



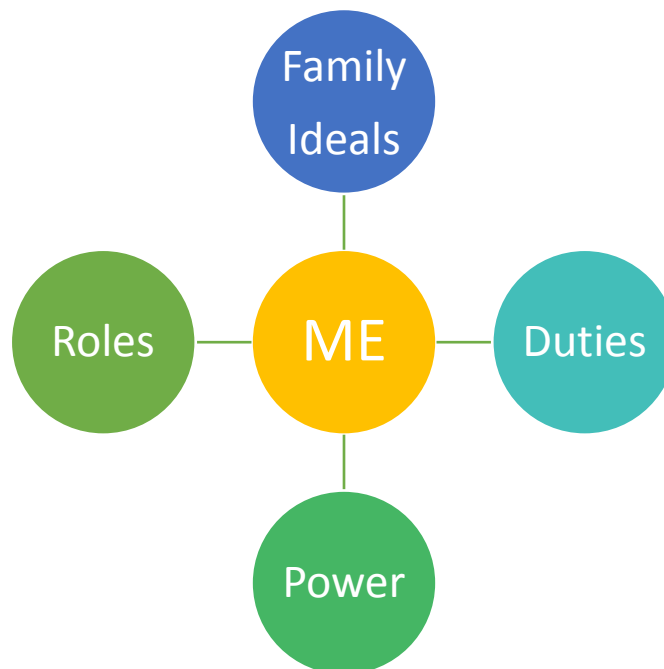
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS INITIATIVE

Toolkit for Families of Young Children

Reflection Activity #1: Your Family Perspective

As children, we grow up learning about various family roles and what to expect from those relationships. As we get older, our life experiences continue to shape the way we view these roles. This distinctive and ever-evolving process can make it difficult to value and understand the family perspectives of others. Likewise, life circumstances can also leave us struggling with understanding family roles when our current household situation does not match our ideals (i.e., divorce, death of a caregiver).

Directions: Review the diagram below and reflect on what messages you received throughout life that now influences your family perspective. Then, answer the questions that follow in the space provided regarding your perceptions and beliefs about these messages. With any other family caregivers involved with your children, compare your family perspectives. Make sure not to make any judgments about each other's perspectives and discuss how they each influence your current family dynamics.



What messages did you receive growing up from your family and from society that influenced your ideas on what a family “should” look like? What life experiences have changed that view for you? What strengths can you recognize about your current household composition?

What role or roles did you imagine you would play in your ideal family unit? What role(s) do you actually play? How have your current family role(s) brought you fulfillment?

What duties did you believe you would perform being in that ideal role(s)? What duties do you actually perform in your family? What are some accomplishments you can give yourself credit for?

What messages did you receive growing up from your family and from society that shaped your ideals of what power and authority looked like being in the family role(s) you imagined? What life experiences have changed that view for you? In what ways are your current views helpful in strengthening your familial relationships?
