

**Parenting Tips**  
from  
**6a Penrith Place**  
**BALGA WA 6061**  
Phone: 9440 0011  
Opening times: Monday to Friday 12 PM to 4 PM

### **Family Meetings**

If your children continually argue with each other or just never seem to get along-consider holding regular family meetings. They require some work and commitment at the start but are worth persevering to achieve harmony in the family. Regular meetings give children a chance to have some input into the way their family operates as well as providing a forum for airing grievances. They also give parents a chance to influence the way that children deal with difficulties among themselves.

### **Bright Ideas**

Family meetings can be used to:

- Resolve conflicts and assist with individual problems
- Discuss family routines and procedures
- Plan for fun things such as outings and holidays

Hold them on a regular basis rather than when a problem arises.

- Begin each meeting on a positive note. Some encouraging comments to each person that sets a positive tone.
- Avoid overloading the meetings with too many matters to discuss. Two or three items are usually enough. End the meeting with a story or pleasant activity.
- Family meetings are not gripe sessions. Children will quickly be turned off if they simply become an opportunity for everyone to have a 'whinge'. If you are discussing problems use non-accusatory language; 'We have a problem with...', rather than 'You children always...'.
- There needs to be a chairperson and a simple set of rules. At first parents will probably need to chair meetings but with experience children can share this role.
- Keep a record of decisions, which can be reviewed at the next meeting.
- If the formality of a family meeting is not for you, then discussing things regularly as a family group (without calling a 'meeting') is an excellent alternative.

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