Health Goals

• Health Goal #11 – I will develop healthful family relationships
• Health Goal #13 – I will make healthful adjustments to family changes
The Role of the Family
What is a Family?

• Family – the basic unit of society that provides a safe and nurturing environment for its members

• A healthy family. . .
  – Expresses mutual love and respect
  – Communicates effectively
  – Provides support and encouragement
  – Etc, etc, etc. . .
The Importance of Family

• Physical and Other Basic Needs
  – Food, clothing, shelter, financial, medical.

• Mental/Emotional Needs
  – The family provides a safe, comforting environment in which all members can express thoughts and emotions freely.

• Social Needs
  – Children learn from family members how to communicate and get along with others.
  – Families help children develop a value system by instilling religious beliefs and by raising them with cultural and family traditions
Developing a Value System

• You learn your values, beliefs, and feelings about what is important from your family.
• Developing a good value system helps you in making responsible decisions.
• Your values also determine your character.
• Having positive values helps you become a good citizen who obeys laws, respects authority, and contributes to school and community.
Dynamics of Family Roles and Responsibilities

• The family is more than just the people who live in one home. It also includes your...

• Extended family – one’s immediate family and other relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

• Benefits...
  – Learning about family history
  – Other relatives serving as guardian

• Each member of an extended family contributes to the well being of every member of the family.
Dynamics of Family Roles and Responsibilities

• Each family member has roles and responsibilities in promoting a healthy family.
  – The adults are usually in charge of providing basic comforts and fulfilling basic needs such as food and shelter, and they also set limits and rules.

• Children and teens have roles and responsibilities as well. . .
  – They respect the authority of parents or guardians and may take on tasks such as washing dishes or cleaning.
  – Teens may be asked to care for a younger sibling – a brother or sister – while a parent is at work.

• Sharing such tasks helps the family run smoothly, and it also boosts the self-esteem of each member of the family.
Strengthening Family Relationships

• Good communication is one of the most important ways to build and maintain healthy family relationships. You can help strengthen your family in the following ways.

• **Demonstrate care and love**
  – Family members show they care through words and actions. Compliments are a great and simple way to demonstrate care and love

• **Show support, especially during difficult times**
  – Whether the difficulty is minor or traumatic, talking about your feelings can help you feel better.
Strengthening Family Relationships

• **Demonstrate trust**
  – Parent’s earn their children’s trust by caring for them, being honest, and keeping promises. Children show that they can be trusted when they are honest, reliable, and loyal

• **Express commitment**
  – The willingness to work together and make necessary sacrifices for the benefit of the entire family

• **Be responsible**
  – Thinking before you act, avoiding risky behaviors, asking for permission, being accountable for your actions, etc.
Strengthening Family Relationships

• **Spend time together**
  – eating meals together, sports, fun activities, trips, etc…

• **Respect individuality**

• **Work together to solve problems**
  – Healthy families try to identify and work out problems before they become serious. If necessary, they seek outside help to resolve their conflicts.

• **Be sensitive to others needs**
  – Pay attention to how others feel. You can help relieve the stress of daily life by using good communication skills and helping with household tasks.
Change and the Family
Families and Change

- Change, a normal part of life, can be a major cause of stress within families.
- The changes that cause stress in families are of two main types.
  - The first type involves changes in the structure, or makeup, of the family
  - The second involves changes in the family’s circumstances
Changes in Family Structure

- Family structure changes when someone new joins the family or when a member of the family moves out of the home.
- To accommodate a new family member, you may have to get along with less space in your home.
- A new family member also brings a new personality that may change the character of the family.
Separation and Divorce

• Sometimes a married couple’s conflicts become too difficult to work out, and the couple decides to either separate or divorce.

• **Separation** – a decision between married individuals to live apart from each other.

• **Divorce** – a legal end to a marriage contract.

• Generally, a couple may separate to work out their problems. If things become worse, they may decide to divorce.
Divorce – Meeting The Needs of Children

• When parents divorce, it must be decided where the children will live.

• **Custody** – a legal decision about who has the right to make decisions affecting the children in a family and who has the responsibility of physically caring for them.

• Custody may be granted to one parent (sole) or divided between both parents (joint)
Divorce – Family Adjustments

• Adapting to divorce requires emotional adjustments for the whole family.
• Teens and Children often find it difficult to live apart from one parent and not see that parent for long periods of time.
• Keep in mind that parents divorce each other, not their children.
Managing Emotional Stress when Parents get Divorced

- Remind yourself that you did not cause the problem.
- Do not feel that you have to choose sides.
- Communicate your feelings about the divorce with your parents and other trusted, supportive adults.
- Take care of yourself by eating nutritious foods, getting physical activity, and managing your stress.
- Consider joining a support group for children of divorce. Doing so will help you realize that you are not alone.
Remarriage

• Stepparents and children need time to adjust to one another.
• Both need to develop communication skills and respect needed for healthful family relationship.
Death of a Family Member

- When a death occurs, each family member needs time to grieve, but the length of time needed for grieving is different for each person.
Coping strategies for the Death of a Love One

• Focus on happy memories
• Accept your feelings
• Join a support group
• Seek help from a grief counselor
Changes in Family Circumstances

• Moving
• Financial Problems
• Illness and Disability
• Drug and Alcohol Abuse
Moving

• When a family moves, its members may miss their old friends and the familiar surroundings of their old home.
• If a move follows the breakup of a marriage, children may miss the patent who no longer lives with them.
Financial Problems

- Loss of a job
- Medical emergencies
- Overdue bills
- Impulse buying
- Credit card abuse
- All often lead to arguments
Illness and Disability

- Change their schedules to care for the sick or disabled person
- Stress over medical decisions about types of care or treatments
- Stress is sometimes reduce if family shares the reasonability
Drug and Alcohol Abuse

• Threatens the health of the entire family
• Can cause family break down
• Seek immediate help
Coping with Family Changes

• Communication is the key
• Do what you can to help
• Read books about the subject or talk to people who have faced a similar problem
• Use Stress-management techniques
Resiliency within the Family

- Resiliency is the ability to adapt effectively and recover from disappointment, difficulty, or crisis.
- Resilient people can call upon their own strengths to deal with changes.
- Resilient families pull together to cope with changing circumstances.
Resiliency within the Family

• When problems occur, family members must identify the problem, evaluate how the problem is affecting the entire family, discuss what can be done to handle the problem, and draw upon family unity and strength to resolve the problem together.