

Moderator and Experienced Mother/Parent Duties for the Support Group Meetings

NOTE regarding the leader code: the call is tied to the person who calls in as the Leader, using the leader code. When that person hangs up the call is ended. So please be sure that you can stay on for the full conference. If you hang up early, everyone will be disconnected.

Teleconference number: 888-844-9904

Participant's code: 6690 326

Leader code: 5239 627

It is important to keep these support groups active, thank you for taking on the role of moderator and experienced mother/parent. These activities are a great resource and support system for employees, however, they will only be as successful as the leadership who guides the process. It is my hope that when I am replaced, that person will provide leadership and guidance to you, but in the meantime it will be all yours. I will provide information below to be helpful. I also recommend that you think back to your time as a lactating mother or parent for inspiration, check out the library for books and magazines on parenting, also check out websites. That is where is go a lot of information in addition to my personal experiences. I actually subscribe to "Parent's Magazine." Hope this is helpful.

Duties: Moderator

- Remind the experience parent/mother that the meeting is coming up
- Lead the meeting by
- Introducing yourself
- Stating the purpose of the meeting
- Introducing the experience mother/parent (short statement, the let them say what they would like about themselves)
- Ask the first question to get the conversation started/ask other questions to keep it going
- If the conversation lulls and it looks like everyone is talked out for this session, make closing remarks and thank everyone for their attendance and end the session.

Duties: Experienced Mother/Parent

- Support the moderator
- Provide advice to the group based on your experiences as a lactating mother or parent
- Help keep conversation flowing

Moderator's Opening Comments:

This is what I say (you can edit it to suit your needs or preference)

Hello

Introduce yourself: My name is Sharyn Alvarez, I am the National FWPM, I work at NHQ in Washington, DC. In the Workforce Management Division

Identify the meeting: This is the Lactation Support Group Meeting

State the purpose of the meeting: The purpose of these meetings for us to get together and talk about any issues, concerns, and questions you may have as it relates to being a nursing mother and a field employee. These meetings are also open to District employees, RD and FSA employees as out in the field you are co-located and often are friends. If there are earth team volunteers or contractors in your office you can also invite them to participate. The more the merrier.

I will moderate the meeting and Francine will be the “experienced mother.”

I will moderate the meeting and Francine will be the “experienced mother.”

Introduce the experienced mother/parent and explain their role: The experienced mother is an NRCS field employee who has children and pumped milk in the work place. She offers and provides practice advice and shares her experiences as a nursing mother who is also a field employee.

Introduction of the experience mother/parent: Francine would you like to introduce yourself? Then you introduce yourself, stating your name, job title, number and age of your children.

Moderator: Then I will ask the group to state their name, state, job title, number of children. I also ask how many years have you worked in your career before you had your first child? Write down the years they state and divide that number by the number of participants (it usually averages out to 7 years).

The reason why I ask this question is because women are often hesitant about taking the time they need to pump at work, they feel that they should be working all 8 hours per day. they are hesitant to participate in these teleconferences too. I say that you spent 7 full years working steadily and the 6 – 12 months you spend pumping milk in the work place for your child is nothing compared to a 30 year career. We don’t require you to take leave to pump like we don’t require employees to take leave to smoke a cigarette and pumping milk for your babies is a better activity than smoking is. So relax and pump as often as you need to. also feel free to participate in these support group meetings.

Does anyone have a question, concern or comment they would like to make to get the conversation going?

NOTE:

Don’t be concern about silences at these meetings. It takes a while for people to warm up over the phone. It would be a good idea to post your photo and the experience mother’s photo in the flyer advertising the meeting (if you have time to) then the participants will see who they are talking to.

Some questions to get the conversation started:

Ask if this is their first meeting, why did they decide to join?

For employees that have not given birth yet:

Do you have a maternity plan?

Have you gotten your pump from your insurance company yet?

Let them know that they can get Madela pump parts from Target Stores

For employees that have given birth and am back from maternity leave

How are they feeling? Are they working full time?

Is the place they are pumping in adequate?

Do they have a car charger for their pump?

WORKING PARENT Support Group

Moderator: I would follow the same format at above, just adjust the wording to fit Parents, noting that some of the participants will be men.

Identify the meeting: This is the Working Parent Support Group Meeting

State the purpose of the meeting: The purpose of these meetings for us to get together and talk about any issues, concerns, questions you may have as it relates to being a working parent and a field employee. This group is a spin-off of the lactation support group. It was suggested that there are parents out in the field that are NOT nursing mothers who would be interested in a group. So we development one. These meetings are also open to District employees, RD and FSA employees as out in the field you are co-located and often are friends. . If there are earth team volunteers or contractors in your office you can also invite them to participate. The more the merrier.

Moderator: I will moderate the meeting and Wynea will be the “experienced parent.”

Introduce the experienced mother/parent and explain their role: The experienced parent is an NRCS field employee who has children. She/he offers and provides practice advice and shares her/his experiences as a parent who is also a field employee.

Introduction of the experience mother/parent: Wynea would you like to introduce yourself? Then you introduce yourself, stating your name, job title, number and age of your children.

Moderator: Then I will ask the group to state their name, state, job title, number of children.

Getting the meeting started: Does anyone have a question, concern or comment they would like to make to get the conversation going?

NOTE:

Don't be concern about silences at these meetings. It takes a while for people to warm up over the phone. It would be a good idea to post your photo and the experience mother's photo in the flyer advertising the meeting (if you have time to) then the participants will see who they are talking to.

Some questions to get the conversation started:

Note the time of year, i.e. how did the holidays work with you and your kids this year?
Or if it is spring break, talk about what plans they have, if it is near summer, what plans do they have for summer day care? (i.e. camps etc.) refer them to EAP (Sand Creek Group) can help them find summer camps for kids.

If you have time, talk with the experience parent ahead of the meeting and bounce around ideas for conversation topics.