

TRYING TO UNDERSTAND

Ask group members to stand in a circle. Invite each group member to complete each of these statements:

- One family rule I now understand better is...
- One family rule I agree with is...
- One family rule I still disagree with is...

THE ROLE I PLAY

Have group members choose partners to discuss:

- Which roles are played in your family?
- Which family role do you play most often?
- How do you feel about your role?
- Have you chosen your role, or have you been pressured to take it?
- Do you ever switch roles in your family?
- If you could switch roles in your family, which role would you take?
- How can people change the roles in their families?

IMPACTING ANOTHER

Invite group members to share stories from their lives or others' lives of times when friends influenced friends for either good or bad. If necessary, ask:

- When have we seen the negative influence of friends in our lives or the lives of people we know?
- When have we witnessed the *positive* influence of friends?

After all who wish to share an experience have done so, discuss:

- Think about your influence over your friends. When do you think your influence has been positive? When do you think your influence has been negative? How can we make the wisest use of our influence?
- How can we make wise choices when it comes to friends?

Summarize group members' answers to this final question on **newsprint or chalkboard**.

MeMO

Distribute **seven index cards** and a **pencil** to each group member. Ask group members to consider the week ahead, with all its responsibilities and obligations. Then invite group members to write one memo to their families for each day of the week to come. The memo could:

- share upcoming concerns, plans, fears, etc. (*Examples: school exams, dates, job interviews, parties, etc.*)
- list grievances or frustrations within family relationships
- address concerns or frustrations (However, no "you should" language. Only "I hope" or "I wish" or "I feel" language.)
- say "thank you" for some of the things other family members do for you
- compliment other family members

Encourage group members to post their memos daily on their refrigerators or at another central location in the home.

INHERITANCE

Distribute **paper** and **pencils**. Invite group members each to make a simple family tree that includes only family members that they know, either through personal relationship or through extensive family storytelling. Now ask group members to reflect for a few moments on each parent:

- What do you know about each parent's childhood? family relationships? role in his or her family?
- What relational gifts or burdens have your grandparents or great-grandparents handed down to your parent? to you?
- What aspects of your parents' relationships with their brothers and sisters do you want to have with your own when you are grown up? What aspects do you *not* want to imitate?