

SECTION VI: The Action

33.1 Family Political Forums

For 5,000 years, humans lived in the past tense: "Yesterday was the same as tomorrow. " For the next 500 years people lived in the present tense: "Today can be whatever we want it to be." But now, for the next 50 years we must start living in the future tense: "Tomorrow's social, economic and political constraints must become today's reality."

"Envisioning a society that is committed to confronting the contemporary social issues of our time through education, activism, and the electoral process."

The Green Party

Family Political Forums are an opportunity for youth and adults to share their vision of what is needed for a healthy future.

A Family Political Forum is a moderated discussion of the political requirements to create a future that provides for peace and security, and for the social and economic wellbeing of both youth and adults.

- ❑ The future will be shaped by the actions taken by the adults of today.
- ❑ For the youth of today, their future is the consequence of those actions.
- ❑ Our public policies are a shared responsibility of both generations.

Sponsorship

Family political forums are sponsored by existing social, recreational, cultural, educational, religious, workplace, or by other formal or informal groups for their own members.

Talk to the adults in your life about politics. It is your future.

The sponsor may be either a youth or adult group whose members would like to participate in a moderated cross-generation political discussion about the future.

At the end of the Forum:

- ❑ Adults will have a better understanding of the views of youth.
- ❑ Youth will have a better understanding of the views of adults.
- ❑ Families will have a structured way to talk about the political, social, and economic issues facing the United States and what is required to have a sustainable future for all.

The Steps to Take to Organize a Family Political Forum

- ❑ Talk to other members of your group to determine if there is support for sponsoring a Forum.
- ❑ Select a date and book the time with a respected neutral person, such as a teacher or minister, to moderate the Forum.
- ❑ Schedule a room in your location to hold the Forum.
- ❑ Download the sample forms from the Living in the Future Tense home page and edit them to suit your event. Have each family to fill out their registration form and return their form to you.
- ❑ Prepare an information package and name tag for each participant for distribution at the meeting.
- ❑ Make arrangements for the room to be setup for the meeting and for cookies and juice to be available at the end of the meeting for informal discussion among the participants.

What is Our Future?

Q: Are the adults of today providing their children with a viable future?

Q: What are the responsibilities of adults of today to ensure their children have a viable future with social and economic opportunity and political freedom?

Q: What are the responsibilities of the youth of today to ensure they inherit a future with social and economic opportunity and political freedom?

Sample Registration Form

This formal registration process is required to know in advance how many people are coming and to ensure that each Forum will have a minimum attendance of at least 10 families, and therefore at least 20 or more participants. This will ensure that each Forum will have enough participants for a dynamic discussion of what the future holds, and what is required from youth and adults, together, to meet the, economic, social and political challenges ahead.

Name of Family Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail address: _____

Participants (Please print first and lasts names)

| Youth | Adults |
|-------|--------|
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When this registration form is returned, a registration package, including a name tag, will be prepared for each participant and will be available at the Forum.

Sample Agenda for a Family Political Forum
Sponsored By
The Name of Your Group

Date: Scheduled date
Time: 6:45 to 8:45 pm
Place: Your group's location
Agenda

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 6:45 – 7:00 | Registration, informal introductions, assigned seating with the adults on one side and the youth on the other. |
| 7:00 – 7:05 | Introduction to the Family Political Forum by the Moderator. |
| 7:05 – 8:15 | Moderated discussion between youth and adults about the future: Are the adults of today providing their children with a viable future? What are the responsibilities of adults today to ensure their children have a viable future with social and economic opportunity and political freedom? What are the responsibilities of the youth of today to ensure they inherit a future with social and economic opportunity and political freedom? |
| 8:15 – 8:30 | Actions for the future. Enough talk. What is next? |
| 8:30 – 8:45 | Cookies and juice. An informal period to introduce yourselves to each other and collect literature on some of the important contemporary social issues of our time. Are there more issues to discuss? Do we need to do this again? |