TRADITION

Every family has traits that make it special, and it’s interesting to think about what makes your family different from other families you know. As you think about these differences, you may be able to pinpoint some of your family’s strengths. Most families have traditions or special ways of doing things that bind them together and make them proud to belong to each other. When you use a muscle in your body over and over again in a certain way, it makes the muscle stronger. Likewise, sharing experiences again and again in a certain way strengthens a family. Best of all, the traditions your family has developed belong to you alone.

Traditions are important for other reasons, too. They usually remind us of what our family thinks is important. Your traditions may come out of your family’s cultural back-
ground. On holidays, you may still eat certain foods that your great-grandparents prepared. But traditions don’t have to be years and years old. A few years ago, your family may have decided to celebrate the last day of school by having a picnic and going to a waterslide. You had such a good time that you decided to do the same thing at the end of every school year.

Think about developing some new traditions that fit your family’s lifestyle and values. These shared traditions will draw you closer as a family and make you a stronger, tighter family unit.

**Let’s Talk about Traditions**

Traditions are an important part of family life. They give a family stability and continuity. In this activity, you will learn why traditions are important. You will also learn how to establish new traditions. Suitable for all ages.

**A Trip Down Memory Lane**

*(with Grandpa in the Driver’s Seat)*

Grandparents, great-grandparents, and older friends and relatives love to share their memories. As we listen to them reminisce, we begin to understand our family heritage. Try taping these conversations to preserve family history. Suitable for age 8 and older.

**The Family Tree Thrives When You Water Its Roots!**

Every family is unique, but all families have similarities too. Take a look at your family’s history—where you came from and how you arrived at the place you are now. You’ll learn to appreciate your ancestors and each other. Suitable for age 8 and older.

**Buried Treasure**

This activity gets the family looking in a different direction—forward! First, family members talk about the things that are important to them now as they select a special memento to put in a time capsule. Then they imagine what they will be like when they open the time capsule at a specified time in the future. Suitable for all ages.

**The Talking Box**

This activity helps family members share what is important to them and express their values. Suitable for all ages.