

Active Parenting for Stepfamilies

Video 3 – A Tale of Two Histories: Turning Differences into Opportunities

The Purpose of this Video

This “Video Library” version of the group discussion program, Active Parenting for Stepfamilies, is designed for parents to view on their own or in groups when time does not allow for the full two-hour sessions. Because group viewing can be enhanced through discussion, the following questions will help a leader facilitate such a discussion. Most of the questions are aimed at helping parents apply the information in the video to their own lives, and they can be used as part of a large-group discussion or by having participants form pairs or small groups. Ask as many questions as time allows and, of course, feel free to add or delete questions as you think best for your audience.

Experience has shown that parents who read the accompanying Parent’s Guide (sold separately) will best be able to utilize the skills presented in the video.* However, when this is not possible, we suggest that you give each participant a copy of the enclosed “Program at a Glance” brochure. (Permission is granted to photocopy the brochures and this guide.)

Leading a Group Discussion

Introduce the video by asking a few questions, such as:

- What challenges have you noticed in your stepfamilies that result from having two different ways of doing things? For example, how you celebrate a holiday.
- What challenges have you encountered dealing with issues of space, time, money, or authority?
- Has anyone in your stepfamily been caught in the middle of a loyalty conflict between two others?

Play the video and follow with questions such as these:

1. What did you learn or find helpful in this video?
2. What did you learn about from the example of the Sosas decorating their Christmas tree?
3. The video talked about the importance of having limits and boundaries. What limits do you think you need in your family around space, including issues of privacy and sexuality?
4. What limits do you have or need around money?
5. In the stepfamily triangle, why is the bond between biological parent and child the strongest?
6. Why is the bond between the adults the most important?
7. How can you avoid having someone caught in the middle of a conflict?
8. Why is responsibility an important character trait to teach your children?
9. How can giving your kids both allowances and chores help teach them responsibility?
10. How are allowances and chores working in your families? How will you modify what you are doing if necessary?