

strengthening families

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Georgia Division of Family and Children Services

Ways to Embed the Five Protective Factors into Your Programs

Social and Emotional Competence of Children And Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Remember: Most parents will be more receptive to information right when an issue (e.g., biting) comes up – take the opportunity to have a conversation, role model some techniques, and/or provide the parent with a brochure or other written parent-friendly information.

- Be a role model for parents; let them watch how you handle their child and other children's behaviors in your program. Role modeling is a great strategy to model new behaviors or to support understanding of developmental issues.
- Provide parent education and conversations within a context of trust and mutual respect. Parents are receptive when they believe that you know their child, you have the child's best interests in mind, and you respect them as knowledgeable about their child.
- Partner with parent education programs in your community so that a parent educator is available to parents during pick-up time once a week, or special parent education events.
- Develop formal parent education events that target specific concerns and give parents the opportunity to share concerns. For example, an event for all parents of 2-year-olds that addresses the so-called "Terrible Twos", or an event focusing on sibling rivalry.
- Invite parents to participate in your program through visits, volunteering, talking with other parents, question and answer sessions, to help with a particular project, attend child and brain development training with teachers, and to read to children in your program.
- Hold informal parent get-togethers/classes that introduce traditional child rearing practices from different cultures.
- Make this a win-win situation – family resource centers and other parent education programs are often seeking ways to reach more parents and raise visibility of their programs. They can't be in every program in the community, but they could be in yours! Check them out - they may have something to offer your parents.

Concrete Support in Times of Need And Parental Resilience

Remember: Programs don't need to provide any or all of these services themselves. One important service is making parents aware of what is available in the community and letting them know that you can be a source for that information.

Some options might be:

- Obtain enough copies of your county or community resource guide to distribute to all families or put links on your website.
- Invite other community partners to your parent events. Have them bring information or speak briefly to let parents know about the services they offer.
- Make sure all the staff is aware of the resources in your community.
- Offer referrals in the context of a personal relationship. A referral has more meaning – and is more likely to be followed up on that way. Know the parent *and* know the referral person or program.
- Follow-up on that referral. Don't just give the referral and then act like it never happened. Ask them if they made the call and if they need anything else.
- Use your trusting relationship with families to help them overcome barriers to accessing the services they need. For the more intense interventions (e.g., mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse) the issue is often not only the lack of knowledge about the services, but the stigma and lack of trust.

Additional resources:

Center for Study of Social Policy: <http://www.cssp.org/>

Center for Study of Social Policy Publications and Assessments: <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/practice#program-self-assessments>

FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention: <http://friendsnrc.org/>

Making Meaningful Connections 2015 Prevention Resource Guide (PDF) www.childwelfare.gov/pubpdfs/guide.pdf

National Child Abuse Prevention Month tip sheets in English and Spanish for parents, programs and communities <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resource-guide/tip-sheets/>

National Child Abuse Prevention Month activity calendars in English and Spanish for parents, programs and communities <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resource-guide/activity-calendar/>

Social Connections

How Early Childhood Programs Can Connect Parents to Other Parents

1) Hold a “Connecting Families” scavenger hunt during other activities at your program e.g., holiday parties, family nights, etc.

Create a list that includes items such as:

- Find another family whose child will go to the same elementary school as your child
- Find another family who lives in your neighborhood
- Find another parent who has the same number of children as you
- Ask families to try to connect with as many other families in the center as they can. Encourage parents to exchange contact information by giving them “address books” to collect contact information

2) Create a specific place in your program for “Family Connections”:

- A small welcoming place for parents to talk and exchange information such as:
 - Exchange babysitting
 - Talk about potty training, giving up a blanket or pacifier, limiting TV time
 - Plan for play dates
- A bulletin board that you ask parents to post issues that they would like to connect with other parents about
- Help parents connect through your newsletter, Facebook page or website

3) Help families come together to plan an event:

- Mulch the playground
- Plant flowers
- Paint a mural
- Put together play equipment

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RESOURCES YOU CAN USE

These websites contain current information, publications and training options useful in learning how the Strengthening Families Framework can be embedded into the work you do with families and communities.

If you have questions please email: strengtheningfamiliesga@gmail.com

- **Center for the Study for Social Policy (CSSP):**
www.cssp.org and www.strengtheningfamilies.net

Nationally, Strengthening Families is coordinated by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) and supported by national partner agencies such as the Child Welfare Information Gateway, FRIENDS National Resource Center, The National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds and United Way. Five Protective Factors are the foundation for the Strengthening Families Approach: parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social or emotional competence of children. For detailed information on ways Strengthening Families is implemented nationally, and in states and communities visit:

<http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/about>.

For extensive information on policy-related articles and studies visit
www.policyforresults.org

- **National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds (The Alliance):**
www.ctfalliance.org

The National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds works to provide training and technical assistance to partner state Children's Trust and Prevention Funds to strengthen their efforts to prevent child abuse. The Alliance maintains an extensive online archive of useful information about strengthening families to prevent child maltreatment.

www.ctfalliance.org/resources.htm

The Alliance has developed a series of **free on-line training courses**. The curriculum is designed to support the implementation of the Strengthening Families framework in multiple settings. The training courses can be accessed at www.ctfalliance.org/onlinetraining.htm.

An overview on the course can be viewed at

www.ctfalliance.org/images/pdfs/OnlineCurriculumFINAL.pdf

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- **Child Welfare Information Gateway:** <https://www.childwelfare.gov/>

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, its Child Welfare Information Gateway and the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention created a resource guide targeted specifically for service providers who work with parents, other caregivers, and their children with the common goal of strengthening families. This resource was developed with input from numerous national organizations, Federal partners, and parents committed to strengthening families. The latest issue, **Making Meaningful Connections 2015 Prevention Resource Guide** can be accessed at: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/guide.pdf>

April Activity Calendars for Programs, Parents and Communities are available at: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resource-e-guide/activity-calendar/>

Tip Sheets Packets (English and Spanish) can be accessed at: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resource-e-guide/tip-sheets/>

- **FRIENDS, the National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP):** www.friendsnrc.org

FRIENDS provides training and technical assistance to federally funded CBCAP Programs. This site serves as a resource to those programs and to the rest of the Child Abuse Prevention community. FRIENDS is an acronym for... *Family Resource Information, Education and Network Development Services*. FRIENDS offers a self-administered Protective Factor Survey for use with caregivers receiving child maltreatment prevention services, measuring protective factors in five areas: family functioning/resiliency, social support, concrete support, nurturing and attachment, and knowledge of parenting/child development. The website includes the tool and a user manual. www.friendsnrc.org/protective-factors-survey

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- ***United Way Strengthening Families (UWSF):***
<http://strengtheningfamilies.unitedway.org/>

By using UWSF, local United Ways and their community partners are reframing their work around the protective factors, resulting in new funding approaches, new training and support for community partners, more family-centered service delivery, workplace integration, and families and communities who have the tools to mobilize and find solutions to challenges. This comprehensive website contains extensive resources for implementing the Strengthening Families Framework in the workplace and community.

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The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

