

Cooperation (Grades 3-5)

For PurposeFull Families



EXPLANATION:

This month we are talking about Cooperation! Cooperation is about assistance and support, about collaboration and teamwork. It is a necessary tool in our toolbox for creating a community that cares for one another. Here is the definition we are using:

Cooperation: Working together and helping others.

A lot of messaging in our world would suggest that “doing it on your own” is a measure of success. And while independence is important, we must develop skills to work alongside one another and create things, together, that are better than anything we could create on our own. Successful people know when and how to ask for help and are generous in giving it out when they have something to offer! Cooperation requires great communication, self-awareness, and the ability to step up (or step back) when the time is right to best support whatever group you are working with. Over the course of the month, we will be creative in teams, accomplish amazing things side by side, and learn about what it means to do meaningful, PurposeFull work together.

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- It has been said that teams are only as good as their weakest player. What do you think about that?
- What skills are important for Cooperation? Which of those skills are your strengths and which skills would you like to improve?
- What does Cooperation look like in your home? How would each member of the household prefer others Cooperate with them?

QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK:

- Think about a sports team that you’ve played on or seen on television or your computer. Which athlete do you think of when you hear the phrase “team player?”
- What makes working with others fun? What makes working with others challenging? Where do you see Cooperation work well? Where doesn’t it work well?
- Who is someone you Cooperate well with? Who is someone you struggle to Cooperate with? Why do you think that is?

APPLICATION:

Books:

- [*The Whispering Town*](#) by Jennifer Elvgren
- [*Code 7: Cracking the Code for an Epic Life*](#) by Bryan R Johnson
- [*Goal!*](#) by Mina Javaherbin
- [*The Subway Sparrow*](#) by Leyla Torrest
- [*Chasing Vermeer*](#) by Blue Balliet
- [*Teamwork Isn’t My Thing And I Don’t Like To Share*](#) by Julia Cook
- [*Earth Day - Hooray*](#) by Stuart J. Murphy

FOR YOUR READING:

- [*5 Ways To Encourage Cooperation*](#) by Susan Brunk
- [*6 Pediatrician-Recommended Tips For Getting Kids To Cooperate*](#) by Wendy L. Hunter, M.D.

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PurposeFULL
People

ACTIVITY:

Play the classic cooperative catch game as a family! Choose an object to toss back and forth. Use a water balloon if you are feeling brave or keep it simple with a beanbag. Stand across from your partner with your toes about one foot apart. One partner tosses the object to the other partner. Each time the object is caught, the partners take one step backwards to create a larger gap. The thrower and the catcher must work cooperatively to be successful! See how you can improve your communication and score (distance) over the course of the month.

PURPOSEFULL PURSUITS:

That's Puzzling

Put all of the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle out on a common-area table and work as a family to build the puzzle. As an additional challenge, could you do it without the picture on the box as a reference point?

Toughness: 3

Time: 3

Type: Group

Cooking Up Cooperation

In this challenge, every family member will be in charge of one dish for tonight's dinner. Work together to plan the meal, then make room for one another in the kitchen as you all take a task and prepare something to savor for tonight's collaborative meal.

Work together to plan the menu ahead of time or get creative and make each part in secret and see how they come together!

Toughness: 3

Time: 2

Type: Group

Spring Cleaning

As a household, brainstorm a list of chores that help keep the home in order. What are some things that would really make the home feel more peaceful, beautiful, or inspiring? After brainstorming, each person chooses a role to help tidy or decorate the home. Throw on some music that everyone enjoys and get to work beautifying your home.

Better yet, make it a game! Have points associated with how quickly (and how quality) each person can clean each thing. Keep track of the score and have a prize waiting for the Clean Up Champion.

Toughness: 1

Time: 2

Type: Group

Cooperative Storytelling

To prepare for this activity, gather about 25 small scraps of paper. Ask each family member to write down one noun on each scrap of paper. Encourage family members to write a variety of people, places, and things. Shuffle the scraps and place them face down on a table. One family member will start the story by drawing one scrap of paper. The family member will include that noun in the beginning of the story and add extra details as needed. Family members will continue to build the story by drawing more nouns and adding more details until you run out of scraps. Don't forget to start winding down the story to prepare for an ending when you get low on scraps. With Cooperation, your family can create a wonderfully creative story!

Toughness: 3

Time: 2

Type: Group