



Fathers' Group Lessons

LAS MANOS DE APÁ

The Hands of My Father



PREPARING TO SERVE LATINO FATHERS

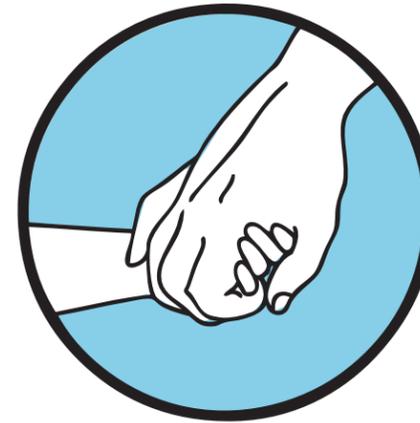
The Las Manos de Apá curriculum acknowledges the contributions of Refugio Rodriguez, Jerry Tello and the National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute for their contributions to the philosophy and teachings of this project. The Las Manos de Apá curriculum was written to provide professionals interested in working with Latino fathers, a tool to begin providing services to them. Although the curriculum provides a format for class facilitation, it is highly recommended that before agencies or facilitators attempt to work with Latino fathers that they participate in training (see www.nlffi.org) that provides basic knowledge and sensitivity to the cultural, psycho-social, and gender issues of working with Latino fathers. Increasing an agency's cultural competency also increases the prospect of successfully recruiting and engaging Latino fathers in program projects and activities.

While many effective, well-designed, fatherhood programs are in place in communities across the nation, Latino families, like any ethnic group, need programs and practitioners that genuinely understand and respect the deep cultural roots, customs, and values that underscore their daily lives and decisions.

Designed by service practitioners with a personal understanding of Latino culture, the tools and strategies outlined are proven to be successful based on the extent of their use and the results acquired. They have been used in programs across the country to help Latino men of all ages build healthier families and successful lives. Some tools help men find the means to support their families, others heal deep personal pain, others help men find the right legal path. The tools reinforce the importance of providing supportive services within the context of the "familia" (family), and underscore other cultural factors that affect the work.

Please read this information carefully and sequentially – and build an understanding and knowledge in much the same way fathers are counseled– step-by-step. A successful program starts with a solid connection and mutual acknowledgement of facilitator and the recipient of the services to be provided. With compassionate knowledge as your base, the fathers will teach you the rest.

Finally, it is important to note that the term "Latino" is used in this curriculum to include those who have Mexican, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Central American and South American heritage or who identify with the spirit and struggles of people of that tradition.



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fhi360
THE SCIENCE OF IMPROVING LIVES



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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In our fast-paced modern society, there are very few opportunities for individuals to come together to share thoughts and ideas. With this curriculum, we are attempting to create a safe, open, and caring environment where parents, specifically Latino fathers, have the opportunity to share what is important in their lives. We would like these activities to be conducted as part of a circle of men or “circulo de hombres,” similar to the ancient traditions of indigenous peoples. These circles are not designed to serve as therapy sessions; however, the chance for Latino men and fathers to tell their stories in a safe environment with other men can be therapeutic for them.

In order to create a lasting and meaningful experience for fathers, these sessions are designed to build upon one another; therefore, the initial six lessons should be presented consecutively whenever possible.

El circulo de apoyo y confianza (The Circle of Caring and Support) lesson contains many options for discussion and can be used to add additional lessons if needed/requested by the fathers. Lessons may also be added at the end if desired by the fathers. A template with the training materials is included for planning additional lessons. Flexibility is important in lessons; if necessary, they can be shortened. The length of lessons will depend upon the needs and interests of the fathers in your program.

Each lesson (except the last one) ends with an assignment for fathers to share with their child some aspect of what they have learned in the circle. This is called regalos y tesoros (gifts and treasures), since time with their fathers is a gift given to children that they will always treasure. Each lesson (except the first one) begins with fathers imparting how they shared the regalos y tesoros with their child.

It is a major commitment for fathers to attend the circle sessions. For this reason, fathers should be thanked and their efforts and contributions acknowledged throughout the lessons. Once all the lessons are completed, facilitators should try to ensure that there is a celebration and recognition of the accomplishment.

The Las Manos de Apá Father Group lessons are designed to build interest, unity, and friendships among fathers. The fathers will most likely express a desire to continue coming to the center. Once the six lessons of the Las Manos de Apá curriculum are completed, activities for fathers and children should continue on an on-going basis.

HOW TO USE THESE MATERIALS

EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

In addition to providing an opportunity for Latino fathers to share aspects of their lives and experiences through storytelling, the Las Manos de Apá Father Group lessons are designed to support Latino fathers as active participants in the literacy development of their young children.

The materials address oral storytelling and conversation as part of day-to-day interactions for building literacy skills. The same strategies apply to infants and toddlers as well. Holding babies, singing to babies, caressing babies, making faces, playing with board books and toys all help the infants begin their journeys toward becoming literate individuals (improving their reading skills, and helping them to be successful in school). When working with fathers, know the children of the fathers in your group. Be sure to address the needs of all age groups when talking with fathers about reading, writing, storytelling and early literacy.

RECOMMENDED FACILITATOR QUALIFICATIONS

The facilitators of the circle should have extensive successful experience working with fathers'/parents' groups and they should be bilingual.

Having men as members of the facilitator team provides a comfort for some fathers, and having women facilitate, as well, provides exposure for the fathers, to assertive and caring female role models. Facilitators need to have skills to create safe and comfortable group environments where fathers are given mutual respect, listened to, and where they are appreciated. In addition, the facilitator should also possess a basic knowledge of the importance of fathers' involvement in the lives of their children, as well as a basic understanding of early literacy development. The facilitator should also be able to actively listen and communicate unconditional acceptance and understanding to the fathers.

Father involvement initiatives require extensive planning. Programs need to consider how to integrate fathers into core services once the Las Manos de Apá Fathers Group Lessons have been completed.

This means involving family service staff and other relevant staff in working with fathers. It also means that once fathers are involved and attending center activities, there is a well-thought-out plan to encourage their continued participation. This may mean developing special parent meetings/events and/or incorporating father-friendly activities into existing center events.

It is very welcoming and supportive to family participants if programs can provide food and refreshments during their activities with fathers. Providing food communicates sharing, caring, encouragement and a sense of family. Offering food also supports the participation of those fathers who come straight from a work setting to attend the circle. These efforts may increase the number of participants.

Offering childcare services for whole family program events is another important aspect of father engagement programming. Providing childcare allows time for fathers and children to spend together as they come to the center, gives mothers a chance to enjoy some personal time and helps to promote father participation. However, it is not advised unless specific activities request it, for children to accompany their fathers for group meetings. The reason for this is that fathers need time to reflect on themselves and their parenting practices and having children with them for these meetings would impact the quality of the meeting experience for the fathers.

For fathers who live in rural areas or have difficulty attending the group for other reasons, it is also important to provide transportation. This can include providing transportation, offering vouchers for buses or other forms of public transportation, or helping fathers to organize car pools.

Fathers may wish to return to participate in the group in the second year or for a second time. Programs should consider whether this is feasible. Specifically, they should consider whether they have the space to accommodate these fathers

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT POINTS

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT POINTS CONTINUED

(some centers may have as many as 40 fathers participating), whether they have the time to accommodate them (it takes time for large groups to adequately process the activities) and whether having a large group will contribute to, or disrupt, the program. Las Manos provides optional activities for each lesson for returning fathers. The purpose of the activities is to 1) create a meaningful second-year experience for fathers; and 2) to help fathers develop leadership skills so that they can eventually facilitate fathers' groups on their own. Programs can develop leadership skills among returning fathers, who can then lead activities and events in programs with staff support. This requires careful planning and consideration; facilitators need to become familiar with the fathers in their groups and work to provide them with leadership opportunities. Facilitators can have fathers take on several activities that will help build their leadership skills. Returning fathers can:

- Recruit for the father's groups and encourage other fathers to participate
- Help the father engagement staff to ensure fathers sign in
- Help the father engagement staff to clean up
- Work with the father engagement staff to lead an activity
- Participate in staff training on father engagement/the father engagement lessons with staff
- Decide how to set up the room for fathers' group
- Engage in activities with children at home that are driven by the work of the group and share the outcomes of those activities with their groups

Building leadership skills in fathers requires careful planning and consideration in order to ensure fathers are fully supported and successful.

SUMMARY

The Las Manos de Apá lessons are designed to provide an opportunity for Latino fathers to engage in culturally and linguistically appropriate activities. The activities also promote father involvement in the development of young children's literacy skill through the use of family storytelling. These family stories carry with them the wisdom and lessons of the past and provide the foundations on which children can build their future.

LESSON 1

Conocimiento

(Getting to Know One Another)



PURPOSE

The focus of this first session is to build relationships with and among fathers and make them feel welcome. Extra care needs to be taken to make fathers feel comfortable in the group.



OBJECTIVE

- Participants will get to know the facilitators.
- Participants will get to know one another.



MATERIALS

- Flip Chart and Markers
- Name Tags



TIME

Two hours (depending upon numbers of fathers present). It is critical to allow enough time for all fathers to share as much as they would like to share/as much as they feel comfortable sharing.



PREPARATION

1. Arrange chairs in a U-shape, with the flip chart at one end.
2. Use letters A-F below to prepare an overview for the fathers' group lessons specific to your program. Ensure that the overview:
 - A. Recognizes and respects the contributions that fathers make every day to the lives of their children.
 - B. Explains the relationship between fathers' involvement and school success for children.
 - C. Explains the relationship between storytelling (e.g. family stories, made-up stories, etc.) reading, music, playing, etc. and oral language development and later school success.

- D. Explains the number of lessons you will be covering and the frequency (e.g. 1 session a week for 6 weeks, 2 lessons a week for 3 weeks, etc.) with which lessons will occur or be scheduled.
- E. Emphasizes to fathers that we are grateful for their participation and that they are helping children become successful in school.
- F. Emphasizes to fathers that this is their program, and that any ideas, feedback, or ideas for improving the program are welcome and encouraged.

One example of an overview might consist of the following:

“Thank you for taking the time to attend our group today. We know your time is valuable and there are other important places you could be. We know that you work hard to support your families and your children, and you are doing many wonderful things already with your children. We all want little ones to be successful in life and school and we want to join with you in helping all children reach their dreams. We want to learn and share with you about your children and talk about ways to help our young ones become successful in school. Research tells us that active father engagement in playing, reading and singing with children helps them to develop the ability to understand and use words. The ability to understand and use words will help the children become good readers and help them to be successful in school and in life. The lessons that you will be participating in over the next 6-8 weeks will allow you as fathers to work together to use your knowledge, talents, family history and love for your children as a way to help children seguir adelante (get ahead). This is your program and we want it to be meaningful for you. We welcome ideas, suggestions and thoughts you have as we progress through the program on how we can make it more meaningful, fun, and useful for you and your family.”

- 3. Write the following on a flip chart paper for fathers to be able to look at during the lesson:

Please Share:

- 1. Your name
- 2. The names of your children
- 3. What you like about being a father
- 4. A funny story about one of your children

- 4. If you have returning fathers in your program (fathers who have participated in a previous year or in a previous group) prepare a second flip chart with the following questions:
 - 1. Your name
 - 2. A funny story about one of your children
 - 3. Something different about your family (if anything) after one year of father engagement programming
 - 4. Something important that you learned last year and would like to share with new fathers



DIRECTIONS

Welcome the fathers to the session and thank them for taking time from their work and family to be involved with the Las Manos de Apá program.

Begin with a brief overview of the Las Manos de Apá project, which was created as part of the preparation of this lesson.

Once the overview is complete, the facilitator should introduce him/herself and share the following with the fathers:

- 1. Who you are (name, short background, etc.)
- 2. Why you do this work

Once the facilitator has introduced him/herself, go around the room and give the fathers an opportunity to introduce themselves. Use the pre-prepared flip chart as a reference and ask fathers to please share:

- 1. Your Name
- 2. The names of your children
- 3. What you like about being a father
- 4. A funny story about one of your children (or baby)

Go around the circle and have each father share. Fathers can always pass if they do not want to share.

RETURNING FATHERS

If you have fathers in your group for whom this may be their second year, ask them to share the following:

1. Your name
2. A funny story about one of your children
3. Something different about your family (if anything) after one year in the fatherhood program
4. Something important that you learned last year and would like to share with new fathers

THANK THE FATHERS AND EXPLAIN

At the end of each lesson, we will have an activity to do at home that grows out of the group activity. We call these our regalos (gifts) or tesoros (treasures) because the time we spend with our children is a gift they will always treasure.

ASK FATHERS

What would you like to share with your child about today's session? It could be what you like most about being a father, a funny story or something you learned or anything else you would like to share with them.

Go around the circle and ask the fathers to talk about what they plan to share with their child.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

When we return next time, we will check in to talk about activities you shared at home with your child.

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP**

Thank the fathers for their time and their willingness to share their stories. Comment on how their stories have impacted you and explain that you look forward to learning more about them and their families in the next session.



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LESSON 2

El Circulo de Apoyo y Confianza

(The Circle of Caring and Support)



PURPOSE

To offer multiple opportunities for fathers to explore their individual strengths and needs based on lessons learned from personal and family history.

To provide fathers with opportunities to discuss and discover the wealth of family stories they can share with their children, which in turn supports children's early language and literacy development.

To create an avenue to make educational topics such as health and nutrition more personal and meaningful for fathers.



OBJECTIVE

To offer fathers opportunities to explore and discuss their families' unique strengths, needs, and interests that they can share with their children by engaging in story-telling activities related to family members.



MATERIALS

- The Circle of Caring and Support Handout
- Art materials (colored pens and pencils, magazines, scissors, colored paper, glitter, pipe cleaners, stickers)
- Name tags



TIME

Two hours



PREPARATION

The group facilitator will need to have completed his circle of caring and support prior to the group session and be prepared to use it as an example. The facilitator's circle should be filled out with both the names of family members and symbols/drawings for family members in order to support members of the group who have literacy challenges. Before the lesson, the facilitator will need to decide the focus for the group from the questions listed below and have chosen a story to share with the group as an example.

Facilitators may also use the circle to create questions related to additional topics of interest identified by fathers.

From the topics listed in the boxes below, choose one to discuss with the fathers regarding the individuals in their circle.

Make copies of the "Circle of Caring and Support" handout in Spanish or English, depending upon the language preferences of the participants.

Tables will be necessary to give the fathers a hard surface on which to work on their circles. Arrange the tables in a circle or U-shape.



DIRECTIONS

Explain to the fathers that each lesson will begin with a welcoming and then checking-in with fathers on how it went for them to do their regalos y tesoros from the previous week.

Go around the circle and ask for volunteers to talk about:

1. What they shared with their children

2. How their children responded

Comment as appropriate. Once all the fathers have had a chance to speak, thank them for sharing their stories and begin the lesson.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

Our families' traditions, values and stories teach us a great deal, much of which we would like to pass on to our children and some of which we would like to change. Often there are important messages contained in our family stories. Please take a moment to think about your family members. Family members can include close friends, godparents, church communities, and others.

Pass out "The Circle of Caring and Support" handout and ask fathers to:

Please take a few minutes to fill in the names in this circle. There are no right or wrong answers, so please fill out the circle in whatever way you feel comfortable. You can put individuals in the circle using their written names or pictures or symbols. (Pictures and symbols support fathers who may have difficulty reading and writing).

The facilitator should hold up and share his/her circle as an example. Then let the fathers work on theirs. If fathers ask for clarification on any of the items, explain to fathers that items can be filled out in any way that makes sense for them and that there are no right or wrong answers.

Allow time for all the fathers to complete their circles (approximately 15-20 minutes). Once all the fathers have completed the Circle of Caring and Support, there are several questions facilitators can ask:

They can ask fathers: what are the **values** that are important to them and their families? How can these values be shared with children?

Traditions are also an important part of family life. Many immigrant parents struggle to maintain the traditions of their home cultures. Facilitators can tell fathers, "Please share about a **tradition** that is important to you. How might you share that tradition with your child?"

Facilitators can lead fathers into discussions of health-related topics by telling them: "Please tell a **health** related story about someone in the circle. And: "Who lived to be the **oldest** in your circle?" And: "What do you know about the health of the person who lived the longest on your circle?"

Facilitators can lead fathers into discussions of **nutrition** by asking: "Who on the tree cooked your favorite foods?" Usually stories will follow that are related to food and particular events. Additional questions for this topic (if not already answered by the story) might include: "What were your favorite foods?" and "When were they cooked?" The nutritional content of the food can be discussed, in addition to suggestions for diet and exercise.

Facilitators can introduce a discussion of **leadership** by asking: "Please tell a story about someone in the circle who motivated you. What did they do and how did they do it?" Once the fathers have shared stories on this topic, ask, "How do you use what you have learned from this person in your day to day life?"

Facilitators can prompt discussions about family **parenting practices** by asking fathers: "Please tell a story about something you learned about discipline from someone in the circle."

To help fathers to recognize the wealth of **information and skills** that they can share with their children, facilitators can ask fathers: "Please tell a story about something you learned from one of these people about life or about something you feel is important that you would like to share with your child"

Facilitators should share their stories on each of the topics, as a way to encourage the fathers to share theirs.

RETURNING FATHERS

If you have fathers in your group who are participating for the second year, ask them to share a story about someone in their circle who they did not talk about the year before.

TESOROS Y REGALOS

ASK FATHERS

What would you like to share with your child about today's session? It could be about something new you learned, a story about someone in your family tree, or anything you feel would be interesting to share about this tree. Consider sharing what you would like them to know about the people in this tree. If you have an infant, think about how you might share this information with your child when he or she gets older.

Go around the room and ask each father to state what he will share with his child.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

When we return next time, we will check-in to hear from fathers about their experiences sharing stories with their children.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP

Thank the fathers for sharing their time and stories with you. Explain to fathers that they have many strengths and skills to share with their children that can be found in family stories and traditions. Children love to learn about what their mothers and fathers were like when they were little and often ask to be told these stories over and over again. Telling children these stories is extremely valuable and helps them feel connected to their families. It also helps them to learn, understand and use new words, which is key to helping children acquire new skills as they grow.

El Circulo de Apoyo y Confianza



The Circle of Caring and Support



People who cared for
and supported me as
I was growing up



3

LESSON 3

Los Hombres como Maestros

(Men as Teachers in Our Lives)



PURPOSE

To provide fathers with an opportunity to discuss and consider the important contributions of men in their lives.



OBJECTIVE

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to describe an important male figure's contribution to their lives.



MATERIALS

- Various art materials (colored pens and pencils, magazines, scissors, colored paper, pipe cleaners, stickers, etc.)
- Name Tags



TIME

Two hours



PREPARATION

Create a demonstration page to share with participants regarding your own experience with a man who influenced your life in a positive way. Self-disclosure needs to be used with care; ensure that you only share as much as you are comfortable with and only as much as will give participants a clear example of the activity.



DIRECTIONS

Welcome fathers and check in on how it went for them to do their regalos y tesoros from the previous week.

Ask for volunteers to share:

1. **What they did with their children**
2. **How their children responded**

Comment as appropriate. Once all fathers have had a chance to speak, thank the fathers for sharing their stories and begin the lesson.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

We are now going to do an activity that will offer you an opportunity to reflect on the important contributions that fathers or other important men have made in your life. This may be a difficult activity for some, so please feel free to share as much or as little as you would like. Please also take care of yourself; if things become too difficult or uncomfortable, feel free to take a break or take care of yourself in any way you feel you need to.

Using the art materials, please create a page that tells a story about a man who influenced your life in a positive way. This can be a father, a brother, an uncle, a grandparent, a friend, a teacher, or someone else.

Note: Keep in mind that some participants may not have had positive male role models. If participants tell you this, suggest that they create a page about the kind of positive male figure they would like to be for their children.

Share your own storybook page with participants as an example. Tell the story of your positive experience with an important male figure, what you learned, and how you might share that experience with your child, or an important child in your life.

RETURNING FATHERS

If you have returning fathers in your group, ask them to create a storybook page about the kind of father they would like to be. Ask them to think about what steps they have taken in the past year to move toward becoming the father they would like to be, and ask them to include it in their drawing.

Ask the fathers if there are any questions.

Give the fathers 25 minutes to work on their stories about an important male figure. This is an interesting, fun, and stimulating activity for fathers. Be sure to feel out the pace and comfort level of your group; if fathers need extra time to work on their storybook page, adjust schedule to ensure they can complete their page.

Once all the fathers have completed their pages, ask the fathers to share their stories. Be sure to let them know they may choose to pass. Once all fathers have shared, thank them for sharing and ask if there are any questions or if they have any thoughts about what they have heard.

**TESOROS Y REGALOS****ASK FATHERS**

What would you like to share with your children about today's session? It could be about something new you learned today, it could be a story about an important man, or it could be something about the kind of father you would like to be.

Go around the room and ask each father to state what he will share with his child.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

When we return next time, we will check-in to ask the fathers about their experiences sharing these stories with their children.

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP**

Wrap up the session by emphasizing to the fathers that they are very important in the lives of their children. Explain that research shows us that father engagement helps children do well in school. Remind fathers that their children love them and like to play with them and spend time with them. Thank the fathers for coming to the session and for all the wonderful things they do for their children and families each day.

4

LESSON 4

Los Sabios

(The Wise Ones: Our Elders)



PURPOSE

To provide participants with a chance to reflect on the cargos y regalos (challenges and gifts) they have received from their grandparents and other elders to consider what types of gifts they want to share with their children.



OBJECTIVE

Participants will share a memory of something they learned from their grandparents and consider the baggage and the gifts they have received and how their children may be affected.



MATERIALS

- Los Sabios (The Wise Ones: Our Elders) Handout
- Art Materials (markers, crayons, construction paper, scissors, colored pencils, etc.)
- Name Tags



TIME

Two hours



PREPARATION

The facilitator will need to have filled out their own “Los Sabios” (The Wise Ones: Our Elders) handout prior to the training and be prepared to use it as an example. The facilitators’ handout should be filled out in writing and also with symbols or drawings to reflect ideas. This will be supportive of members in the group who may have literacy challenges.

Make copies of the “Los Sabios (The Wise Ones: Our Elders)” Handout

Write the following 4 questions on a piece of flip chart paper for the second half of the activity:

1. What challenges do you not want to pass on to your children?
2. What lessons would you like share with your children?

- 3. If your child were an adult, what would you like your child to say about you?
- 4. What would you like your grandchildren to say about you?



DIRECTIONS

Welcome fathers and check-in on how it went with the regalos y tesoros from the previous week.

Go around the circle and ask for volunteers to share:

- 1. What they did with their children
- 2. How their child responded

Comment as appropriate. Once all the fathers have had a chance to speak, thank the fathers for sharing their stories and begin the lesson.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

We learn a great deal from our grandparents as well as from older individuals in our communities. They teach us life wisdom and help us to look back to where we have been on our journeys. They give us many happy memories, stories and experiences which are their gifts (regalos) to us. They may also give us things we would like to change, which we are calling baggage (cargas) for the purpose of this lesson.

ASK FATHERS

How many of you remember your grandparents or an important elder? (This will help the facilitator to gauge how many participants have memories of grandparents. This is important because some individuals did not know their grandparents.)

Note: If any participant did not know their grandparents, ask him to think about an older person who has been important in his life.

ASK FATHERS

“What do you remember most about your grand parents or an important elder in your life?” (Take a couple of answers and move on.)

Pass out the Los Sabios (The Wise Ones: Our Elders) Handout

Take a moment to share your previously prepared Los Sabios (The Wise Ones: Our Elders) handout with fathers.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

“Please think about your grand parents and complete your “Los Sabios” story. If you did not know your grandparents, please think about an older person who may have had an influence on you. Please consider both the regalos (gifts) and cargas (baggage) you have received from your grandparents or an important elder in your life.”

RETURNING FATHERS

Ask returning fathers to fill out the Los Sabios worksheet and consider a different set of grandparents or important elders.

During the debrief ask the returning fathers:

- 1. Did you learn any new stories about your grandparents or the grandparents of your wife in the last year?
- 2. Did you share these stories with your child? What did he or she think about the stories?

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

You may answer the questions any way you like: with pictures, words or symbols. There are no right or wrong answers.

Allow 10-15 minutes to fill out the worksheet. If necessary, give the fathers more time so that all of them are able to complete their worksheet.

ASK THE FATHERS

Please share your worksheets. Some of our stories may involve painful memories, so it is ok to pass if you feel you do not want to share.”

Once all fathers have had an opportunity to share, acknowledge the regalos (gifts) and cargas (baggage) that have been shared. Thank the fathers for sharing their stories.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

You are now creating the “stories” that your children will share about you. Referring to the flip chart, ask fathers to share:

- 1. What challenges do you not want to pass on to your children?
- 2. What lessons would you like to share with your children?
- 3. If your child were an adult, what would you like your child to say about you?
- 4. What would you like your grandchildren to say about you?

Give each participant an opportunity to answer each question, remembering that participants have the option of passing on any question.



TESOROS Y REGALOS

ASK FATHERS

What would you like to share with your children about today's session? It could be about something new you learned today, it could be a story about a grandparent or a wise elder, or about an important lesson from an elder.

Go around the room and ask each father to state what he will share with his child.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

When we meet next time, we will talk about our experiences sharing stories at home with our children.



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP

Sometimes we do not realize that the stories we have from and about our grandparents and elders bring us wisdom and knowledge. The stories told to us by our grandparents and the stories we create with them eventually become our own stories. Even stories of great pain and suffering contain lessons which provide us with a map for our lives that we can share with our children. Our children need this map to give them roots in their families so they can have a strong foundation upon which to build their futures. We must guide our children through our pasts so that they can build their futures.

Los Sabios

Los nombres de mis padres/personas mayores son _____

_____.

Cuando recuerdo mi hogar en _____,

me siento _____

por la razón de que _____

y quiero _____.

El olor de _____ me recuerda de mi niñez,

cuando yo _____

mis abuelos/personas mayores eran de _____

_____.

La vida de ellos era muy _____

porque _____.

Las dificultades que me dieron son _____

_____.

Los regalos que me dejaron son _____

_____.

The Wise Ones: Our Elders

My parents'/elders' names are _____

When I remember my home in _____,

I feel _____

because _____,

and I want to _____.

The smell of _____ reminds me of

my childhood when I used to _____.

My grandparents were from _____.

Their lives were very _____

because _____.

The challenges my parents/grandparents/elders shared with me are _____

_____.

The gifts my parents/grandparents/elders gave to me are _____

_____.



5

LESSON 5

Mi Cuento, Mi Vida

(My Story, My Life)



PURPOSE

To provide participants with a chance to reflect on their life experiences and journeys.



OBJECTIVE

Participants will create a road of life project which will illustrate their life stories and wisdom. This activity will offer participants a chance to reflect on where they have been and consider future directions.



MATERIALS

- Art materials (markers, pipe cleaners, crayons, old magazines, glue, scissors, construction paper, scissors, colored pencils, feathers, stickers)
- Name Tags
- Large pieces of paper 17" X 11"



TIME

Two hours



PREPARATION

The facilitator will need to have filled out their own "Road of Life" prior to the training to share with fathers as an example. The facilitator's handout should use written words, along with symbols or drawings to reflect ideas. This will help members of the group who may have literacy challenges.

There is no handout for this session as participants are free to make their road look any way they like.



DIRECTIONS

Welcome fathers and check-in on how it went with the regalos y tesoros from the previous week.

Go around the circle and ask for volunteers to share:

- 1) What they did with their children
- 2) How their child responded

Comment as appropriate. Once all fathers have had a chance to speak, thank the fathers for sharing their stories and begin the lesson.

EXPLAIN TO PARTICIPANTS

We all have had many experiences that make us who we are; it is important for us to remember where we come from so that we can consider where we are going. We may think of our lives as a road; we're on a journey and there are many things that happen to us along the way that change the path and sometimes even the destination.

Facilitators should share key examples from the previously prepared road of life.

ASK PARTICIPANTS

Please create your own road of life. Were there times when the road was curved and there was a surprise around the corner? Were there times when your path was blocked? Were there times when the road was bumpy? Were there times when the road was smooth? Also consider who helped you when times were difficult on the road. Encourage fathers to be creative. (There is no handout for this activity as the participants will create their own roads with curves, blockades, bumps etc.)

RETURNING FATHERS

Ask returning fathers if their roads look different this year; are there any new events in the past or in the present that they would like to add.

This is a very personal activity, ensure enough time for all participants to finish their road of life (approximately 30 minutes)

Once all fathers are done, go around the circle and ask the fathers to share their road of life. Once all participants have had an opportunity to share, thank them for sharing their personal stories.

RETURNING FATHERS

During the debrief, after the activity, ask returning fathers these questions:

1. Have your views on your road of life changed over the past year? Do you see your road any differently now?
2. What is the favorite part of your road? Is there a special story that goes with that time?



TESOROS Y REGALOS

ASK FATHERS

What would you like to share with your child about today's session? It could be about something new you learned, it could be a story about something funny or an important story you would like to share with your child (or in the future, if your child is a baby) about your life.

Go around the room and ask each father to state what he will share with his child.

EXPLAIN TO FATHERS

When we return next time, we will talk about our experiences sharing stories about the road of life with our children.



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP

Thank the fathers for sharing their stories and journeys. Explain to the fathers that their life experiences are important and make them the most important person in the lives of their children. Explain that in the DVD, "My Parents, My Teachers" it is stated "every parent has what every child needs." Emphasize to fathers that they have many wonderful stories and life wisdom to share with their children and that children want to hear them. Explain to the fathers that their stories provide the road map for the lives of their children and that understanding their family history and where they come from helps children to feel safe and connected. This then allows them to use their roots to realize their dreams.

6

LESSON 6

Amor de Padre

(A Father's Love)



PURPOSE

To provide fathers with an opportunity to create a fictional or non-fictional story they would like to share with their child.



OBJECTIVE

To support fathers in understanding that telling stories to children is important, and that as fathers they have many stories to share.



MATERIALS

- Name Tags
- Art Materials
- "A Time of Magic" Handout (Danise, R 2005)
- La Promesa (The Promise) Handout



TIME

Two hours



PREPARATION

Certificates of completion (or some type of individual recognition of completion of the lessons of the Las Manos de Apá curriculum)

The facilitator should create a short story to share with fathers about his childhood using both writing and art materials.

Make color copies of the "La Promesa" (The Promise Handout)



DIRECTIONS

Welcome fathers and check-in on how it went with the regalos y tesoros from the previous week.

Go around the circle and ask for volunteers to share:

1. What they did with their children
2. How the children responded

Comment as appropriate. Once all fathers have had a chance to speak, thank the fathers for sharing their stories and begin the lesson.

Explain to the fathers that you are going to read them a story called “A Time of Magic” by Roberto Dansie (or depending on the literacy level of your group, you could ask for a volunteer to read the story.)

Once the story has been read,

Ask fathers if they remember a story their father or another male family member told them. Take a few responses and then ask the fathers to create a story they would like to share with their child. It can be a story about themselves when they were little, a story they remember from a family member or a story they make up.

RETURNING FATHERS

Remind fathers that they have many stories to tell and ask returning fathers to create a story different than the one they shared last year/in the last group.

Give the fathers time (approximately 30 minutes) to create their stories.

Once all the fathers have finished their stories, go around the group and ask the fathers to share their stories with the group. Be sure they understand that they can pass if they do not wish to share.

RETURNING FATHERS

Ask returning fathers to share their new stories with the group and then ask the following questions:

1. Have you been able to share some of your stories with your child?
2. What was your child’s favorite story last year?
3. Was your favorite story the same as your child’s favorite story?
4. Did your child want to hear the story more than one time?
(Be sure to explain to fathers that repeating the story is important and helps children learn.)

EXPLAIN TO THE FATHERS

Having good reading and writing skills is the key for children to be successful in school. In order to learn reading and writing skills, children need to understand how to use words. They learn about words by playing, singing, talking, reading, and telling stories with you from the time they are born. It does not matter what language you speak, but it is important to use the language you are most comfortable with. Children will learn to speak another language faster if they are able to speak their home language first. Being able to speak two languages is a great gift for children.

Reading to children and playing with books is a good way to help children learn to read as well. Even if it is difficult to read the words in a book, you can make up stories or talk about what is happening in the pictures. Be sure to ask children to read to you or tell you stories about the pictures they see—sometimes older children who know the story will do this without prompting. If the child is familiar with the story and says, “That’s not the way it goes,” try to engage them in using their imagination to create a story that goes a different way than what they are used to.

Pass out “La Promesa” (The Promise Sheet) to fathers.

Ask them to make a promise to spend a certain amount of each day either playing with children or talking with them during daily routines such as eating dinner, driving in the car, or before going to bed. Remind them that in addition to being fun, these activities help children learn to use words which will help them become good readers.

Once the fathers have completed their promise sheets, go around the room and ask them to share what they have promised to do with their child.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP

As this is the last session, a special ending is important. Thank the fathers for their commitment and work during the past six lessons.

- Encourage them to keep playing with their children and teaching them new words each day.
- Remind the fathers that their children love and adore them and that they are superheroes in the eyes of their children.
- Remind them they have many wonderful stories from their lives to share with their children.
- Explain that true stories are magical for children and that stories can be about anything, including what the father did during the day at work, or something the father did as a child.
- Remind fathers that children love to hear the same stories over and over again.

Inform fathers of any additional activities that will take place at the program that could benefit them or their families.

Provide special refreshments and music, and allow the fathers to celebrate and socialize together.

“Un Tiempo de Magia”

(Dansie, R. 2005)

“¿Deseas la historia de un libro o una historia sobre mí?” Esta era la pregunta que mi papá siempre hacía cuando me llevaba a acostar. Era mi momento favorito de todo el día. Yo podía escoger. Y si yo escogía una historia de él, mi papá me daba otras dos opciones. Una historia verdadera, o sólo una historia. Invariablemente, yo escogía una historia verdadera, que tuviera que ver con él siendo todavía un niño.

Mi hermano menor también pasó a través de este ritual familiar. Cuando llegaba al punto de las historias verdaderas, Martín interrumpía a mi papá y decía, “Papá, hace millones de años habían dinosaurios. Esto quiere decir que cuando tú eras niño viste los dinosaurios, ¿verdad?” Yo me reía y me preguntaba como mi papá tomaría ese comentario, pero él siempre sonreía y procedía a contarle a Martín una historia de los dinosaurios que con los que se había encontrado cuando era sólo un niño pequeño.

A medida que fui creciendo, mi papá compartía conmigo más historias, aquellas que en realidad le habían ocurrido a él. Yo las encontraba tan cautivadoras como aquellas que me contaba cuando yo era menor. Esta es la forma en que vine a ver este mundo, a la llegada del siglo 20 y en la tierra de Montana. Llegué a conocer a sus perros favoritos, el trabajo con las ovejas, los carruajes y los caballos, la pesca con mosca, los hábitos de los venados y los alces, las largas noches de invierno y los cielos coloridos de las auroras boreales.

“¡Hora de dormir!” diría mi madre, trayéndome a mi tiempo y lugar y mi papá decía entonces “terminaremos esto en otro momento.” Y yo me preguntaba que pasaría después. Llegaría la noche y él comenzaría la historia donde la había dejado y aún habría más espera, siempre algo para aguardar ansioso.

Cuando mi papá murió, las historias se acabaron. Es difícil ir en la vida sin historias. Los substitutos para estas historias eran los libros, la televisión y el cine. Estos resultaban genéricos, distantes e impersonales. Servían para pasar el tiempo, pero no estaban llenos de vida.

Cuando llegaron mis hijos y era la hora de llevarlos a la cama, yo les leía sus libros de cuentos y un día, les conté una historia de mi papá y las historias que él me había contado a mí. Encontré en sus ojos la mirada que mi papá había encontrado en los míos. Y la magia regresó a mi vida y sentí a mi papá cerca, muy cerca. Llegó el día cuando les conté mi primera historia verdadera. Un momento clave en nuestras vidas. Las historias de las aventuras que yo pasé cuando era un niño pequeño. Estas historias se han convertido en sus favoritas. Y resulta cómico; estas historias aún no llegan a su fin. Porque la historia más interesante es la historia de nuestra vida. Mi papá murió siendo yo un joven. Mis hijos nunca lo conocieron, sin embargo ellos lo conocen a él y sus aventuras. No tengo duda de que mis hijos se encontrarán un día contándoles a sus hijos acerca de su abuelo, su papá y sus propias aventuras de la vida. Ellos también encontrarán su tiempo de Magia.

“A Time of Magic”

(Dansie, R. 2005)

“Do you want a book story or a story from me?” This was the question my father always asked when putting me to bed. It was my favorite time of the entire day. I got to choose. And if I went for a story from him, my father would give me two more options. A true story or just a story. Invariably I would choose a true story, which had to do with him when he was a little boy.

My youngest brother also went through this family ritual. When it came to the true stories, Martin interrupted my father and said. “Dad, millions of years ago there were dinosaurs. That means that when you were a little boy, you got to see the dinosaurs didn’t you?” I laughed and wondered how my father would take such a comment, but he just smiled and proceeded to tell Martin a story of the dinosaurs he encountered when he was just a little boy.

As I grew older, my father shared with me more stories, the ones that actually happened to him. I found them just as captivating as the ones he told me in my younger years. That is how I came to see this world, at the turn of the 20th century and in the land of Montana. I got to know his favorite dogs, the work with the sheep, the buggies and horses, the fly fishing, the habits of the deer and moose, the long winter nights, and the colorful skies of the aurora borealis.

“Time to go to sleep!” my mother would say, bringing me back to my time and place, and my father would say “we will finish it some other time.” And I would wonder about what had happened next. The night would come and he would start the story where he had left it, and still there would always be more waiting, always something to look forward to.

When my father passed away the stories stopped. It is kind of hard to go on with life without stories. The substitute for these stories was books, TV, and movies. They were generic, distant, impersonal. They killed time, but did not infuse it with life.

When my children arrived, and the time came for them to be put to bed. I read to them from their children’s books, and then, one day, I told them a story of my father, and the stories that he told me. I found in their eyes the look that my father had found in mine. And magic came back into my life, and I felt my father near, so near. The day came when I told them my first real story. A key moment in our lives. The stories of the adventures I went through when I was just a little boy. These stories have become their favorite. And it’s funny; these stories still have no end. For the most interesting story is the story of our life. My father died when I was a young man. My children never met him, yet they know him and his adventures. I have no doubt my children will find themselves telling their children of their grandfather, their father and their own adventures of a lifetime. They will find their time of Magic.

La Promesa (The Promise)

Yo prometo de pasar tiempo con mi niño(a) haciendo uno de los siguiente actividades/I promise to spend time with my child each day doing one of the following activities:

ACTIVITY/ACTIVIDAD	SIGNATURE/FIRMA
 Reading/ Leyendo	
 Playing/ Jugando	
 Singing/ Cantando	
 Talking/ Hablando	
 Dancing/ Bailando	



Form to Plan Additional Lessons

(If additional lessons are planned, be sure to keep this documentation for the evaluation and submit with quarterly report)

PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY (State the reason for the activity)

OBJECTIVE (What will participants/fathers walk away with?)

MATERIALS (List the materials you will need to accomplish the Lesson)

TIME (How long will it take to complete the Lesson?)

PREPARATION (What will need to be done first to prepare for the Lesson?)
