, “Would anyone like to respond to \_\_\_\_\_?” or “Did anyone have a similar experience they want to share?”*

*Before shifting to a debrief about rules, you might say, “So, we are learning a lot about children's behavior. Today, we will begin to think about how we can respond to behavior when it occurs. A few of you have pointed out that challenging behavior is occurring in certain activities or routines. We are going to talk about routines in this session and how we might structure them to prevent challenging behavior. I want you to continue to do these observations on your child's behavior. These observations will be useful as we develop intervention strategies.”*

Did you try establishing rules for your child? Does anyone want to share what they did and how it went?

*Summarize after sharing. You might say, “A few of you tried establishing rules and had some success. Your children were interested in the rules. Establishing expectations and helping children understand them will be something that we will continue to talk about.”*

# Activity 1



## Show Slide 4: Affirmations

As we have done before, take a moment and think about the hard work and effort you are putting in at home. Turn to Session 4, **Activity 1** in your Family Handbook. You can use this space to write down an affirmation about what you accomplished last week or use this time to think of those affirmations. Remember, there is brain science about how using affirmations are helpful in helping you feel strong and optimistic about making changes.

*Allow 2 minutes for families to write a quick response. If there is time, you could invite a few participants to share what they wrote down as their affirmation.*

# Successful Routines



## Show Slide 5: Routines

What are they and why are they important? Today we are going to focus on the development of routines and helping children follow daily routines.

Routines are predictable and naturally occurring activities in a child's day. Routines include caregiving, daily tasks, meals, play, community, and social activities.

Can you name some of the daily routines that you and your family engage in? Remember, routines are repeated, predictable events. *Call on a few participants to share routines they engage in.*



## Show Slide 6: Possible Family Routines

You shared lots of different family routines. Here is a list of possible routines that your family might have. All families might have different routines and they will look different from one family to the next.

*(List from the slide: getting dressed/undressed, brushing teeth/hair, mealtime, playing outside, clean-up, going on an outing, going to school, after school activities, riding in the car, going to the park, going shopping, going to a restaurant, going to the doctor/dentist, taking medication, going to the restroom (diaper/toileting), taking a bath/shower, getting ready for bed, taking a nap/rest)*

Let's think about what makes a routine work or not work. I will give you a few moments to think through these questions and then I will ask a few of you to share your examples.

1. What is a routine that works well for your child?
2. What is a routine that feels good?
3. What is it about that routine that makes it successful?

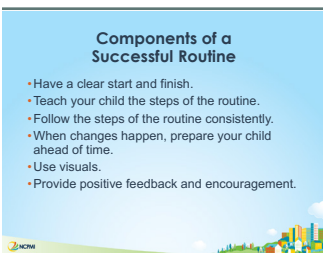


Call on a few participants to share the answers to these questions. Briefly summarize the discussion from 2-3 participants before moving onto the next set of questions.

1. What is a routine that feels difficult for your child?
2. What makes it challenging?

Call on a few participants to share the answers to these questions. Briefly summarize the discussion from 2-3 participants.

As we have discussed some routines are more enjoyable or easier than others. We want to think about ways we can structure routines so that they are easier or go smoothly. These are a few things you can do to make sure every routine is as successful as possible. We will review each of these ideas in detail along with other tips that will help you make the most of your family routines and schedules.



## Show Slide 7: Essential Components of a Successful Routine

- ▶ Create the routine so there is a clear start and a finish.
- ▶ Teach your child the steps and the expectations of the routine.
- ▶ Establish a predictable routine and follow it consistently.
- ▶ When changes are necessary, prepare your child ahead of time.
- ▶ If needed, visual cues can be helpful.
- ▶ Offer positive feedback and encouragement for successes.



## Show Slide 8: Breaking Down the Steps of a Routine

Here is an example of a “getting ready for bed” routine that a family created. Remember each family is different and there might be some steps that another family will not have in their routine. The point of this activity is to break routines down into simple steps that your child can follow. This is a long list of steps, but the more we break down the steps of a routine for children, the easier it is to teach them the steps. Even the steps within the routine might need broken down a bit more, like taking a bath.

Routine	Steps within Routine
Getting Ready for Bed	Go to the toilet
	Take a bath
	Get pajamas on
	Brush your hair
	Brush your teeth
	Get into bed
	Read 2 stories
	Snuggle and say goodnight

## Activity 2: Creating a Family Routine



You are now going to break down the steps of one of your child's routines in your Family Handbook. Let's look in your Family Handbook at **Activity 2**. Pick a routine *that is hard* for your child. Feel free to ask those around you for ideas or help. We are all here to help one another. We will use this routine as part of your Apply It and Try It activity later in the session. For now, write the routine at the top of the page and in the spaces below write down steps. Write down the specific steps and expectations of the routine/transition from start to finish (what you want your child to do).

*Give participants time to write down the steps of their routine in the family workbook.*

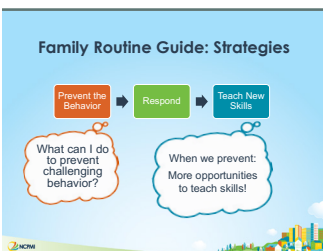
What are some things you specifically do during your routines to help your child follow the steps and your expectations?

*Be sure that you allow enough time for families to share their strategies. This will allow you to know what families are currently using. We recommend that you still review all the prevention strategies to be sure that all families receive the information however you may want to ask the families who mentioned a strategy to share what they have done when you discuss that strategy.*

*Pass out or instruct participants to take out the Family Routine Guide. Spend 5 minutes orienting participants to the guide.*

## Introduction to the Family Routine Guide

Many of you just shared some great ideas for strategies to help routines be successful. To help your family plan effective routines at home, we want to introduce you to a family resource called the *Family Routine Guide*. We think it is important that you get this guide now, so that as we go through the material for today's session, you can start using the guide to plan for routines with your child. We will use the Family Routine Guide again in our last session. You might want to use it as you begin to plan how you will use the strategies that you are learning with your child. The guide is set up by family routines. At the beginning of the guide you will find a table of contents. You can browse this to see that many routines are covered, including bedtime, mealtime, play, attending community events, taking medication, and other common routines.



### Show Slide 9: Family Routine Guide Strategies

Each routine also identifies function-why children are engaging in challenging behavior-and provides guidance on strategies to use in 3 sections:

1. Prevent the Behavior
2. Respond
3. Teach New Skills

## Prevention Strategies

Today, we really want to focus on that first idea, *what can I do to prevent challenging behavior?* Many of the ideas we will discuss in this session are prevention strategies that can be used in your routines. You will also see them listed in the Routine Guide. I am going to give you a minute or two to flip through the Routine Guide and then we are going to start right in on those strategies. *(Pause for 1-2 minutes)*.

When we think about how to reduce challenging behavior, we think about using prevention strategies to reduce the likelihood that the child will engage in challenging behavior, new skills we will teach to replace challenging behavior, and new responses to behavior when it occurs. Prevention strategies are very important to addressing young child's challenging behavior. When we prevent the behavior, we have more opportunities to teach the child new skills and how to follow our expectations.

## Visual supports



### Show Slide 10: Visual Supports

Using visuals can be an effective way to help children learn and follow a routine. Visual Supports can be photographs, drawings, objects, written words, or lists. Research has proven that visual supports work well for teaching and communicating with young children. It is even easier for some children to process a visual faster than hearing words. Pairing a visual with words helps children to begin to make those language connections and help them understand what you are asking to do.

It is also common for young children to not follow directions the first time that the instruction is given. This does not necessarily mean that the child is defiant, in fact it is likely that the child is having difficulty understanding the direction or needs more support to follow the direction. A visual is a way to provide that extra support. We are going to cover a few ideas for using visuals when teaching a routine.

When we are not prepared for our day or not prepared for transitions, many challenging behaviors can arise. Think about a time when you may have lost your schedule (electronic or handwritten) and think about how that made you feel. I would feel lost or confused if I lost my ability to use my calendar on my phone. Visual schedules offer children the same type of security they provide adults. Children need to know the daily schedule and the routine, and when a transition is coming. If your child can see the schedule, then you can review the routine together and refer to the steps if they are forgotten.

For example, think about a bedtime routine. A visual sequence can be used for the steps of the routine. The first picture might be changing into pajamas. The next picture may be getting into bed. Then a picture for reading a story, and another for giving a goodnight hug. The final picture might be turning the nightlight on.

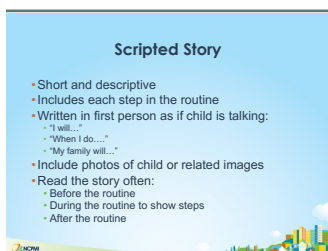


If you look at the materials for today, you will see sample visuals for common routines. This resource is titled, *Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions*. Think of it as your visual tool kit. We want you to have a few visuals so



you can create your own visual schedule for your children. Because each family will have their own activities and routines, there is a template included in this resource with directions on how to make your own visuals. This way you can add steps to routines or customize a routine just for your family. We will be using these visuals to help us plan later in our session.

*Make sure to pass out resources or refer participants to the resources in their binder, folder, material set, etc. Give families time to view the visuals and glance at the template.*



## Show Slide 11: Scripted Story

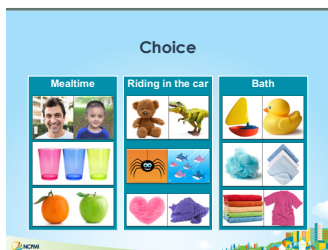
If your child is struggling with the routine and is interested in books or seeing photos of themselves the use of scripted stories might be helpful. A scripted story provides the child with guidance about what to expect and how to behave with a particular activity, setting, or routine. In our last session, we looked at a scripted story for teaching household rules.

These stories or scripts are short and descriptive of the routine that you are trying to teach your child. It includes each step of the routine with a detailed description without using too many words. The story is written in first person language as if the child is speaking, for example, “*I will..., When I do...*”. Include photos of your child or related images to help teach your child the expectations of the routine. Be sure to read the story to your child before the routine. Refer to the steps of the story as the child completes the routine. You can read story after the routine and reinforce or redirect your child in the steps on the routines.



We have several sample scripted stories you can view during today’s session and additional resources on how to develop your own scripted story. You should each have copies of the *Cleaning Up My Toys* Example scripted story and *I Brush My Teeth* Example scripted story. These will be helpful when you want to try to make one at home—we all need reminders and tips sometimes.

## Choice



## Show Slide 12: Choice

Another great way to help routines go smoothly is to offer choices. Offering a choice to your child will increase the likelihood that they will do the activity. For instance, when brushing teeth, you could say, “Do you want to use the mint toothpaste or the strawberry toothpaste?” or during meals “Would you like to use the blue cup or the orange cup?” Choices can allow your child to select an item of their preference and allows the child to have some control over the routine or task. Research has shown that choice making can reduce challenging behaviors if the choices happen during the routine in which the challenging behaviors tend to occur. So if the dinner routine feels hard, try offering more choices at dinner. Or if getting ready for school seems challenging, try offering more choices while your child is getting ready for school. If

you allow your child to make choices about their preferences in a routine, they might be more engaged and cooperative and have less challenging behavior.

Possible choice options (as seen on the slide with photos)

Mealtime:

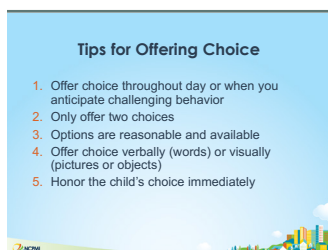
- ▶ Choose to sit next to Daddy or next to brother
- ▶ Choose what cup or plate to use
- ▶ Choose what beverage or food

Riding in the car:

- ▶ Choose a toy to take
- ▶ Choose a song to listen to
- ▶ Choose a blanket or pillow

Bath

- ▶ Choose bath toys
- ▶ Choose a washcloth or sponge
- ▶ Choose a towel or robe



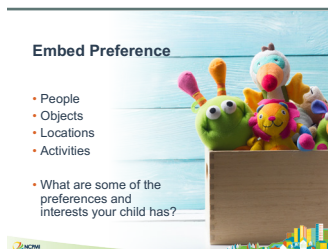
## Show Slide 13: Tips for Offering Choice

Here are important tips when offering choices:

1. You can offer choices throughout the day or when you most anticipate challenging behaviors to occur.
2. Young children should only be offered two choices, more than that makes it difficult for the child to decide.
3. Be sure the choice options are reasonable (child can do either one) and available.
4. Determine how choices will be offered; verbally or visually (pictures or objects).
5. The child's choice should be honored immediately.

The choices we are describing are positive alternatives for the child. We are not discussing the choice of “You do it” or “I will do it for you” that we sometimes say to a child when we become frustrated with their behavior. That is not really a choice.

## Embed Preferences



## Show Slide 14: Embed Preferences into the Routine

Another way to help children learn and follow routines is to use their interests. Incorporate your child's likes and *preferences* into the routine activity to prevent challenging behaviors.

For example: Pietro does not like getting ready for school, but he likes to pretend he is a superhero. In the morning, his mom asks him which superhero he is in the morning



and calls him by the superhero name throughout the morning routine. She has also bought him clothes with his favorite superheroes to make getting dressed easier, which is usually the most challenging part of their morning routine.

Preferences might include: people (e.g., Brother is going to help you put on your pajamas), objects (e.g., lunch is on your Mickey Mouse plate.), locations (e.g., we can read the story in our cozy spot), or activities (you can put stickers in the book while you wait for the doctor).



What are some of the preferences and interests your own children have that you might be able to incorporate into a routine? *Call on a **few** participants to share ideas on how they can use their child's interests. Ideas if families cannot think of ideas: Encouraging your child to pretend to be their favorite animal walking to the car, playing your child's favorite songs while getting ready for school, incorporating your child's color in the routine (e.g., blue toothbrush, blue plates, blue placemat).*



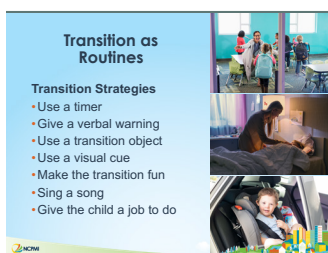
## Show Slide 15: Consistency is Key

While things might change or pop up in our busy schedules with work, school, and family, it is important that we try to keep the day-to-day routines consistent or as close to the same as possible. Being consistent with routines will help your children learn and follow the steps of the routine. The great thing about using a visual schedule, is that we can quickly change one of the schedule pictures to help prepare the children for the change.

*Share a sample visual schedule and demonstrate how to easily switch an event on the schedule.*

If there is a need to change the routine for whatever reason (e.g., multiple family homes, medical reasons, diapers to underwear, crib to bed) it is important that your child is aware and prepared for the change before launching them into a new situation.

## Tips for Transitions



## Show Slide 16: Transitions as Routines

For a lot of children, moving from one activity to another is very hard. We call these transitions. At this point you may imagine that transitions are also a sort of routine. Transitions are sometimes the most difficult time for families with young children.

Transitions (moving from one location to the next, or from one person to another, or from one activity to the next) is something we do many times during the day. However, change can be overwhelming and seem unpredictable for your child, especially when they are not ready to move on to the next place or activity. Children make many transitions each day – for example – from parents to teachers, from home to car, or from play time to the dinner table. When and how often transitions occur are usually decided by an adult and children often act out with challenging behavior when they feel unable to control their routine.



Transitions can involve moving from one place to another, moving from one person to another, or moving from one activity to another.

What are transitions that occur for your child?

*Call on a **few** participants to share their ideas. Briefly summarize the discussion from 2-3 participants. Ideas of other transitions might be from playing toys to eating dinner; reading books to bedtime; painting to washing hands.*

You might have developed some things that help those transitions go more smoothly. Has anyone done anything to help your child complete the transition? Or what strategies have you heard during this session that would help ease the stress of transitions.

*Possible responses might be:*

- ▶ *Use a timer.*
- ▶ *Warning them when one activity is going to end and another is going to begin.*
- ▶ *Offer the child to bring a transition object or toy with them.*
- ▶ *Use a visual schedule or visual cue.*
- ▶ *Make the transition fun (e.g., you need to leave the park... “we can ride on daddy’s shoulders to the car”, or “I have your favorite snack or toy in the car”).*
- ▶ *Sing songs as you transition (e.g., sing a silly song or familiar song)*
- ▶ *Give your child a job to do during the transition (e.g., help with dinner, feed the pet).*

*After participants share their ideas, review the tips on slide 16 before moving on to slide 17.*



To help you remember the tips we are going to talk about today, there is a great family handout called *Helping Children Transition Between Activities*. We hope this resource comes in handy as you try to put these new strategies in place—we all need reminders every now and again.

#### Timers and Warnings



### Show Slide 17: Timers and Warnings

Using a timer can be helpful for both the child and the adult. We can use timers (like an alarm clock) to help us get ready on time or to let us know how many minutes are left when we are doing a task, like cooking or a chore. With children, timers can be used for routines or transitions that are challenging.

First, determine what kind of timer will be used. There are many different types of timers (e.g., egg timers, digital timer, sand timer, cell phone timer, visual time timer). Then inform the child how much time is left for the current activity or time left before the next activity. For example, “5 more minutes of screen time.” Make sure your child can either see the timer or hear the timer. When the timer goes off, they might need a little reminder, such as, “The timer went off. Screen time is all done.” Children also benefit from a verbal warning. Let your child know that a transition is going to occur. For example, “In 5 minutes you will need to stop playing and clean up so we can get ready for dinner.”



## Show Slide 18: Transition Cues

Just like visuals can support routines, visuals can also prepare children for a transition. Let's look back at the resource titled, *Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions* and you will find that some of the visual cue cards we reviewed can be used to help make transitions easier. For example, if your child is playing Legos and it is time for bath, you can show your child the visual for bath time. You could also set up the transition for success and use a timer. For example: "Five more minutes of Legos. Then it is time for bath." Remember to make transitions fun. So, on the way to the bath, you could tell your child, "let's pretend we are invisible and tiptoe all the way to the bathroom." Take a few moments to review the visual supports and see if any of them might be useful for transitions at home. *Give participants a minute to review the visuals.*



## Show Slide 19: First/Then

How many of you have ever used first-then language with your children? Saying things like, "first put on your shoes, then we can go outside" or "first work, then play." Using first/then is the last transition tip we will review today. First/then can be a verbal or visual cue to teach or remind your child that first they need to complete the task (which may be less desirable) before they can engage in a more desirable activity. What are some of those first-then statements you have used with your own children? *Call on a few participants to share ideas or fun ways they can help use their child's interests.*

*Examples families might share:*

- ▶ *First brush teeth, then read books*
- ▶ *First clean up toys, then go play outside*
- ▶ *First put your dishes in the sink, then play with the dog*

Now that we have some ideas about how we can help children with first-then statements, we can think about using the visual cards in your family materials. You can make first/then visuals like the one on the slide to help children see the transition. There are directions in your resources on how to make a first-then visual to use with your child. *Be prepared to show families the first-then template in the resource, **Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions.***

## When Routines Go Well

### When Routines Go Well

- Acknowledge and encourage children for following a routine:
  - Use positive, specific feedback
  - Encourage all attempts during the routine



### Show Slide 20: When Routines Go Well

It is a big deal when your child follows routines, directions, and transitions without refusal or protest. So, celebrate. Your child needs to be acknowledged and encouraged for following a routine. As we discussed in Session 1, it is important to use positive specific feedback. For example: “You cleaned up your toys and are ready to go to the park! Way to go! Let’s go!” or “You took a bath and now it is time to read your favorite book! What a big kid!”

In fact, it is important to encourage all of your child’s attempts during the routine. This will tell them, “My family sees that I am trying. I can do this.” Keep in mind that your child may need a lot of practice and support in learning a new skill or a skill they might feel is challenging. If you discourage or reprimand your child because they are not completing their routine as you would like them to, their attempts to try to engage in the routine may stop or there may be more disruptive behavior.

## Activity 3: Apply It, Try It

Now that we have discussed the power of routines and ways to help your child learn and follow routines, we want to make sure you leave today with a good plan to apply these new ideas. The *Apply It and Try It Activity* will be to map out a family routine and a plan to make it powerful.



### Apply It and Try It

Powerful Routine: *Handbook Activity 2 and 3*

1. Go back to the routine you selected the listed steps to the routine
2. List visual you want to use
3. Using the *Family Routine Guide*, select 3 strategies to teach the routine

Activity Card 3



### Show Slide 21: Apply It, Try It

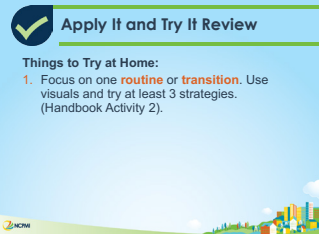
We are going to go back into the Family Handbook. Remember, you selected a routine and listed the steps of the routine. Now let’s put these new strategies to good use. Let’s turn back to **Activity 2** where you already listed the steps of the routine you want to help your child learn.

One thing you might plan for is the use of visuals. Think about the visuals that would be helpful for your child. Review the visual cues in your family materials to see if that routine card is available. Remember, you can use these as a start, but not all steps of the routines will be available. In the space provided, write down the visuals you want to use.

*Allow time for families to write down the visuals they want to use when teaching their child a routine.*

Next you can use the Family Routine Guide to help you think of ways to teach your child the routine, different strategies to try, and ways to respond if your child does not follow the routine or transition. I want you to select at least three strategies to try this week. For example, if the routine is getting dressed, you might select the strategies of providing choice, visuals for first/then, and using a timer. You will write down these three strategies on **Activity 3** in your Family Handbook (*Give participants 10 minutes to write down strategies*).

# Closing



## Slide 22: Apply It and Try It Review

You just worked on the Apply It and Try It activity that you will be focusing on until we have our next session. Do your best to focus on the routine or transition and remember, provide lots of encouragement to yourself and your child. Be prepared to share your experiences with the group when we return. Thank you again for your continued participation and all the great discussions. I hope that as we work together in the *Positive Solutions for Families* sessions, you will continue to gain useful information and practical tools. Next time we will discuss ideas for helping your children learn all about emotions, ways to calm down, and skills for problem solving.