

### Unit 3: Protecting Families in Cases of Separation

#### Teachers' Guide

#### LESSON 2: Identifying and Talking about Parents' Rights

**FOR MORE INFORMATION TO HELP YOU ANSWER QUESTIONS THAT MAY COME UP DURING THIS LESSON, REFER TO THE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SHEET "LEGAL INFORMATION ABOUT PARENTAL RIGHTS" AT THE END OF THIS LESSON.**

**Time: 2 hours**

#### Content Objectives

- Students discuss their roles as parents in different contexts.
- Students read, discuss, and ask questions about the rights of parents.

#### Rights Objectives

- Students begin to think about parenthood as a special relationship and a legal status.
- Students begin to think about the rights to which parents are entitled.

#### Language Objectives

- Students continue to build their language skills around rights.
- Students practice reading, writing, and speaking in English.

#### Materials Needed:

- Student lesson plan

#### KEY VOCABULARY:

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives
Right	To take care of	Legal
Custody	To live with	Physical
Visitation	To visit	Parental
Contact	To call	Minor
Wellbeing	To write	
Health	To decide	
Safety	To ask for	
Education		

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## LESSON ACTIVITIES:

### PART A) We Are a Family Poem

**Students should work individually to fill in their poems but should consult neighbors or instructors on vocabulary. When students complete their poems, they should share them with the whole class.**

[First name and the first names of your family members] \_\_\_\_\_ :  
We are [Adjectives that describe your family] \_\_\_\_\_. We are a family.  
We live \_\_\_\_\_.  
We enjoy \_\_\_\_\_.  
We hope \_\_\_\_\_.  
We deserve \_\_\_\_\_.  
We are a family. We have rights!

**Example:** Julia, Amal, Angela, and Simon:  
We are young, old, American, Russian, and Lebanese. We are a family.  
We live by a park, in a building with neighbors we like.  
We enjoy swimming, watching movies, and eating dinner together.  
We hope for the good fortune of our friends, family, and community.  
We deserve respect and the freedom to be together.  
We are a family. We have rights!

**PART B) Identifying Parental Rights:** *As a class, review the following stories. Write and then state the right or rights needed by parents of minor children (defined in a majority of places and circumstances in the U.S. as individuals under the age of 18) to do what is described in each scenario.*

**The instructor should guide the whole class in determining which right the following people need, guiding students to a consensus through discussion.**

**The correct and complete answers for each scenario are:**

- **Cristina: Custody**
- **Ji: Custody**
- **Anne: Custody or contact**
- **Orhan: Visitation**

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Cristina wants to remove her son, age 6, from school. What right does Cristina need?

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Ji wants to see his son's records from the doctor. What right does Ji need?

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Anne is in prison and wants to call her son. What right does Anne need?

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Orhan does not have legal custody of his daughter and wants to visit with her. What right does Orhan need?

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### PART C) Talking about Parental Rights

**The instructor should gather students into small groups. Encourage students to use vocabulary introduced at the beginning of the lesson.**

In small groups, reflect on how you use parental rights. Try to include the rights of **custody**, **contact**, and **visitation**. Complete and then practice speaking the following sentence, using vocabulary from the lesson or words you know:

**Ex: I use my parental right to contact when I call my child at his grandmother's house.**

1. I use my parental right to \_\_\_\_\_ when I \_\_\_\_\_.

2. I use my parental right to \_\_\_\_\_ when I \_\_\_\_\_.

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3. I use my parental right to \_\_\_\_\_ when I

\_\_\_\_\_.

### PART D) Reflections

**In a small group, first, the instructor asks the students to reflect on writing about their families and the lessons and challenges of the above activities. Then the class as a whole reflects on how the students' families are respected or not in society, with particular attention to how families are affected by immigration status. Part of the discussion can take place in the students' native languages if necessary and possible.**

Take a moment to reflect on the lesson, what you have learned, and the challenges you experienced with the activities, as well as what you enjoyed about them. Then, as a class, reflect on how your families are respected or not in society and how your families are affected by immigration status. Feel free to communicate in your native language, as necessary and possible.

**END OF LESSON REFLECTIONS: The teacher asks students at the end of each lesson what they learned and how they felt doing these activities. The teacher may want to take notes based on what students share to help in preparing the lesson for the following week.**

**Guiding questions for instructors to pose to students include the following:**

- What new ideas/content did you learn?
- What new vocabulary did you learn?
- What new rights did you learn?
- What was difficult? What was easy?
- How did you feel?
- What would you change?
- How would you use this information?
- How does this content connect to human rights?
- What situations can you think of when you may want to assert your rights?

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## FAQ: LEGAL INFORMATION ABOUT PARENTAL RIGHTS

### ❖ What is a right?

Rights have been defined in many ways. Here is one definition: “A moral or legal entitlement to have or obtain something or to act in a certain way” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014).

### ❖ What is a parental right?

Here is one definition: “The fundamental right of parents to make decisions concerning the care, custody, and control of their minor children without regard to the child’s citizenship, as provided for and limited by applicable law” (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2013).

### ❖ What are some typical rights and duties of parents?

**Custody:** To provide protective care to your minor child

- Physical custody:
  - To live with your minor child
- Legal custody:
  - To have information about your minor child’s wellbeing (health, safety, education, etc.)
  - To make decisions to benefit and protect your minor child’s wellbeing
  - To represent your minor child’s interests and needs to others (doctors, teachers, lawyers, etc.)

**Visitation:** To visit with your minor child when you are not living with him or her.

**Contact:** To talk to, call, or write your minor child when you are not living with him or her.

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### FAQ: INFORMATION ABOUT DIFFERENCES IN FAMILY LAW

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- ❖ Each state has its own laws and procedures related to family and caretaking arrangements. These laws and procedures differ depending on where you live. It is important to find out what the rules are in the state where you live. A local attorney can help you do that.
- ❖ Also, different states may use different terminology in their family law procedures. For example, some states may have guardianship hearings while other states may call a very similar proceeding a dependency hearing. Therefore, it is important to learn what the different procedures in your state are called and make sure you understand them. A local attorney can help you do that.
- ❖ The information provided here is general in nature and provides examples of caretaking arrangements. However, it is important to find out whether these arrangements or similar arrangements can be used in your state.

### FAQ: FINDING RESOURCES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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- ❖ Because family law differs so much from state to state, it is important to know how to find resources in your community that can help you create caretaking arrangements that comply with the law where you live.
- ❖ In many states, the family court may provide assistance to people who do not have lawyers and need help creating legal documents or filing papers with the court. You can usually find information about any court programs intended to help people who do not have lawyers by checking the court's website or calling the courthouse.
- ❖ Many communities have non-profit organizations that provide free or low-cost legal assistance to people who need it. To find these organizations, you may want to check with your local library, community center, school, or place of worship to find out if the people there know what organizations are helping people in your local area. You can also ask other people in your community who may have had similar issues.

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