

The Question Box

The question box* is a useful way getting information from class participants in a non-threatening way. It helps the facilitator to know what students are learning and what they need to know.

Directions for using the question box:

1. Prepare a box with a removable lid. Cover it with paper if you like, and put the title "Question Box" on the front, or draw question marks all over the box. Cut a slit in the lid big enough to receive folded 8.5 x 11" papers. Put the lid back on the box.
2. Give each participant a sheet of paper at each class on which they can write any questions they would like to have answered or comments about any of the class activities.
3. Do not put names on the papers.
4. At the end of the class, everyone will fold his or her paper, even if it is blank and put it in the question box.
5. Questions will be discussed at the next class unless the topic is to be covered in a future lesson. This method of handling questions allows participants to ask questions that they might be embarrassed to ask otherwise. In addition, it gives the facilitator time to go over questions before class and to find information on the topic that may help in the discussion process.

Hints for handling questions:

1. Share the question with class members and let them respond with possible answers. This method draws on the knowledge and experience of the participants.
2. Be careful to not dismiss answers as wrong. Remember, what works for one child may not work for another, so it is better to have several options than only one option.
3. Share your own opinion and information you have gathered on the subject.
4. If you and/or the participants are not satisfied with the answers generated, try to find the answer. Some potential resources are County Extension FCS Agents, the library, the Internet, school teachers and guidance counselors, local marriage and family counselors. You can make seeking potential solutions a homework assignment for participants.
5. Remember that most parenting problems have more than one potential solution and no one answer is the right answer.

*Idea adapted with permission from "Girl Talk" developed by Judy Berryhill, Trish Lowry, and Joanne Brown.