

SAMPLE ECOPLAY GROUP RULES

Name _____ Date _____

When planning an Eco-play group, it's a good idea to have a discussion about group rules at the first session. The rules of the group should be up to the facilitator and the group members.

Here are some sample rules that you may find useful in planning your groups and helping you to get started,

1. *Confidentiality* – Group members should agree to abide by the rule, “What happens in the group, stays in the group.” Group members agree not to discuss each other’s personal information outside of a group context, and to respect each other’s privacy.
2. *Safety* – Group members should agree not to attack each other verbally or physically while in group, or outside of group.
3. *Participation* – Group members should agree to actively participate in the group, do all the homework assignments, and show up on time.
4. *Punctuality* – Facilitators should honor those who show up on time by starting the group promptly at the advertised time. The ‘Fifteen Minute Rule’ is a good rule of thumb: If a group member is more than fifteen minutes late, it counts as an absence. Remind participants that tardiness causes disruptions to the flow of the group, and is disrespectful to other members of the group.
5. *Absences* – Due to the intensive nature of the program, it is recommended that you establish a firm policy regarding absences. Since each session builds on previous sessions, it is not recommended that participants be allowed more than two consecutive absences.
6. *Courtesy* – Group members should respect each other and the facilitator(s). This includes not interrupting others who are speaking. Facilitators may wish to use a “talking stick” if constant interruption becomes an issue. A talking stick is just a stick or other object that is passed among group members. The rule for using a talking stick is that only the person holding the stick may speak.

These are just some sample rules that will help your program to run more smoothly. Remember that you may revise the rules at any time during the course of the program, and you should solicit suggestions and input from group members prior to making any changes in the rules.

Once you've all agreed upon the rules, type them up, make copies, and distribute to group members so that everyone knows what is expected of group participants.