

**What can we do to make a difference in how we feel?**

*Taking action where  
we can:*

**Family  
Emotional  
Charter**

# What is a Family Emotional Charter?

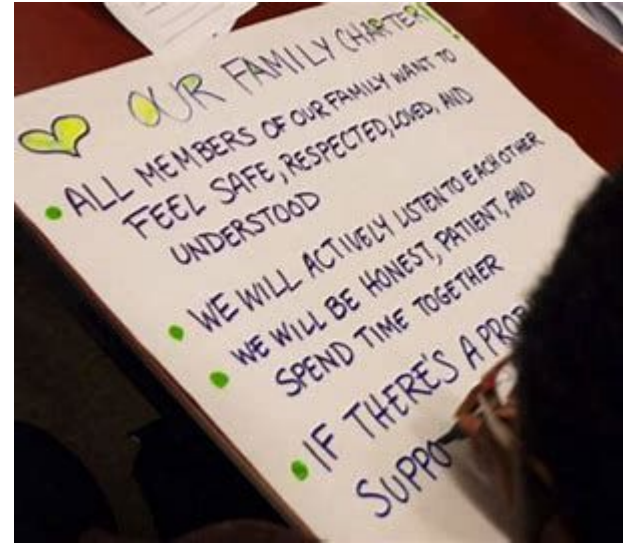
A written document detailing how all family members would like to feel

Everyone clearly states how they want to feel at home

A way of building deeper connections with our children and family members

Promotes a positive emotional climate in your home

A framework for checking in with each other often and supporting each other



*"Putting our emotional needs in writing is a way of making them real for everyone"*

# How to Build your Family's Emotional Charter?

Grab some paper, pens, crayons, and/or markers or use your computer!

Ask everyone to write down 5 feelings in response to: *How would you like to feel at home?*

- Ask each family member to think about that question. Combine all of the words into one master list.
- Discuss each word and notice which feeling words have similar meanings
- Narrow down your list to the “top 5” words and write them down.

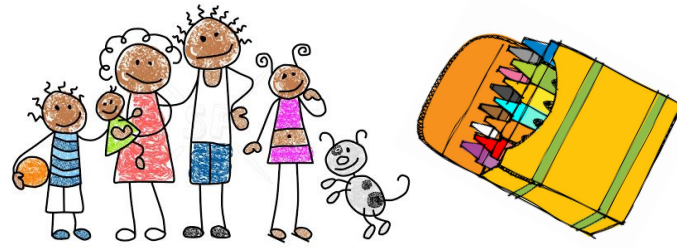


For each feeling word, discuss the things that would help each person experience more of that feeling.

- What are one or two specific behaviors that could help each family member have the feeling as often as possible? For example, being ‘nice’ is not very specific. But smiling, saying good morning, knocking on the door before entering are specific and even observable behaviors.

# Continued

**Pull all the pieces together and create the Charter**



- Be creative! Use your family's talent and have fun. The Charter can be big or small, colorful, or filled with drawings.
- What's important is that you have a final document that includes the top 5 feelings and the specific behaviors.
- Once the Family Charter is complete, everyone must sign it - Then display it in your home!

## Keeping your Charter alive

- Have each family member set a daily or weekly goal to uphold the Charter.
- Schedule weekly or monthly family meetings to review the Charter. What's working? What's not? What can we do differently?
- Revise the Family Charter, as needed. It should be a living agreement.

Mark Brackett, Ph.D.

