

## SESSION I ~ INTRODUCTION

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

#### Introduction of Group Process

- Facilitators introduce themselves.
- Explain to group members that this type of work may be painful at times.
- Hand out and explain the Adult Group Guidelines.

#### Introduction of Group Members

- Facilitator shares that each week we'll introduce ourselves and tell how we're feeling that day.
- Facilitator models this.
- Go around the circle and share name and why they're here and how they're feeling today. "My name is Sally and I'm here because I'm going through a divorce. Today I'm feeling \_\_\_\_\_." (poster available)

#### Explain Goal of Group for Children and Adults:

- At Calm Waters, our curriculum is based on research and what helps heal individuals after a sudden loss; this includes divorce and the loss of the family structure as the children knew it.
- Our research based strategies for creating a healing environment include creating a predictable environment for you and your children. We will start sessions the same each week. Children sessions follow the same outline week after week with a quick rhythmic game, check in, a story, art activity and game that all relate to the theme of the week.
- We also strive to create a playful environment. Play disarms fear and children learn quickly that adults like to avoid talking about certain topics such as loss and divorce: due to this, we want children to feel free to open up hear and talk about their experience.
- A sensory rich environment allows for children to feel grounded during group. When your family changes, children can feel a literal sense of not knowing their place in the world. This can cause some of the behavior changes you may have noticed such as distraction, irritability, sadness, clinginess, anger. To help kids regain their skills of regulation, our sensory rich environment allows for kids to build tools that help soothe them when their emotions become intense.
- We believe humans are made to impact their surrounding environment. Therefore, we talk all the children's questions seriously in order to give them a voice. We find small ways to "share power" with them during group time by allowing them to lead some activities and express themselves creatively through art.
- Children's check in time includes a feeling chart but also you may notice your children wearing band aids. We ask children if they have any outside or inside

- hurts and give out band aids as a physical, tangible sign of empathy.
- Finally, we want children and adults to leave group with a greater sense of self awareness and emotional vocabulary. We want children to use their voice to exercise their mind, increase their self esteem, express their needs to others, and gain impulse control.
- These are our goals for group. Later tonight, we will ask you your goals for this next 8 weeks.

**Child 1: Drama Room; Reading Mom and Dad Don't Live Together Anymore**

**Child 2: Art Room, Reading Mom and Dad Break Up and painting a family portrait**

**Child 3: Movement Room, Reading Divorce is a Grown Up Problem and playing a parachute game to understand group dynamics and group support.**

**Preteen and Teen**

- They will be doing several "getting to know you" exercises.
- They will also create a "Roller Coaster of Feelings."

**Activity: Developing and Shattering Identity Boxes**

- Before we can get to know you, you must know yourself. Use this worksheet to examine who you are and how you want to be seen here. Getting divorced is a change that can make life chaotic for a while to say the least. Take some time in this activity to get to know yourself, who you want to be, and how you want others to see you.
- Share with the group how you want to be seen.

**Activity: "Roller Coaster"**

*Activities for Growth and Healing* from Bo's Place, Houston.

- Facilitator talks about how some families going through a divorce can be like a roller coaster.
- The facilitator draws a picture of a roller coaster on long butcher paper. (this may already be drawn and hung on wall.) Be sure to include the ups and downs and twists and turns.
- Tell the adults that these turns and ups and downs represent different feelings.
- Ask each group member to write his/her feelings since the divorce on post-it notes; one feeling per post-it note.
- Have each person place each of their post-it notes at any point on the roller coaster where they feel they belong (where they feel they experienced them).
- Facilitator leads a discussion of what it feels like to be on a roller coaster of feelings.

**Discussion Questions:** "Let's look at our roller coaster....."

- "What do you see?"
- "Are there lots of the same feelings repeated over and over?"
- "Which feelings were repeated most often? Least often?"
- "Are there points on the roller coaster where lots of feelings are all grouped

together? Why do you think that is?"

- "Are all the feelings negative ones? If not, what are the positive ones?"
- "As you look at these, what feelings make you most uncomfortable? (or are the most difficult for you to deal with?)"

### **Activity: Personal Goal**

- Using what you have processed tonight on who you are and the emotions and situations divorce has effected, take time to think of a goal you would like to achieve in the next 8 weeks.
- Remember to keep your goal SMART. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.
- Spend a few moments going around the circle having each member share at least one goal they have for their weeks at Calm Waters.

### **Closing**

- Go around the circle and each person shares one thing they learned or liked about Calm Waters tonight.

## SESSION II ~ GETTING TO KNOW ME

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

#### Opening

- Facilitator begins by saying “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m here because I’m getting a divorce. Right now, I’m feeling \_\_\_\_\_.”

#### Review the Adult Guidelines

#### Child 1 (Drama Room) and Child 2 (Movement Room)

- They will hear the book *Quick As A Cricket* by Audrey Wood.
- They will “act out” animals from the book with a special emphasis on moves that cross the midline of the body. This improves communication between the right and left side of the brain. Communication between both sides of the brain helps with regulation, mood and even focus for academics. We can try one now if you would like. Now make a fist with both hands. With your right hand give a “thumbs up” with your thumb. **Simultaneously**, on your left hand hold up your index finger to show “number 1”. Now switch both hands at the **SAME TIME**: Make your thumbs up with your left hand and number 1 with your right hand. This is a tougher one for sure. How fast can you switch between the two?
- They will also make “people shapes” of themselves to add to their toolbox. This will facilitate a discussion of positive self talk and how children are unique.

#### Child 3: Art Room, They will read Just Because I Am and paint their story.

- They will also make “people shapes” of themselves. This will facilitate a discussion of positive self talk and how children are unique.

#### Preteen & Teen will share their story.

#### Activity: Share Your Story

- Go around the group and give group members an opportunity to share their story and where they are in the divorce process. We are not asking them to give details, just sharing their story **if they chose** so that the group may be able to better relate and support one another. Again, group members are always allowed to pass, this is just an opportunity for them if they want to take it.

#### Activity: “I want, I am...”

- Each group member completes the “I want, I am” handout.
- Go around the circle and have each member share from “I need”, and then have each member share from “I hate”, etc. until most have shared from every space.
- Note: Initially, you may go around the table with each person sharing in turn, but after the first few, try asking for members to volunteer responses and have

various members share in any order. Attempt to make sure each member responds several times or has the opportunity to share.

- Now repeat the activity with the adults filling in the blanks with the response they think their child would have written.
- Go around the circle and have members share until most have shared from every space.

### **Activity: “All About Me – Before and After the Divorce”**

- Distribute a grid sheet to each participant. Ask them to take some time to think about their answers. Remind them that there is no right or wrong way to answer.
- Specifically, how would they have answered each question before their divorce process ever began? Fill that in on the “Before” column.
- How would they answer the questions now, since the divorce? Fill that in on the “Since” column.
- Give them time to write their answers. Tell them not to labor over the answers; their first thought is usually the best.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Say “Raise your hand if all of your answers were exactly the same, before and after the divorce.” (*Few actually would have this.*)
- If you have some hand-raisers, ask them: “Have you worked at it to try to keep it the same? How difficult or easy has that been for you?”
- Now say “Raise your hand if you had changes from before to after the divorce.” (*This should be many more.*)
- Ask: “If your answers changed, how do you view those changes? Have most been positive, or negative?”
- What seems to be more difficult for you now?
- What seems to have gotten easier, or better for you?

### **Handout: “Ways to Help Your Children When Dealing With Divorce” and Validation handouts.**

- Go over Ways to help children handout. This handout provides some very simple and helpful tips to keep in mind. Discuss as time allows.
- Go over the validation scenarios handout. Answers provided as well.
- Explain to parents that they may have to play a bit of a detective in order to fully understand what their child is saying to them and how to respond.
- Go over 3-4 examples to help parents get the hang of the “detective work”.
- Ask parents what things their children has said and how this validation technique could help validate some hard statements.

### **Closing**

- Go around the circle and have each member share something they realized about themselves.

## SESSION III ~ FEELINGS

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

#### Opening

- Facilitator begins by saying “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m here because I’m getting a divorce. Right now, I’m feeling \_\_\_\_\_.”

#### Review the Adult Guidelines

**Child 1: Movement Room, will read The Way I Feel and play feeling charades**

**Child 2: Drama Room, will read The Way I Feel and play feeling charades**

**Child 3: Art Room, will paint their “Mountains and Valleys” (highs and lows through the divorce)**

**Preteen and Teen will read other stories of teens going through divorce of their parents and the struggles they face such as taking on new responsibilities or hearing too many details of your parents’ business. They will also practice coping skills of square breathing and body scanning.**

#### Adult Activities:

##### Activity: “Feelings Balloons”

- Each group member blows up a balloon. Have them blow it up fully, but not to the extent that it pops.
- Using a permanent marker, each participant then writes a feeling they have had in the past week on the balloon.
- Ask for a volunteer to come and stand in an open space. One at a time, have each group member give their balloons to the volunteer to hold. Explain to the volunteer that their job is to hold onto all of these balloons (feelings) without letting any go.
- Eventually, the volunteer will be unable to keep all of the balloons in his/her arms and will drop balloons. The group learns that it is difficult to hold onto all of these feelings at the same time.
- Ask the group: What’s happening here? Our volunteer seems to be having some difficulty managing all of these feelings.
- Discuss: How do we deal with these feelings? Can we choose some to let go? How do we let go? How do we express them in a healthy way? Can we get help in dealing with feelings when we start to feel overloaded?

### **Movie clip: “Kramer vs. Kramer”**

Introduce the clip by stating that the mom left home a year and a half earlier and the dad has been raising the little boy alone. They are now in a custody battle over their six year son.

- View the clip from “*Kramer vs. Kramer.*”
- Process the clip.
  1. How did the dad feel about the judge’s decision?
  2. How did the dad present the decision to his son? (excluded his feelings when he explained it)
  3. Did the dad talk negatively about the mom to the son?
  4. What were the son’s feelings? Concerns? (ex. Who would read his bedtime story?)
  5. Why do you think the mother changed her mind?

### **Discussion: “You Are Normal; Your Feelings Are Normal”**

- Ask the group members to share different emotions they see in their children.
- One of the facilitators can make a list as members share.
- Discuss if these emotions are since the divorce or were evident before.
- Ask the group members what type of feelings they as adults are experiencing. How do the feelings they had BEFORE the divorce compare to those since the divorce?
- One of the facilitators can make a list on butcher paper on the wall as members share.
- Discuss the handout. What do you notice about this range of feelings on the handout? (Broad.) Do you see any on the handout that you have experienced but you hadn’t mentioned before? Which ones are the most difficult for you to deal with?

### **Children’s Reactions to Divorce**

- Distribute handouts.
- Explain that these are a brief summary of fairly typical responses for kids at various ages.
- Have them see if they see some things that look familiar in their own kids.
- Many parents wonder how to talk to their kids about their divorce. Keep it simple and spare them the details. Yes, be honest with your children but remember to be age appropriate, do not blame the other parent and ALWAYS remind them that it is not their fault and they bring you both joy.

### **Closing**

- Share one thing that was helpful at Calm Waters tonight.

## SESSION IV ~ STRESS AND ANGER MANAGEMENT

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

#### Opening

- Facilitator begins by saying “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m here because I’m getting a divorce. Right now, I’m feeling \_\_\_\_\_.”

#### Review the Adult Guidelines

**Child 1 (Art room), Child 2 (Movement room), Child 3 (Drama room) will practice anger coping skills.**

**Preteens and Teens will complete a questionnaire about anger and control. They will process cool down techniques that include Describe, Non Judgmental Stance, Feeling not Acting, and Opposite Action.**

#### Adult Activities:

##### Activity: “*The Anger Insight Questionnaire*”

- Ask the participants to complete the *Anger Questionnaire*.
- Part 1-
  - Ask the group to identify some of the similarities and differences in the ways that they express anger versus their parents’ expressions of anger.
  - Ask the group what they think counts for these similarities and differences.
- Part 2-
  - Ask the participants if they are comfortable with their own reactions.
  - Ask the participants what changes they would want to make and why.
- Part 3-
  - Now, ask the participants the same questions as in Part 1, but instead of having them think of their parents’ reactions to anger, have them think of their children’s. Discuss.

##### Activity: **Meditation/ Stillness**

- Ask your group members to get comfortable and still. Ask group members to close their eyes, knowing that this is a meditation exercise and the room is safe. Let them know they will hear your voice during this exercise.
- Ask them to sit and clear their minds completely.
- Wait five seconds and then tell them that if meditation is not a normal practice for them, thoughts, to-do list tasks and stress may be coming into their mind. Let them know this is normal. Coach them to imagine a conveyor belt that is passing

across their mind's eye. As an intrusive thought comes in, do not fight it or feel discouraged, but simply watch it move along the conveyor belt until it is out of sight.

- Let them know that they may be doing this often at first as thoughts keep entering their still mind.
- Now let everyone know we will continue to sit with their eyes closed for another 60 seconds. Be silent during this time.
- Once the exercise is over, ask the group to process the below questions:
  - How new or foreign was the activity to you? Does anyone here meditate or even take quiet moments to themselves throughout the day?
  - Ask if any of them schedule breaks for themselves at work or at home?
  - Discuss the importance of self-care and stillness.
  - Discuss physical and mental symptoms of stress.
  - Do they know when they are angry or stressed by a body ache or pain?

### **Activity: Coping with Anger/Stress**

Ask the group:

- Has anyone NOT felt anger during their divorce process? (Acknowledge how anger is something most of the group members have felt at some point during their divorce.)
- Does anyone think that anger helped you cope in some way with your situation?
- At any time, has anger caused any of you additional problems? Would you care to share about that?
- Using the butcher paper on the wall or a flip chart, have the group name things they have relied on to help them cope with their stress and/or anger.
- Record the coping mechanisms as they are named, regardless as to whether they are healthy or unhealthy. Try for a variety of things both positive and negative.
- Go through the things they listed on the paper, letting the group members determine which things they feel to be the healthiest ways to cope.
- Emphasize that it's normal to feel anger at least at some point when dealing with a divorce, but to stay "stuck" in your anger, or to invest all your energy in anger at your ex is not only a drain on yourself but can be destructive to your children. Despite the change in your family, you want your life to move forward.

### **Activity: Talking to Your Kids About Anger**

- **1. Model calmness.** The best way to teach kids how to deal with anger constructively is by showing them through your example! Tonight we are trying to show children models through books and storytelling, but seeing someone do it is much more powerful. Similarly, seeing someone express anger negatively is also very powerful. Remember your kids are watching. So use those frustrating experiences as "on-the-spot lessons" to your child of ways to calm down.

- Here's an example: Suppose you get a phone call from the auto shop saying your car estimate has now doubled. You're furious, and standing nearby is your child now watching you very closely. Muster every ounce of calmness and use it as an instant anger control lesson for your child: "I am so angry right now" you calmly tell your child. "The auto shop just doubled the price for fixing my car." Then offer a calm-down solution: "I'm going on a quick walk so I can get back in control." Your example is what your child will copy.
- **2. Exit and calm down.** One of the toughest parts of parenting is when children address their anger towards us. If you're not careful, you find their anger fueling emotions in you that you never realized were in you. Beware: anger is contagious. It's best to make a rule in your home from the start: "In this house we solve problems when we're calm and in control." And then consistently reinforce the rule.
- Here's an example of how you might use it. The next time your child is angry and wants a quick solution, you might say, "I need a time out. Let's talk about this later," and then, exit calmly and don't answer back. I had one mom tell me her only escape was to lock herself in the bathroom. The child continued kicking and screaming, but she would not come out until he was calm. It took a few "locked up times" for the child to realize she meant business. And from then on the child knew that Mom would only talk about the problem when he was in calm and in control.
- **3. Develop a feeling vocabulary.** Many kids display anger because they simply don't know how to express their frustrations any other way. Kicking, screaming, swearing, hitting, or throwing things may be the only way they know how to show their feelings. Asking this kid to "tell me how you feel" is unrealistic, because he may not have learned the words to tell you how he is feeling! Last week and tonight in child and teen groups, facilitators are going over emotion words to help increase your child's emotional intelligence. To help him or her express his/her anger, create a feeling word poster together saying: "Let's think of all the words we could use that tell others we're really angry" then list his ideas.
- Here's a few: angry, mad, frustrated, furious, irritated, ticked off, irate, and incensed. Write them on a chart, hang it up, and practice using them often. When your child is angry, use the words so he can apply them to real life: "Looks like you're really angry. Want to talk about it?" or "You seem really irritated. Do you need to walk it off?" Then keep adding new emotion words to the list whenever new ones come up in those great "teachable moments" opportunities throughout the day.
- **4. Create Coping Skills.** There are dozens of ways to help kids calm down when they first start to get angry. Unfortunately, many kids have never been given the opportunity to think of those other possibilities. Tonight, all groups have discussed coping skills for when they become angry. Make sure to ask your child what some of their coping skills are. Talk with your child about more acceptable "replacer" behaviors. Here's a few ideas a group of fourth-graders thought of: walk away, think of a peaceful place, run a lap, listen to music, hit a pillow, shoot baskets, draw pictures, talk to someone, or sing a song. Once the child chooses

their "calm down" technique, encourage him to use the same strategy each time they start to get angry.

- **5. Develop an awareness of early warning signs.** Explain to your child that we all have little signs that warn us when we're getting angry. We should listen to them because they can help us stay out of trouble. Next, help your child recognize what specific warning signs they may have that tells them that they starting to get upset such as, "I talk louder, my cheeks get flushed, I clench my fists, my heart pounds, my mouth gets dry, and I breathe faster." Once they are aware of them, start pointing them out to them whenever they first start to get frustrated. "Looks like you're starting to get out of control." or "Your hands are in a fist now. Do you feel yourself starting to get angry?" The more we help kids recognize those early angry warning signs when their anger is first triggered, the better they will be able to calm themselves down. It's also the time when anger management strategies are most effective. Anger escalates very quickly, and waiting until a child is already in "melt down" to try to get her back into control is usually too late.
- Teaching children a new way to deal with their anger constructively is not easy -- especially if they have only practiced aggressive ways to deal with their frustrations. Research tells us learning new behaviors take a minimum of 21 days of repetition. So here's my recommendation: Choose one skill your child needs to be more successful and emphasize the same skill a few minutes every day for at least 21 days! Besides, the possibility your child will really learn the new skill will be much stronger, because he's been practicing the same technique over and over, and that's exactly the way you learn any new skill. It's also the best way to stem the onslaught of violence and help our kids lead more successful, peaceful lives.

## Closing

- Share one thing that was helpful at Calm Waters tonight.
- Group hug.

## SESSION V ~ BASIC COMMUNICATION

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

#### Opening

- Facilitator begins by saying “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m here because I’m getting a divorce. Right now, I’m feeling \_\_\_\_\_.”

#### Review the Adult Guidelines

**Child 1 (Drama room), Child 2 (Art room) will read Howard B Wigglebottom Learns to Listen and play listening games such as Simon Says or Streamer Dancing following movement directions.**

**Child 3 (Movement room), Preteens and Teens** will read the poem “*Hear Me Out*”

- They will also complete the colored blocks activity we will do later and complete the worksheet “What I wish my parents knew about me”
- They will discuss thinking dialectically

#### Adult Activities:

##### Game: “The Tragic Story of the Right Family”

- Adults and facilitators make a circle around the table/on the floor.
- Explain that this is a listening game where the adults have to be paying attention and listening in order to know when to pass the telephone to the person next to them.
- Facilitator selects one person in the group to start the game by giving them the toy telephone.
- One facilitator will read the story about the *Right family*. Anytime the adult with the phone hears the word “left,” he/she will pass the telephone to the person on their left. Anytime the adult hears the word “right,” he/she will pass the telephone to the person on the right.
- After the activity, ask the group: “How did it go for you? Was it easy or difficult?”
- Say: “We had a little fun with that listening game. But now let’s get more serious.”

##### Ask:

- “When you communicate in your family, what is it like? Do people listen to each other?”
- Is there lots of yelling or arguing?
- Do you email or text more than talk face-to-face?
- Who listens well in your family?
- How do you wish your family communicated?

### Activity: “Colored Blocks”

- Explain that listening is an important key to effective communication.
- It is important for the messenger to choose his/her words carefully to make sure that the message is accurate and complete.
- Say: “Now let’s test your skills and see how good at communicating you are!”
- Choose two participants to perform this activity for the rest of the group.
- Participants sit back-to-back.
- Each is given a duplicate set of colored blocks.
- One creates a configuration with the colored blocks and then gives instructions to the other so that s/he can reproduce this configuration.
- The partner does exactly what s/he has been instructed to do, without questions.
- When this is completed, the two participants then look at one another’s positioning of the blocks. Discuss what they could have done differently to come up with the same configuration.
- Have the same two participants create another configuration. This time, implement their new ideas (more detailed explanation, questions going both ways, etc.).
- The two participants look at the new block arrangement. Did it improve? Why?
- This activity can be repeated with another dyad if time permits.
- Discuss how this activity applies to the communication between them and their children. Kids are often complaining about parents not listening to them, and vice versa.

Ask:

- “Who in here thinks they listen really well to their kids? How do you know you do? If not, what do you think prevents it?”
- “Do you think your family’s communicating and listening has changed since the divorce?”

### Discussion: “What I Wish My Children Knew About Me”

- Ask the participants to identify what they want their children to know about them. These are things you really wish you could share with kids but haven’t yet such as “it’s not your fault”; “I know you know too much about our divorce”; “I’m sorry x,y,z have changed for you” etc.
- **Explain that these will be shared anonymously with the Children III group and the Teen groups next week. As well as their lists will be shared with you several measures will be taken to make sure it is anonymous for all.**

**Handouts: “Communication”** (to be discussed if time allows OR taken home)

- Review the handout “*Communication: Listening*”
- Review “*Effective Communication with Child/Teenager*”

### Closing

- Share one thing that was helpful at Calm Waters tonight.

**SESSION VI ~ CHANGES**

## **SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:**

### **Opening**

- Facilitator begins by saying “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m here because I’m getting a divorce. Right now, I’m feeling \_\_\_\_\_.”

### **Review the Adult Guidelines**

**Child 1 (Drama room), Child 2 (Movement room) they will read The Very Hungry Caterpillar and discuss changes their families have experienced and how to cope with difficult or frequent changes.**

**Child 3 (Art room) will discuss changes they have experienced by looking at past, present, and hopes for the future.**

**Preteens and Teens will discuss changes both good and bad. They will also discuss how to reduce vulnerability and emotional response to sudden changes they may not be able to control.**

### **Movie Clip: “Bye Bye Love”**

Preface the video by stating that the following clip is about the changes several families experienced after a divorce.

- View the clip from “Bye Bye Love” (clip lasts 12 minutes)
- Discuss some of the changes the dad’s in the movie experienced.
- What were some of the changes that the children experienced?
- Are the group members currently experiencing any of these changes?

### **Activity: “Change Cards”**

Tonight the adults will be discussing “change” in their groups. They will brainstorm things in their world that change (such as, their feelings, their housing arrangements, their finances, the way they spend time with their kids, etc.) They will discuss their view of these changes as good or bad.

- Facilitator passes out several 3 x 5 index cards to group members.
- Facilitator explains that change is often difficult for most people, even if the change is a good thing. Most of us are resistant to change.
- Ask them to think about how they have dealt with the changes they have faced in their family since the divorce began.
- Have the group members write on their cards one change they’ve noticed in their families or in their lives since their divorce. (anonymously) One change per card. They may use several cards.
- Place the cards in the basket.

- Pass the basket around the circle and each person draws out a card and reads it.
- Have them share if they have had the same or a similar change in their family. Then invite them to tell whether they felt the change was good or bad or mixed.

**Optional Art: “Past, Present, Future”**

- Facilitator demonstrates folding paper into thirds lengthwise.
- Write at the top of each section: “The Way It Was”, “The Way It Is Now”, and “The Way I Want It to Be.”
- Have the adults draw a picture under each heading.

**Closing**

- Group members share with each other their “Past, Present, Future” drawings.

## **SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:**

### **Opening**

- Facilitator begins by saying “My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m here because I’m getting a divorce. Right now, I’m feeling \_\_\_\_\_.”

### **Review the Adult Guidelines**

**Child 1 (Drama room), Child 2 (Art room), Child 3 (Movement room) Preteens and Teens ---all groups will discuss who supports them, their rights as children/individuals, and how to use their five senses to create a self care environment.**

### **Adult Activities:**

#### **Activity: “Support Wheel”**

*Teens Together Grief Support Group Curriculum* by Linda Lehmann

- Facilitator hands out “Support Wheel” handout.
- Facilitator says, “Just as a wheel needs all of its spokes in order to roll, so do we need people in our lives for each one of the areas (spokes) on our support wheel. Take a few minutes to fill out the support wheel and fill in each spoke with the names of people who can give you that kind of support.”
- When finished, facilitator asks:
  - Are there any spokes that don’t have names on them?
  - If so, can you think of someone who might give you that kind of support?
  - Are there only one or two people named on the support wheel? (Maybe you’re depending on one person too much. It’s unrealistic to try to be, or expect anyone else to be all things to a person.)
  - Remind them that each one of these kinds of support is important to them as they deal with and adjust to life after divorce.

#### **Discussion: “Taking Care of Yourself”**

- Facilitator leads a discussion on ways group members take care of themselves.
- Brainstorm and use butcher paper or poster board to record suggestions.
- Encourage topics: nutrition, exercise, drink water, rest, sleep.
- Facilitator reminds the group to:
  - Accept your feelings.
  - Realize that you may not be feeling like those around you. Your emotions will be different than those of your children or other important people in your life. It’s OK.
  - Allow yourself to accept expressions of caring from others. This is not the time to be a SuperHero.
  - Take days and things one at a time.
  - Give yourself a pat on the back for the things you do well, but don’t try to be perfect.

### **Video: “What Parents Need to Know From Kids About Divorce”**

- Preface the video with:
  - The “experts” -kids on the video will be echoing some of the thoughts your own children maybe experiencing. (clip will last 19 minutes)
- Discuss.

### **Discussion: “*What I wish my parents knew about me*”**

Say “You just watched a portion of a video about what other people’s children have to say about divorce. Now let’s see what your children had to say last week!

- Go over the children/teen’s answers from the week before.
- Discuss what the parents think about what their children/teens wrote.
  - Were they surprised by anything they read?
  - Which responses do they think their children/teens wrote? Why?

### **Closing**

- Share one thing they learned tonight at Calm Waters.
- **Remind the group that next week is the final Calm Waters meeting**