

Inspiring workshop activities for parent meetings

These workshop activities help bring parents together in conversation in an accessible and interactive way. They invite reflection, recognition, and sharing of experiences about parenting. The activities were developed for the Week van de Opvoeding (Parenting Week), but can be used throughout the year. For example during parenting workshops or community meetings.

Each puzzle format provides starting points for conversation, connection, and strengthening parenting confidence. Use them individually or combine them for a varied program.

Puzzle 1 – Conversation puzzle about parenting

Goal: Parents engage in accessible conversation with each other about their experiences as parents.

Activity format:

- Have parents walk around and each time approach someone different to discuss one of the questions on the card. Just like bingo: check off questions or work toward completing a full row.
- Prefer to sit down? Have small groups roll two dice. The number determines which question they discuss. Goal: complete and discuss a full row.

Puzzle 2 – What Do you need as a parent?

Goal: Parents reflect on what they need to fulfill their role well.

Activity format: Parents independently fill in the blank puzzle with elements or wishes that are important in their parenting. This can be done during a meeting, but also at home. The act of filling it in itself can provide insight and awareness.

Example answers include:

- A weekly meal planning schedule
- An hour of time for myself each week
- Help with school pickup

Optional: Have parents then engage in conversation in small groups, for example using these questions:

- What's already working well?
- What's still a wish?
- What do you need to achieve that?

- Who or what can help you with that?

Puzzle 3 – Who gives me support?

Goal: Parents think about what gives them support in parenting and who that support comes from. It's not just about who helps, but also in what way.

Activity format: Parents fill in the puzzle by writing down for each piece who supports them and in what way. Afterwards, they can discuss this with others.

There are different forms of social support that can help:

- **Emotional support:** a listening ear, sharing experiences, feeling supported
- **Practical support:** babysitting, help with homework or groceries
- **Informational support:** help finding the right information or practical advice, for example about dealing with tantrums or school choice
- **Normative support:** learning from someone you consider a good or caring parent
- **Connection:** doing things together, belonging, feeling safe and involved

Follow-up questions (optional):

- Am I satisfied with the support I have?
- What am I still missing?
- Who could I involve more?
- How can I strengthen my network?