CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES

DYSFUNCTIONAL

1. Rigid, Black and white
2. Low self worth/ shame
3. Compulsive behavior covers pain
4. Rules are arbitrary, rigid or non-existent; chaos
5. Feelings are avoided & repressed--no risks taken
6. Denial of stress, issues and problems. Stress is a welcomed distraction from emotional pain
7. Disturbed hierarchy, one person or no one in charge, hidden coalitions provide safety, may be upside down family or chaos.
8. Terminal seriousness - anger- depression, hostility or phony happiness

HEALTHY

Open to change and new ideas
High self worth
People choose their behavior
Rules are designed to guide and protect are age appropriate and consistent
Feelings are expressed openly and validated touch is appropriate and nurturing.
Expect stress, pull together for mutual support
Parents are in change--strong coalition; they protect and assume responsibility for children
Fun, humor, joy and laughter exist in adults and children..