

SESSION

1

Building a strong family

NAME:



Introductions and ground rules

Welcome! The aim of the group is to meet together for six sessions to talk about our challenges, encouragements and needs as parents, and to share our experiences with each other.

Parenting is HARD; It's one of the most rewarding and difficult jobs we will have. You can't drive a car without being taught but there's no manual for being a parent! We all know what it's like to be raised as a child but we might not have had good experiences of being parented to use as a guide.

The aim of this group is to learn together and support one another. Through our discussions around these booklets we will learn from each other and take away ideas that will help us enjoy being with our children more and meet their needs more effectively.

It's important to remember that we're not trying to become perfect parents, it's okay for us all to be 'good enough parents'.

Confidentiality and group trust

There's no pressure to share anything. Share as much or as little as you feel comfortable with. Whatever we do share, it's important that it doesn't get repeated or talked about outside of the room. Being part of the group means that we all agree to this. Confidentiality is a vital part to us all feeling safe here.

As facilitators, we won't discuss what we talk about with other professionals outside of Kids Matter unless we're concerned about you or your child's safety - and if we felt we had to talk to someone, we would discuss that with you first.

The topics we will cover over the next six weeks are:

Session 1: Building a strong family

- Session 2: Loving our children well
- Session 3: Play, encouragement and listening
- Session 4: Routines and rewards
- Session 5: Family rules and consequences
- Session 6: The bigger picture

We will then meet 6 weeks after the final session for a reunion, and then in 3 months time for a booster session!

Today we are going to be looking at **Building a strong family**.



My hopes for doing the Kids Matter programme are:

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What is family?

All our families will look different. We're all here because we want the best for our children. A strong and loving family is important for our children as it gives them a feeling of belonging. Let's think together about how we can strengthen our families.



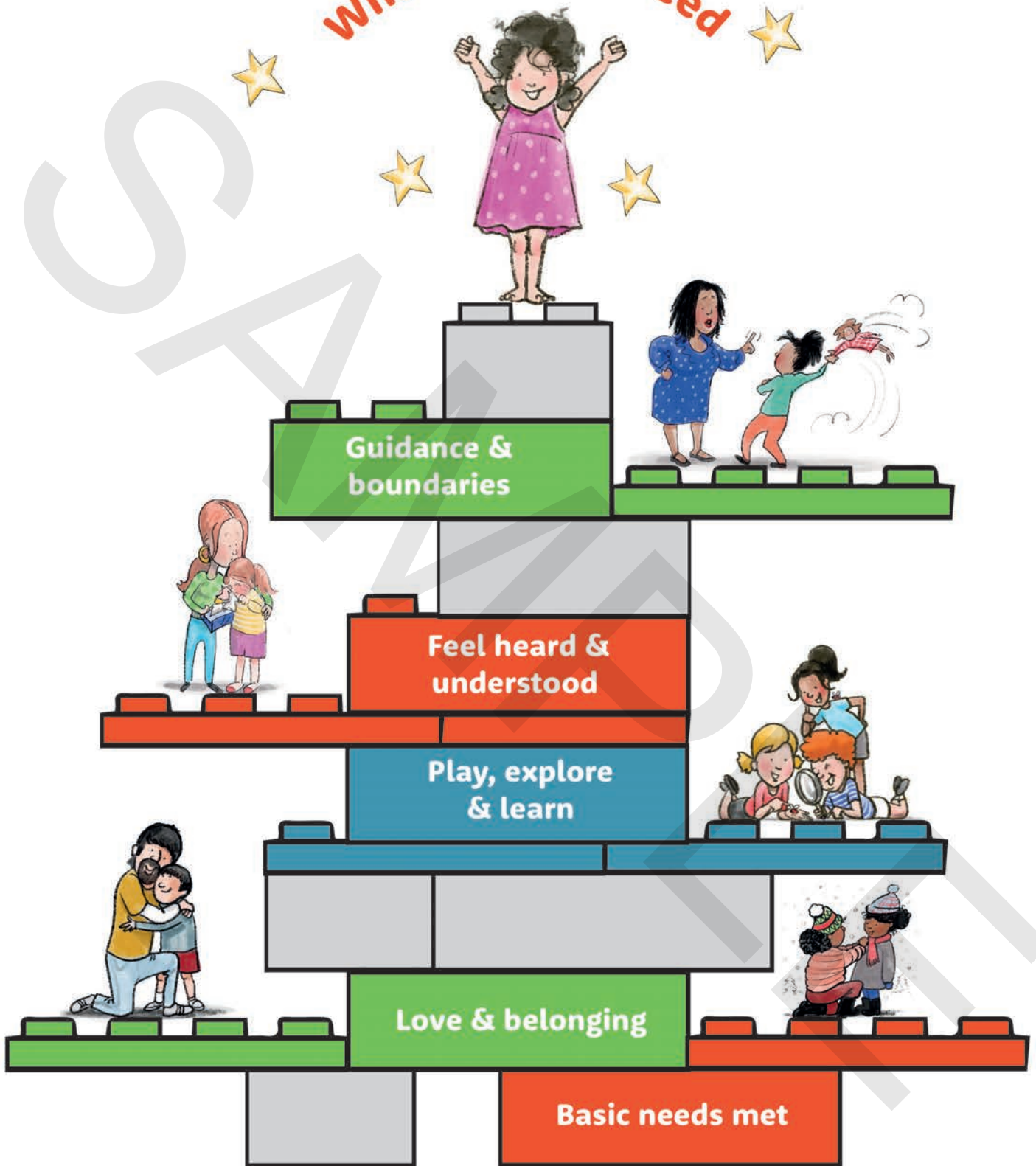


Every family has good things and things that are a challenge or a struggle. It's helpful to focus on the positives, especially when things are hard.

Things that I like about my family are:

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What children need





What do children need?



Basic needs met. It is difficult for children to thrive if they are ill, tired, hungry, cold or feel unsafe at home or at school. Clothing, food, warmth, housing, sleep: these are some of the basic needs which children have.



Love & belonging. Children need to be loved by at least one adult who cares for them. They need to know that they will be loved even if they make mistakes. A loving bond between a child and carer helps the child to trust, develop self-esteem, show kindness, and build friendships.



Play, explore & learn. Children need to play and explore, it's their job! Children can play alone, with adults, with friends and with siblings. Lots of playing helps a child grow, develop and learn all about the world.



Feel heard & understood. Children need to feel heard and understood by important adults in their lives. When children are listened to they feel valued and important to us.



Guidance & boundaries. Children need to have guidance from us as they grow up. Clear boundaries along with regular routines help children know what to expect which helps them feel secure.

These five building blocks are key to strengthening our relationship with our children and helping them to thrive in life. It's not possible to protect them from all of life's difficulties but having a strong relationship with us helps children to **build resilience**, cope when things don't go their way and recover from any disappointments.

“Resilience” means the ability to recover from difficult things that happen to us. For our children, these could be little everyday things like losing a game or arguing with friends up to much bigger life events such as parents separating or a relative dying.



Looking after ourselves

Pressures on us as we parent

Mental health
Financial
Employment
Relationships
Remembering to eat well
Not enough sleep
Health worries for us or others
Ill health or additional needs of our child
Isolation



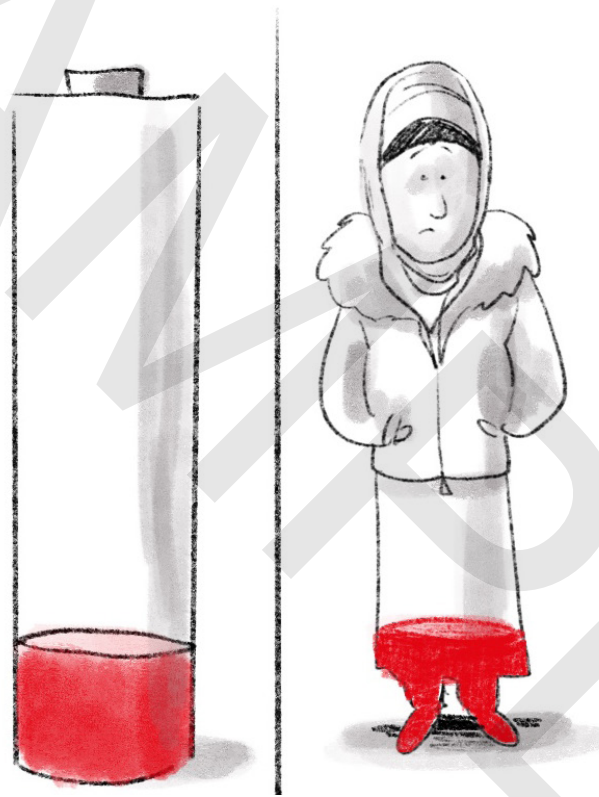
These pressures are common for all of us at different times, in varying degrees. They can have an impact on how we feel, on our relationships, and how we parent.

We can have less patience and have more conflict with others in the family when we feel under pressure.

We're all here because we want to parent our children as best we can. However, it's very important that we think about our own needs as parents as well.

It is important to take time for ourselves alongside looking after our family. Keeping ourselves as healthy and as happy as possible will enable us to be the best parents we can be. When we understand ourselves well it can help us to understand our children. When we are feeling mentally and physically well, we are better equipped to cope with pressures facing us.

If our battery runs low it will be much harder to be the best parent we can be. Doing things that we enjoy is part of looking after ourselves well and helps us to recharge.



What can I do that I will really enjoy this week?

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Summing up...

Today we have looked at:

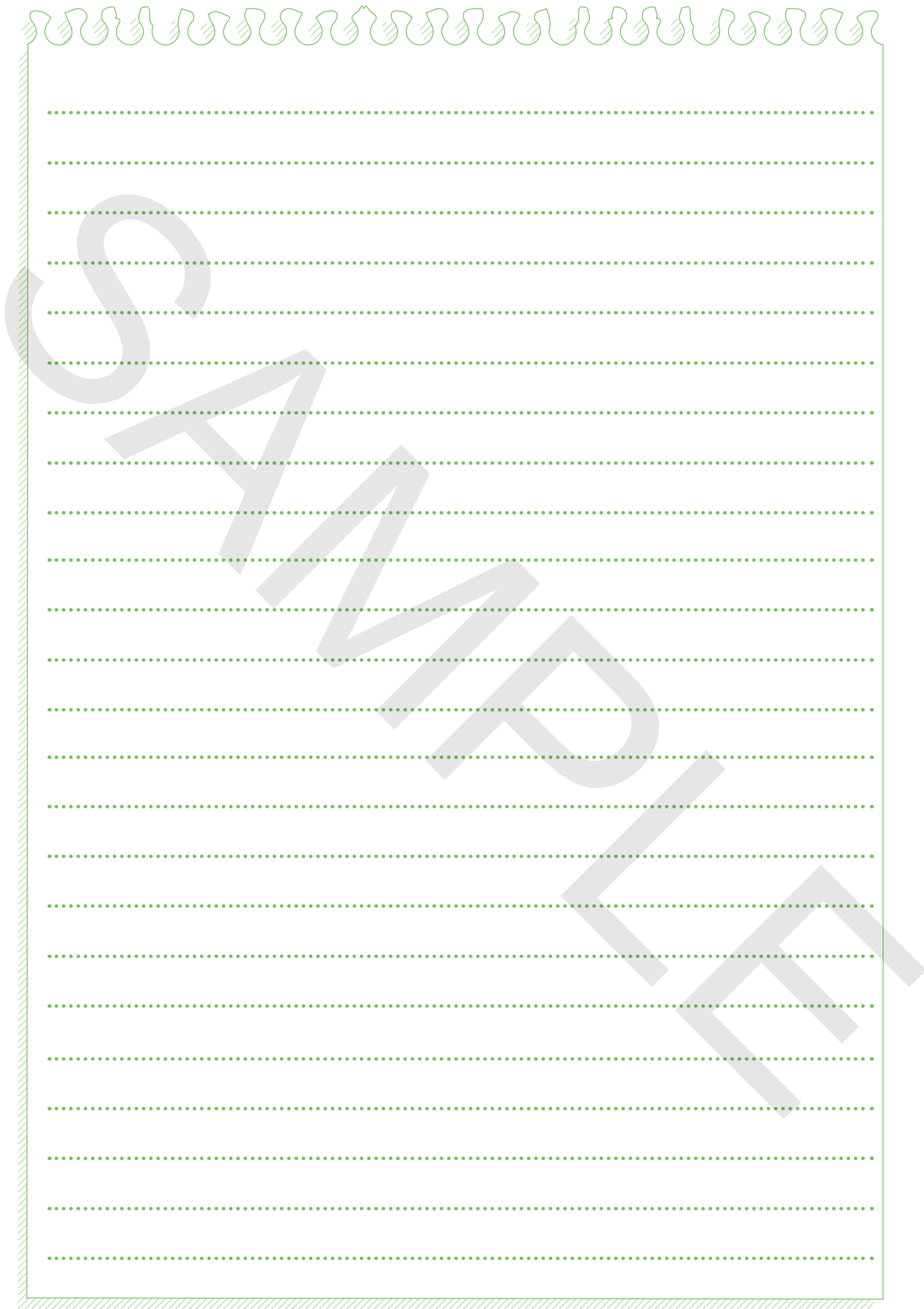
- What children need
- What is family
- Our own family and our parenting team
- Pressures on us as parents
- Importance of looking after ourselves

 **One thing I am going to do differently in my family this week is:**



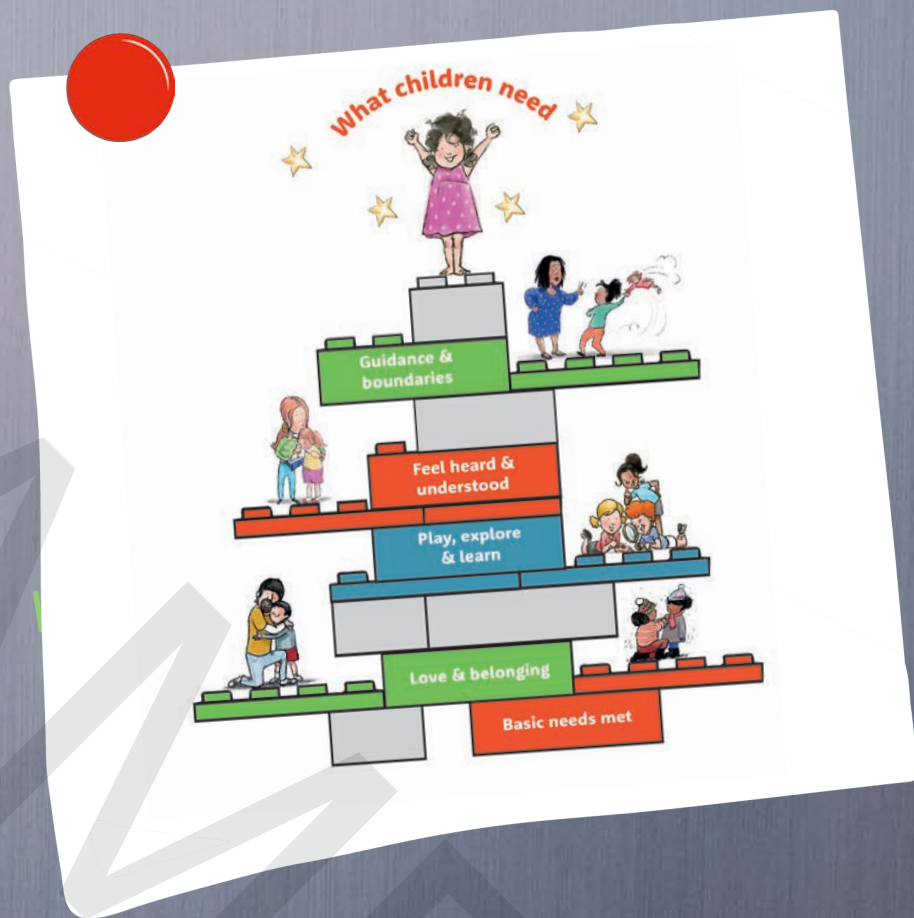
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What is family?



MY FAMILY IS THE BEST PLACE FOR MY CHILDREN TO FEEL LOVED

- Make time to build and strengthen positive relationships around me
- Look after myself so I can look after my children well
- Focus on positive things in my family
- Get support/help when I need it

Remember: No-one can be a perfect parent, we are aiming for 'good enough'!

