



# Paths to the Future

**12-WEEK FACILITATOR ACTIVITY GUIDE**

For Ages 12+

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## Week Three Theme: **MOTHER/DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIPS**

Through collage-making and group discussion, girls will begin to explore their relationships with their mothers (or the “mother figure” in their lives), share feelings, and identify ways to take care of themselves when things go wrong.

### **ACTIVITY**

- Collage and Group Discussion, Letter Writing

### **MATERIALS**

- Posterboard or large paper
- Magazines for cut-outs
- Markers or pastels
- Gluesticks
- Scissors

### **PURPOSE**

- To describe and define the different types of mother/daughter relationships.
- To provide a safe place for girls to express their feelings about their relationships with their mother or the “mother figure” in their lives.
- To discuss obstacles or barriers that typically come up in mother/daughter relationships.
- To identify ways to take care of themselves and support each other when things go wrong or become overwhelming.



## Week Three



### OPENING RITUAL

Do the same opening ritual each time.



### THEME INTRODUCTION

Introduce the theme of the week, “Mother/Daughter Relationships.”



### CHECK-IN

Go around the circle and have each girl “check in” as to what is going on in her life.

*Ask the girls how things went with relating assertively last week. Any experiences?*



### ACTIVITY 1

#### Introduction & Discussion

*Note to Facilitator: If there are girls in the group who do not have a mother or whose mother is deceased, ask them to think about who might be the dominant “mother figure” in their lives (i.e. a grandmother, aunt, close family friend, etc.)*

- 1 Identify the purpose of this week’s theme and activity. Say:
  - In general, some girls have conflicted relationships with their moms and sometimes their fathers are not in the picture.
  - Relationships with moms may sometimes seem like love/hate relationships and can at times be difficult or painful.
  - Sometimes relationships with mothers may seem more like friendships and other times more like a parent-child relationship. This can be confusing, e.g. sometimes she can act like a friend, but later get mad and use information against you.
  - Finding ways to take care of ourselves and stay strong even when we’re hurting or in pain can help us get through difficult times.



### ACTIVITY 2

#### Collage – Mother/Daughter Relationships

Prepare a space for girls so that they have all the materials they need to make a collage. Inform them that this activity will be done in silence. If possible, have soft, relaxing music playing in the background.

- 1 Tell the girls that later on you’re going to have a discussion about mother/daughter relationships, but for now they’re going to do something creative.
- 2 Ask girls to pause for a moment to quietly reflect and think carefully about their relationships with their mothers. They may close their eyes if they wish.
- 3 Tell them that this collage will represent their relationships with their moms or mother figures and some of the things that symbolize this relationship.



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- 4 Ask them draw a circle in the center of the paper that will represent themselves and their mothers (or mother figure). Ask them to find pictures, words, symbols, or images to place in the middle of the circle that depicts them and their moms in some way (it can be abstract or they can simply draw a figure or write words, etc.).
- 5 Then, by again using words, symbols, colors, pictures or images from magazines, ask them to draw or paste these images and words all around the center that may symbolize some of the thoughts, feelings, opinions, etc. (good and not so good) that come up for them when they think about their relationships with their mothers. Allow 35 – 45 minutes for this activity.



### SHARING OF ACTIVITY

- 1 Have each girl share her collage one at a time. Encourage them to describe particular images and insights.
- 2 You can use the following discussion questions:
  - What was it like making this collage?
  - How do you feel when you look at it?
  - What is it like sharing it with others?

Close the sharing activity by acknowledging their creativity and openness in sharing their relationships with their mothers and then introduce the next discussion.



### ACTIVITY 3

#### Discussion

#### Topic: “Mother/Daughter Relationships”

Introductory Remarks (To be made by the facilitator to begin the discussion):

- Mother/daughter relationships can be very complex.
- It’s hard to find a girl who hasn’t fought or been in conflict with her mother.
- Feelings about our moms can at times be strong and sometimes painful.
- Relationships with our mothers affect our lives in one way or another, whether we like it or not.
- Being aware of these feelings and accepting them can help us take care of ourselves when problems arise.

Introduce the objectives of the discussion to the group. Try to make it natural and informal. Feel free to use your own words. Objectives:

- 1 To describe and define the different types of mother/daughter relationships.



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- 2 To describe obstacles or barriers that typically come up in these relationships and the feelings we have about them.
- 3 To think about ways to take care of ourselves first and support each other when things go wrong or become overwhelming.

### **Shape Discussion:**

*(Ask questions relating to Objective #1)*

- Describe some of the different types of mother/daughter relationships that you know about and how they are different. What should a good relationship be like and why? What is your best guess as to what a mother's role should be? Tell us about the type of relationship you have with your own mother (or mother figure)?

*(mini-summary)*

*(Ask questions relating to Objective #2)*

- What problems typically come up between mothers and daughters? Why do some girls have a really hard time when they're in conflict with their moms and other girls don't? What types of things do girls justify doing when they're angry or hurt by their mothers? What problems have you experienced in your own relationship with your mom? How does it feel when you are in conflict with her? What typically happens?

*(mini-summary)*

*(Ask questions relating to Objective #3)*

- Tell me about a time when someone you know has been in conflict with her mom, but she still took care of herself. How do you think she dealt with her feelings? How would you guess she gets the support she needs to deal with it and keep herself strong? What ways can you take care of yourself when you're having conflict with your own mom even if you think that she's not going to change? What can you do to get support from friends and/or family during these times?

### **Summarize:**

Take time to summarize all of the key points that were made and the discussion as a whole. The facilitator can summarize or the participants can. Tell them what THEY said.



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Using the talking piece, go around the circle and have each girl answer the following question:

- What is one thing you can do to take care of yourself if a conflict arises with your mother (or mother figure) this week?

*Tell the girls you'll check in with them next week to see how it went.*



### ACTIVITY 4

#### **Letter to My Mother**

If time allows, have girls write a letter to their mother to express anything they would like say or perhaps resolve. Let the girls know that they do not necessarily have to give the letter to their mother, but can if they wish.



### SHARING OF ACTIVITY

When finished, ask for volunteers who would like to share their letter or parts of their letters with the group.



### CLOSING RITUAL

Bring the girls together for your closing ritual.