

## Facilitating Challenges in Groups

### Side Conversations

- Address the behavior directly: “I’m having a hard time hearing” or “Let’s all give Sue our attention.”
- Stand close to chatty group
- Revisit group agreements

### One Person Dominates

- Break eye contact
- Remember to go back to the interrupted person
- Ask for ideas or comments from those who have not yet spoken
- Say, “This is interesting, perhaps we can continue with this later. Let’s get back to talking about...”
- Ask someone else if they had a different concern
- Use an object that must be held by the person who has the floor to speak
- Explain the time frame beforehand (“We have 15 minutes to check in, in order to hear from everyone that breaks down to about two minutes each.”)

### Silent Members

- Allow an opportunity for each member to respond to questions and during check-in.
- Pair the silent person with someone other than his or her spouse/partner.
- Connect by phone to make sure the group is meeting his or her needs.
- Know their name and make a point of connecting with them and greeting them each time.
- Ask their opinion about an experience you know they have had (“How was the pool when you took your children there last week?”).
- Just because they are not participating, it doesn’t necessarily mean that they are not benefiting from the group or that there is something wrong. Check out your perceptions with the person.

### Person Who “Knows it all”

- Look for and point out the strengths in this person
- Look for opportunities to talk with this person outside of group
- Use their energy by giving them a “job” or task to help with
- Ask other participants to share what they know about the topic
- Be understanding and compassionate

### Parent Disagrees with or Challenges the Facilitator Directly

- Be prepared by knowing your content
- Talk with the person privately about how you can work together
- State what you know and acknowledge that you may have to disagree
- Avoid arguing
- Set clear boundaries
- Avoid taking it personally and getting defensive
- Listen and demonstrate understanding even when you disagree