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Our Social World Lesson Objective

Time: **40 minutes**

New York State Parenting Standard: **Standard 3: Support Systems and Services**

Aim: For Students to look more closely at their social world, identify how it might change if they were to become a parent, and where they would go to find supportive services.

Objectives: Students Will:

- 1. Look closely at their current social world and those they rely on for support.**
- 2. Identify how their support system would change if they were to have a child today.**
- 3. Brainstorm, research and share information on local community supports for families with young children**

Materials Needed:

Lesson outline, yarn, and large people cutouts (laminated or made from cardboard or cardstock material), “My Social World” and “My Family Support Network” handouts, list of children and family service agencies or community resource guide.

Our Social World Lesson Outline

- I. Our Social World
 - A. Engage in a brief discussion about social supports, and how essential these are to our well-being. Research suggests that having significant support during parenting is of critical importance to family health.
 - B. Have participants complete the “Social World” handout for themselves, at this time in their life.
 - 1. The person in the Center represents “Self.”
 - 2. The next is “those we can count on in the middle of the night.”
 - 3. The next is extended family/friends/supports
 - 4. The last is coal systems ie. agencies where we receive help, government supports, etc.
 - C. Have students complete this again, this time have them fill it in as if they were a parent of a young child (you may supply specific scenarios if you want).
 - 1. What people/places did they previously rely on that they can no longer rely on?
 - 2. Why would this be?
 - 3. Where might they go for new/additional supports?
- II. Enhancing Connections and Building Supports
 - A. As a follow up to the above personal activity, engage in the following large group activity.
 - 1. Have students stand in a circle (not too far apart), or have several smaller circles.
 - 2. Hold a ball of yarn, and identify the name of support system or agency that assists parents with young children. As you say the name, throw the ball of yarn - **holding the end of it** - to another individual in the circle. Ask them to name a person/agency while throwing the ball of yarn - **keeping a piece of it**- to another person, and so on. Continue to do this until you have created a yarn web. You can add a question such as “what values, beliefs help us to raise healthy children? Etc, if students are short on ideas. The idea is to create a large web.
 - 3. Give group a set of large paper cut-out family members laminated or made of hard material (you would need to enlarge those provide a great deal, or create your own). Have students throw cutout people up in the air over their web, and see what happens.
 - 4. Have groups come back together to discuss what happened.
 - a. How many people “fell through the cracks?”
 - b. Which family members were more likely to fall through – Children because they were smaller, need more support to succeed.
 - c. Share ideas for making connections in our lives to prevent “falling through the cracks.”
 - d. Discuss how having a child now would change their support system and future.

- B. Home work/Project
1. Have each student research a community agency or interview an employee at a community agency where families might go for support.
 2. Have students share this information with classmates through presentation, poster or other means.
 3. Create a directory of agencies, their services and contact information for student to have and share with families in their community.
- * Have a list of Children and Family service agencies without their contact information available to share with students.
- Handouts and People Cutout located in “Social World” document