

# Strengthening Families and Communities





## Letter From the Children's Bureau

Dear Colleagues:

We all want to live in a nation that is prosperous, innovative, and supports the healthy development of children. The fact is, when we invest in children, we are investing in community and economic development. Sometimes children are exposed to conditions that undermine their well-being. But by recognizing and building on existing strengths within communities and families, we can support all families in providing a healthy, safe, and loving environment for their children.

In support of this effort, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, its Child Welfare Information Gateway, the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention and the Center for the Study of Social Policy-Strengthening Families are pleased to provide the *Strengthening Families and Communities: 2011 Resource Guide*. The resources in this book were developed with input from numerous national organizations, Federal partners, and parents committed to strengthening families and communities. Its goal is to support service providers in their work with parents, caregivers, and their children to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

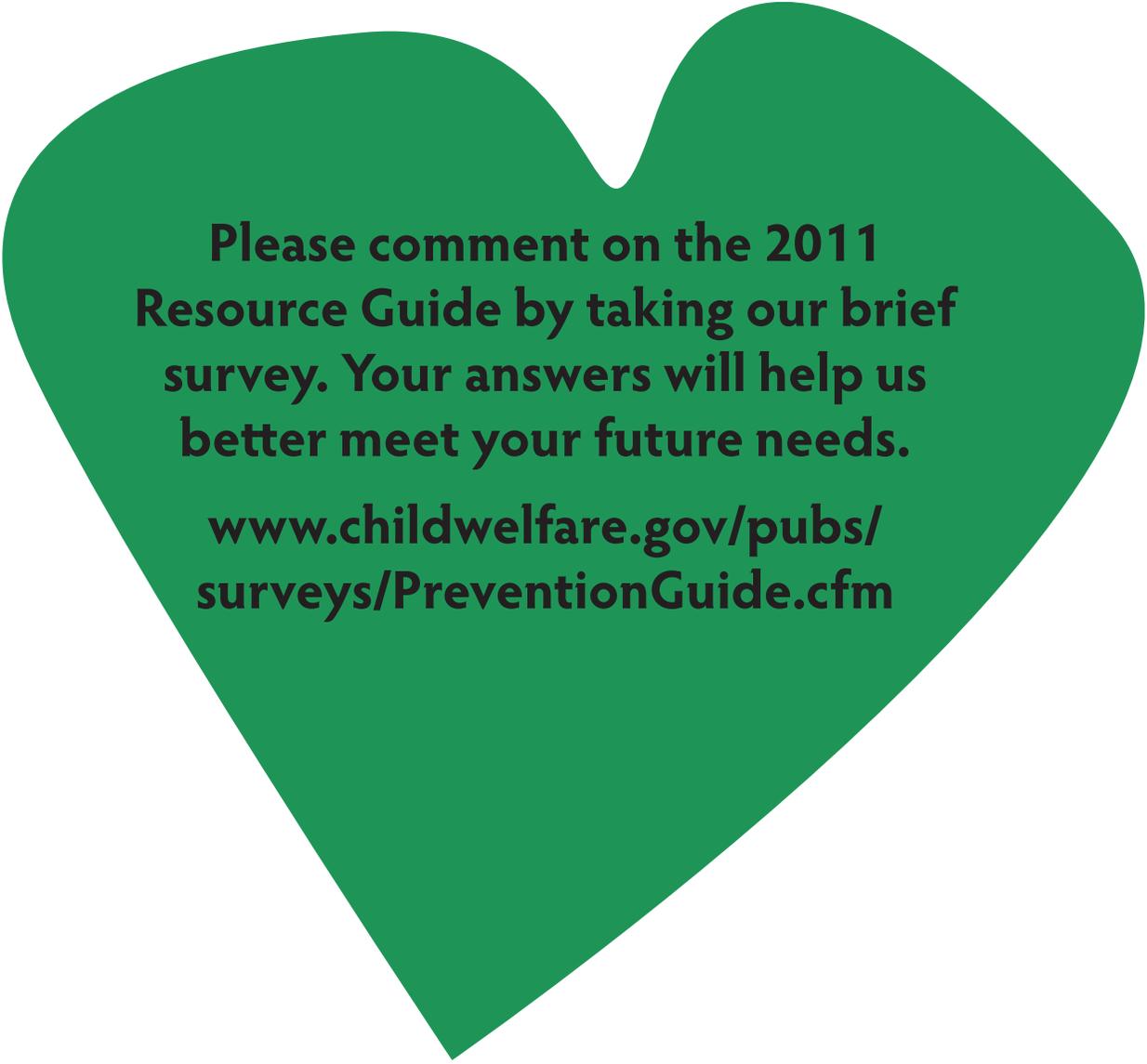
The Resource Guide focuses on five important factors that have been shown to protect children from the risk of abuse and neglect. Information about these protective factors is augmented with tools and strategies for integrating these factors into existing community programs and systems. Agencies, policymakers, advocates, and service providers alike will find resources in this book to help them promote these five important factors in communities and families.

Effective early prevention efforts are less costly to our nation and to individuals than trying to fix things later. This guidebook provides many suggestions to help communities "get prevention right." We thank you for participating in this important effort and for the work you do each day to build promising futures for our nation's children.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Samuels", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Bryan Samuels  
Commissioner

Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



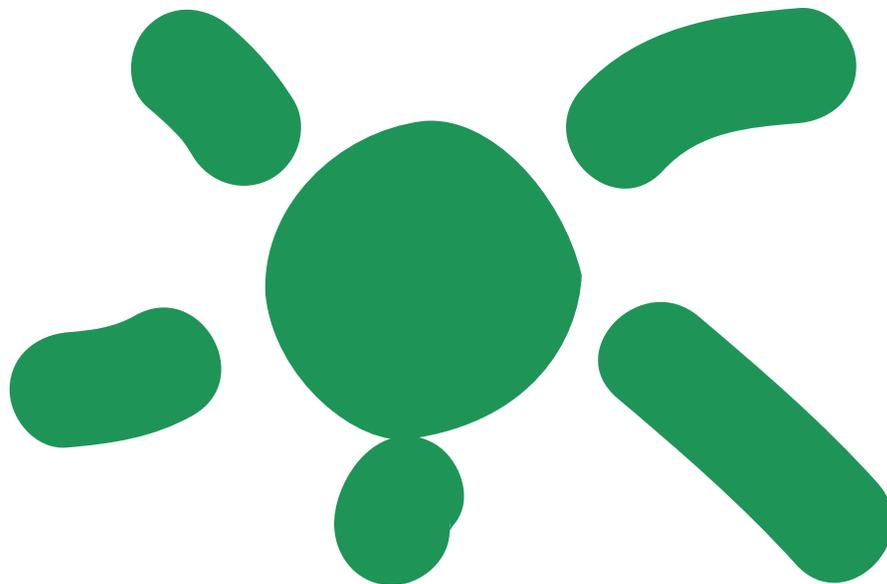
**Please comment on the 2011  
Resource Guide by taking our brief  
survey. Your answers will help us  
better meet your future needs.**

**[www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/  
surveys/PreventionGuide.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/surveys/PreventionGuide.cfm)**

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## About the Resource Guide

This Resource Guide was developed to support service providers in their work with parents, caregivers, and their children to prevent child abuse and neglect. It was created by 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 and the Center for the Study of Social Policy—Strengthening Families. The resources featured represent the work of a broad-based partnership of national organizations, Federal partners, and parents committed to strengthening families and communities.

### What’s Inside

The Resource Guide was created primarily to support community-based child abuse prevention professionals who work to strengthen communities and support parents, caregivers, and their children. However, others such as policymakers, parent educators, family support workers, health care providers, program administrators, teachers, child care providers, mentors, and clergy, also will find the resources useful.

Resources include:

- **Chapter 1: Laying the Groundwork**—Information about the research and theory on which the Resource Guide is based, including protective factors that help reduce child abuse and neglect, strategies for creating lasting change in how communities support families, and evidence-informed practice.
- **Chapter 2: Working With Families: The Five Protective Factors**—Detailed information about each of the protective factors and tips for infusing them into direct practice with families and children.
- **Chapter 3: Engaging Your Community**—Tools and strategies to help build community awareness and support the development of broad-based community partnerships.
- **Chapter 4: Protecting Children**—Information about why child abuse occurs, risk factors, consequences, and identifying and reporting maltreatment.
- **Chapter 5: Resources**—Contact information for private and Federal partners working nationally to strengthen families.
- **Chapter 6: Tip Sheets for Parents and Caregivers**—Strengths-based tip sheets on specific parenting topics that can be used in discussions or visits with caregivers.

Many more resources for strengthening families are available from the national organizations and Federal partners listed in our resource directory beginning on page 61.

## About the Resource Guide

### Suggested Uses for the Resource Guide:

- Distribute copies to key community partners working with children and families, including child welfare agencies, child advocacy centers, public health agencies, child care centers, family therapists, media representatives, schools, faith communities, and policymakers.
- Use the Resource Guide as a topic for discussion at an upcoming meeting of your family strengthening community partnership.
- Provide copies to those who regularly offer trainings to family support workers in your community.
- Use the information in the Resource Guide when developing your own media kits, press releases, and other public awareness tools.
- Make the information available to those in your community who are writing grants to support family strengthening work.
- Make copies of the parenting tip sheets (Chapter 6) for use in parent education classes or parent support groups.

Please let us know how you are using this year's Resource Guide and how we can better meet your needs! Take our brief survey: [www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/surveys/PreventionGuide.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/surveys/PreventionGuide.cfm)

### On the Web

The Child Welfare Information Gateway website provides links to resources and information about child abuse prevention, family strengthening, family-centered practice, family support, family preservation services, and many related topics. Throughout the Resource Guide, links to related Information Gateway webpages will provide you with a wealth of additional information: [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

This Resource Guide can be ordered or downloaded from the Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect section of the Child Welfare Information Gateway website. Also available on the website are an activity calendar, a short video, and downloadable logos and graphics that may be used to customize Child Abuse Prevention Month resources for local communities: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth)

The FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention website offers information about the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), community-based child abuse prevention priorities, State Lead Agencies, outcome accountability, parent leadership, and other important topics. Also available on the site are an Evaluation Toolkit, archived teleconferences, a link to the FRIENDS Online Training Center, and downloadable FRIENDS factsheets, learning tools, and publications: [www.friendsnrc.org](http://www.friendsnrc.org)

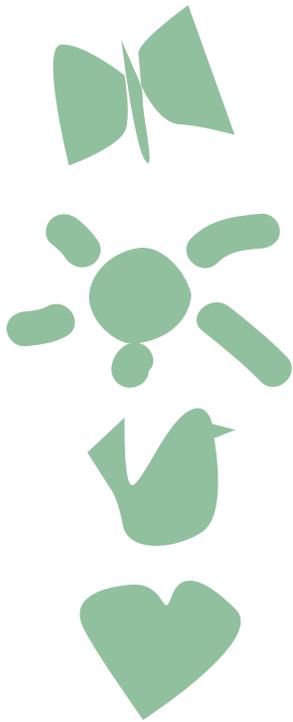
The Center for the Study of Social Policy—Strengthening Families coordinates the national Strengthening Families initiative, which is being implemented in more than half of all States. Strengthening Families engages early childhood programs and other unusual partners in preventing child abuse and neglect by building five research-based Protective Factors that are shown to correlate with reduced incidence of child abuse and neglect. [www.strengtheningfamilies.net](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net)

# Chapter 1

## Laying the Groundwork



# Protective Factors for Strengthening Families



Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. They are attributes that serve as buffers, helping parents who might otherwise be at risk of abusing their children to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

For years, researchers have been studying both the risk factors common among families experiencing abuse and neglect and those factors that protect families who are under stress. There is growing interest in understanding the complex ways in which these risk and protective factors interact, within the context of a child's family, community, and society, to affect both the incidence and consequences of abuse and neglect.

## Why Focus on Promoting Protective Factors?

Research has found that successful interventions must both reduce risk factors and promote protective factors to ensure the well-being of children and families. Focusing on promoting protective factors is a more productive approach than reducing risk factors alone because:

- Protective factors are positive attributes that strengthen *all* families. A universal approach helps get needed support to families that may not meet the criteria for “at-risk” services, but who are dealing with stressors that could lead them to abuse or neglect.
- Focusing on protective factors, which are attributes that families themselves often want to build, helps service providers develop positive relationships with parents. Parents then feel more comfortable seeking out extra support if needed. This positive relationship is especially critical for parents who may be reluctant to disclose concerns or identify behaviors or circumstances that may place their families at risk.
- When service providers work with families to increase protective factors, they also help families build and draw on natural support networks within their family and community. These networks are critical to families’ long-term success.

## Protective Factors for Strengthening Families

### Which Protective Factors Are Most Important?

Research has shown that the following protective factors are linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect:

- **Nurturing and Attachment.** A child's early experience of being nurtured and developing a bond with a caring adult affects all aspects of behavior and development. When parents and children have strong, warm feelings for one another, children develop trust that their parents will provide what they need to thrive, including love, acceptance, positive guidance, and protection.
- **Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development.** Discipline is both more effective and more nurturing when parents know how to set and enforce limits and encourage appropriate behaviors based on the child's age and level of development. Parents who understand how children grow and develop can provide an environment where children can live up to their potential. Child abuse and neglect are often associated with a lack of understanding of basic child development or an inability to put that knowledge into action. Timely mentoring, coaching, advice, and practice may be more useful to parents than information alone.
- **Parental Resilience.** Resilience is the ability to handle everyday stressors and recover from occasional crises. Parents who are emotionally resilient have a positive attitude, creatively solve problems, effectively address challenges, and are less likely to direct anger and frustration at their children. In addition, these parents are aware of their own challenges—for example, those arising from inappropriate parenting they received as children—and accept help and/or counseling when needed.
- **Social Connections.** Evidence links social isolation and perceived lack of support to child maltreatment. Trusted and caring family and friends provide emotional support to parents by offering encouragement and assistance in facing the daily challenges of raising a family. Supportive adults in the family and the community can model alternative parenting styles and can serve as resources for parents when they need help.
- **Concrete Supports for Parents.** Many factors beyond the parent-child relationship affect a family's ability to care for their children. Parents need basic resources such as food, clothing, housing, transportation, and access to essential services that address family-specific needs (such as child care and health care) to ensure the health and well-being of their children. Some families may also need support connecting to social services such as alcohol and drug treatment, domestic violence counseling, or public benefits. Providing or connecting families to the concrete supports that families need is critical. These combined efforts help families cope with stress and prevent situations where maltreatment could occur.

## Protective Factors for Strengthening Families

These protective factors are critical for all parents and caregivers, regardless of the child's age, sex, ethnicity or racial heritage, economic status, special needs, or whether he or she is raised by a single, married, or divorced parent or other caregivers. All of these factors work together to reinforce each other; for example, parents are more likely to be resilient in times of stress when they have social connections and a strong attachment to their child. Protective factors can provide a helpful conceptual framework for guiding any provider's work with children and their families.

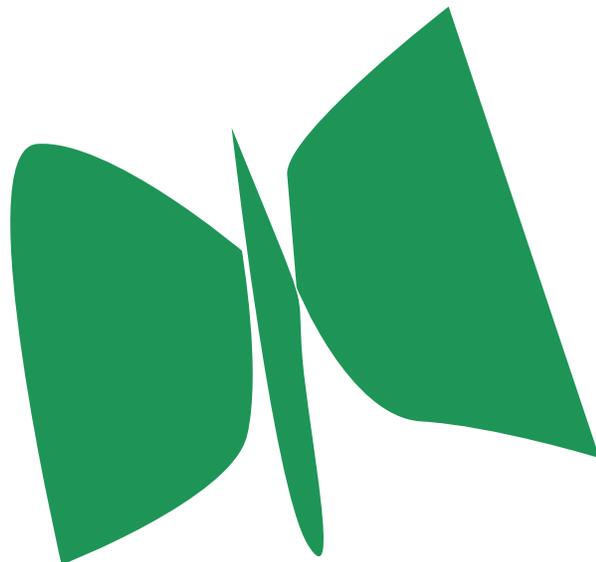
### References

Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2003). *Protective factors literature review: Early care and education programs and the prevention of child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC, Available: [www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/horton.pdf](http://www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/horton.pdf)

Panel on Research on Child Abuse and Neglect, National Research Council. (1993). *Understanding child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Available: [www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309048893](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309048893)

Pollard, J. Hawkins, J., & Arthur, M. (1999). Risk and protection: Are both necessary to understand diverse behavioral outcomes in adolescence? *Social Work Research*, 23(3), 145–158.

Shonkoff, J. & Phillips, D. (Eds.). (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Available: [www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309069882](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309069882)



## CDC's Strategic Direction for Child Maltreatment Prevention

The protective factors described throughout this Resource Guide support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) strategic direction for child maltreatment prevention: safe, stable, and nurturing relationships (SSNRs) between children and adults. SSNRs between children and their caregivers are the antithesis of maltreatment and other adverse exposures that occur during childhood and compromise health over the lifespan. Healthy relationships are fundamental to the development of the brain and to children's physical, emotional, social, behavioral, and intellectual capacities.

## Characteristics of Healthy Relationships

- **Safety.** Safety refers to the extent to which a child is free from fear and secure from physical or psychological harm within their social and physical environment.
- **Stability.** This refers to the degree of predictability and consistency in a child's environment.
- Families that are stable and have regular routines provide children with the consistency needed to lessen the impact of stressful experiences.
- **Nurture.** Nurture refers to the extent to which a parent or caregiver is available and able to sensitively respond to and meet the needs of their child.

## Importance of Social Context

To promote SSNRs and prevent child maltreatment effectively, it is critical to address social determinants such as neighborhood economic distress, lack of social support, social norms, and policies. Social contexts help to create and support SSNRs and/or child maltreatment. Understanding the role that these social factors play, as well as interventions that work to address them, may improve our ability to plan and implement effective prevention policies.



## Promoting Safe, Stable, and Nurturing Relationships

### Prevention Strategy

The CDC strategy to prevent child maltreatment is organized around four priorities:

#### *Measuring Impact*

- Monitor fatal and nonfatal child maltreatment at national and State levels
- Develop and monitor specific, valid, and reliable measures of SSNRs
- Identify and quantify the social and economic burden of child maltreatment

#### *Creating and Evaluating New Approaches to Prevention*

- Identify populations at risk, modifiable risk and protective factors, and the best times and settings for interventions
- Evaluate parenting-focused prevention strategies
- Evaluate public and organizational policies for prevention

#### *Applying and Adapting Effective Practices*

- Accelerate adoption and adaptation of evidence-based prevention strategies

#### *Building Community Readiness*

- Build community capacity to implement evidence-based prevention approaches
- Develop prevention and strategy tools for communities and organizations
- Establish partnerships that facilitate dissemination and implementation of evidence-based prevention strategies

Learn more about this and other CDC prevention strategies on the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control website: [www.cdc.gov/injury](http://www.cdc.gov/injury).

## Deepening and Sustaining a Protective-Factors Approach

*Adapted from the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families Initiative*

Implementing a protective-factors approach to child abuse and neglect prevention means engaging the programs, services, and systems already supporting children and families as partners in preventing maltreatment and promoting optimal development. To do this, States participating in the Strengthening Families National Network have found that three “levers for change” help their work significantly. These levers for change enhance the environment in which programs do their work—creating the incentives, capacity, and impetus for many more programs to take on a protective-factors approach. The three levers for change are:

- Parent Partnerships
- Professional Development
- Policy and Systems

### Parent Partnerships

Parent partnerships help ensure that prevention strategies (a) are responsive and relevant to all kinds of family needs and choices, (b) model the relationships among families, service providers, and community resources that can promote the best possible environment for children’s development, and (c) engage parents as active partners. Parent partnerships work when many parents are consistently involved as decision-makers in program planning, implementation, and assessment. There are many ways to implement parent partnerships:

- Partner with parent organizations
- Create and maintain prominent leadership roles for parents
- Learn about what motivates parents to engage in program leadership
- Provide leadership training and support for parents
- Create opportunities for parents to engage with other parents directly around learning about and using the protective factors in their own families
- Designate specific resources for parent engagement, participation, and leadership



## Levers for Change

**Illinois** and **Washington** have adapted the World Café approach to organize intimate, semi-structured conversations among parents that focus on building protective factors, promoting parent leadership, and creating lasting partnerships throughout communities. Thousands of parents in both States have engaged in the cafés. The process of organizing and leading the cafés has built a cadre of committed parent leaders who are helping to shape each State’s Strengthening Families efforts—as well as engaging parents in learning about the protective factors.

### Professional Development

Infusing the protective factors into training for all people who work with children and families helps build a workforce with common knowledge, goals, and language. Professionals at every level, from frontline workers to supervisors and administrators, need protective-factors training that is tailored to their roles and imparts a cohesive message focused on strengthening families.

Strategies for enhancing professional development:

- Provide trainings on protective factors to current trainers to leverage existing training capacity
- Integrate Strengthening Families themes and the protective factors into college, continuing education, and certificate programs for those working with children and families
- Incorporate family-strengthening concepts into new worker trainings
- Develop online training and distance learning opportunities
- Provide training at conferences and meetings
- Reinforce family-strengthening training with structured mechanisms for continued support, such as reflective supervision and ongoing mentoring

In **Idaho**, the State’s Strengthening Families Initiative has integrated its 17-hour Strengthening Families training into its Quality Rating and Improvement System. This ensures that programs have an incentive to participate, that participants can access training stipend dollars, and that quality consultants and program mentors can provide support on implementation. Initiatives in **Missouri** and **Arkansas** are adapting child care resource and referral contracts to provide incentives for offering training on the protective factors.

### Policies and Systems

A protective-factors approach can serve as a platform for coordination across diverse initiatives and the development of common language and goals for families in all levels of work. The common focal point is building protective factors in families for the prevention of maltreatment and optimal development of all children. Integrating a protective-factors approach into regulations and procedures that govern everyday practice in child and family services is an effective way to create broad and sustainable change.

Strategies for building collaboration across systems:

- Engage multidisciplinary partners
- Link to cross-systems planning efforts
- Adapt contractual methods for funding and defining programs to include a protective-factors focus
- Use protective factors to define a shared set of desired outcomes for families across systems and disciplines
- Identify the State agencies that fund early childhood initiatives and engage these agencies in planning and implementing family-strengthening activities
- Revise job requirements, performance reviews, tools, assessment forms, and performance contracts to reflect a protective-factors approach to working with children and families

**Massachusetts** has aligned \$15 million in contracts from three separate funding sources around building the protective factors. Strengthening Families **Georgia** is exploring integration of protective factors into its child care licensing procedures.

## Using Evidence to Support Efforts to Strengthen Families



Evidence-based family-strengthening practice involves identifying, assessing, and implementing strategies that are supported by scientific research as being effective. Just as we expect our family physician to keep abreast of treatment options that work best, we want to use evidence in our own work to:

- Ensure we are integrating the best available research with current child abuse prevention program expertise to guide our work with children and families
- Invest our limited dollars in programs and practices backed by evidence that shows they produce positive outcomes for children and families
- Become more informed funders, consumers, and community partners to prevent child abuse and neglect
- Foster a culture of continuous quality improvement by promoting ongoing evaluation and quality assurance activities across all prevention and family support programs

The terms “evidence-based” and “evidence-informed” are defined differently in different contexts. Evidence-based *practices* are approaches to prevention or treatment that are validated by some form of documented scientific evidence. This includes findings established through controlled clinical studies, but other methods of establishing evidence are valid as well. Evidence-based *programs* use a defined curriculum or set of services that, when implemented with fidelity as a whole, has been validated by some form of scientific evidence. Evidence-based practices and programs may be described as “supported” or “well-supported,” depending on the strength of the research design.

Evidence-*informed* practices use the best available research and practice knowledge to guide program design and implementation. This informed practice allows for innovation while incorporating the lessons learned from the existing research literature. Ideally, evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and practices should be responsive to families’ cultural backgrounds, community values, and individual preferences.

## Using Evidence to Support Efforts to Strengthen Families

### **Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed Programs and Practices for Family Strengthening and Child Abuse Prevention**

Research has identified a number of evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and practices that strengthen families and reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. National registries and websites provide more detailed information about particular programs. Readers are encouraged to evaluate the level of evidence available for any specific program, as well as to consider its appropriateness for specific families and communities. Some strategies that have been identified as evidence-based are:

- Family-centered interventions
- Individualized community supports
- In-home services
- Family-centered community building
- Parent education

### **Selecting and Implementing Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed Programs and Practices**

Selecting and implementing the appropriate evidence-based or evidence-informed programs and practices can be daunting. The FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, with the help of State and national partners, developed Integrating Evidence-Based Practices into CBCAP Programs: A Tool for Critical Discussions. This Discussion Tool was designed to promote conversations and careful thought to guide child abuse and neglect prevention programs in the selection, implementation, documentation, and evaluation of evidence-based or evidence-informed programs and practices.

The Discussion Tool was developed for use in a training environment with a skilled technical assistance provider. However, FRIENDS has made the Discussion Tool's introduction and appendices available on its website. For more information visit: [www.friendsnrc.org/cbcap-priority-areas/evidence-base-practice-in-cbcap/integrating-evidence-based-practice-resources](http://www.friendsnrc.org/cbcap-priority-areas/evidence-base-practice-in-cbcap/integrating-evidence-based-practice-resources).

The following online resources identify evidence-based programs. This is not an exhaustive list of such resources, nor is it an endorsement. It is important to note that each registry may use different criteria to evaluate the strength of a program's supporting evidence.

## Using Evidence to Support Efforts to Strengthen Families

### Administration for Children and Families

The ACF website offers resources in grant opportunities and information on previously funded programs. [www.acf.hhs.gov/index.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/index.html)

### Benefits and Costs of Early Intervention Programs for Children and Youth

This report describes study findings, and provides an overview of how the analysis was conducted. It also summarizes research-based prevention and early intervention programs for youth.

[www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-07-3901](http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-07-3901)

### California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare

The CEBC provides professionals vital information about selected programs related to child welfare. Each program is reviewed and rated according to the CEBC Scientific Rating Scale to determine the level of evidence for the program. The programs are also rated on a Relevance to Child Welfare Rating Scale.

[www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org](http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org)

### Child Trends: What Works

Child Trends is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center that studies children at every stage of development. Its mission is to improve outcomes for children by providing research, data, and analysis to the people and institutions whose decisions and actions affect children, including policymakers, program providers, foundations, and the media. Visit the link and click on What Works.

[www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)

### Child Welfare Information Gateway

This website includes a library search feature as well as other useful tools, documents and resources helpful in identifying evidence-based and evidence-informed practices.

[www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

### Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise

This document is a thorough, objective review and synthesis of current research that addresses the potential for interventions of various forms in early childhood to improve outcomes for participating children and their families.

[www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB9145](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9145)

### Ohio State University Center for Learning Excellence

This web-based system provides evidence-based practice tools as well as a program database, and can assist the user in selecting and implementing evidence-based programs that positively affect youth behaviors. <http://cle.osu.edu/resouces/evidence-based-practice-tools>

### Find Youth Info

This website holds an Evidence-Based Program Directory of evidence-based, federally funded youth programs. Users can search by risk factors, protective factors, or keyword.

[www.findyouthinfo.gov/programsearch.aspx](http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/programsearch.aspx)

### The Campbell Collaboration (C2)

This nonprofit organization aims to help people make well-informed decisions about effects of social, behavioral, and educational interventions. C2 prepares, maintains and disseminates summaries and electronic brochures of reviews of intervention studies and reports of trials for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and the public.

[www.campbellcollaboration.org](http://www.campbellcollaboration.org)

### Pathways Mapping Initiative

This website addresses what it takes to improve the lives of children and families living in urban neighborhoods. Community coalitions, providers of services and other support, funders, and policymakers will find a wealth of information about what works in social programs and policies.

[www.cssp.org/major\\_initiatives/pathways.html](http://www.cssp.org/major_initiatives/pathways.html)

### Promising Practices Catalog from the Finance Project's Information Resource Center

This resource describes programs, practices, and initiatives across the country that aim to improve the futures of children, families, and communities.

[www.financeproject.org/index.cfm?page=23](http://www.financeproject.org/index.cfm?page=23)

### The Promising Practices Network

This website highlights programs and practices that credible research indicates are effective in improving outcomes for children, youth, and families.

[www.promisingpractices.net](http://www.promisingpractices.net)

### SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)

NREPP is a database of interventions for the prevention and treatment of mental and substance use disorders. Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has developed this resource to help people, agencies, and organizations implement programs and practices in their communities. [www.nrepp.samhsa.gov](http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov)

### Identifying and Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions

These concepts were developed by SAMHSA as a guide for its State Incentive Grant Program, but they are relevant for child abuse prevention.

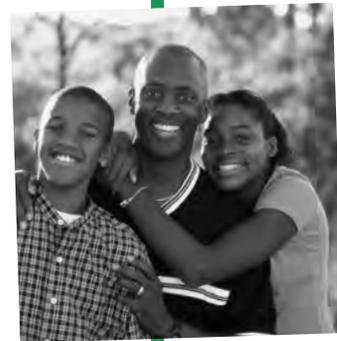
<http://prevention.samhsa.gov/evidencebased/evidencebased.pdf>

### Wisconsin Clearinghouse for Prevention Resources

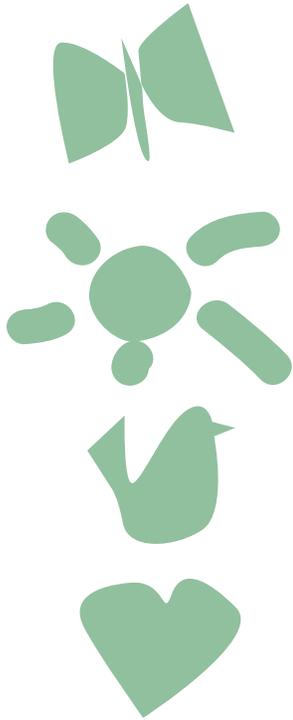
This clearinghouse has a section for identifying evidence-based methodologies in child abuse prevention. <http://wch.uhs.wisc.edu>

## Chapter 2

# Working With Families: The Five Protective Factors



## Promoting the Five Protective Factors



This chapter provides background and guidance for service providers and others on exploring the five protective factors with parents. For each protective factor, you will find:

- Brief background on why the protective factor is important for strengthening families and reducing the risk of abuse or neglect
- Suggested areas to explore and language to use as you partner with parents to identify family strengths and needs
- Strategies and resources that may serve to strengthen families

For each protective factor, the focus is on helping parents identify and build on their own strengths and on empowering them to identify the best strategies to help them enhance their parenting capacity. This gives the provider a foundation for working in partnership with the parent and family to explore opportunities for growth and support.

The five protective factors covered in this chapter are:

- **Nurturing and attachment**—Building a close bond helps parents better understand, respond to, and communicate with their children.
- **Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development**—Parents learn what to look for at each age and how to help their children reach their full potential.
- **Parental resilience**—Recognizing the signs of stress and enhancing problem-solving skills can help parents build their capacity to cope.
- **Social connections**—Parents with an extensive network of family, friends, and neighbors have better support in times of need.
- **Concrete supports for parents**—Caregivers with access to financial, housing, and other concrete resources and services that help them meet their basic needs can better attend to their role as parents.

## Promoting the Five Protective Factors

The words used with parents have a powerful impact on our ability to connect. Providers are encouraged to engage community members in identifying ways to describe the protective factors that speak to that community. For example, a group of parents from the Nisqually Nation in Washington State suggested, “Compassion, freedom, hope, community, and health.”<sup>1</sup>

The resources and suggestions provided in this chapter are just a starting point for developing the parent-provider partnership. Other considerations are equally important. For example, the parent and provider should find a mutually comfortable place to meet, such as the parent’s home, a coffee shop, a picnic bench in a nearby park, or at a religious institution or school. A casual setting may facilitate a more friendly and informal discussion.

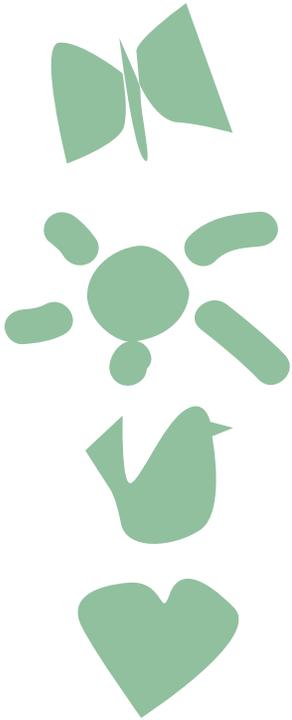
For more information on protective factors that reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect, visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway webpage—Enhancing Protective Factors: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors).



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<sup>1</sup> This and other examples of parent-friendly language included in this Resource Guide were provided by the Washington and Illinois Strengthening Families Initiatives.

## Nurturing and Attachment



Parents today have a lot on their plates. Juggling the demands of work, home, and other responsibilities leaves many parents feeling like they do not have nearly enough time with their children. But even small acts of kindness, protection, and caring—a hug, a smile, or loving words—make a big difference to children. Research consistently shows that babies who receive affection and nurturing from their parents have the best chance of developing into children, teens, and adults who are happy, healthy, and competent. Research also shows that a relationship with a consistent, stable, and caring adult in the early years is associated in later life with better academic grades, healthier behaviors, more positive peer interactions, and an increased ability to cope with stress.

Infant brains develop best when a few stable caregivers work to understand and meet their needs for love, affection, and stimulation, or provide comfort when they are hungry, bored, tired, wet, or cold. Conversely, neglectful and abusive parenting can have a negative effect on brain development. Research shows that a lack of contact or interaction with a caregiver can change the infant's body chemistry, resulting in a reduction in the growth hormones essential for brain and heart development. Furthermore, the ability to feel remorse and empathy are built on experience. Children who lack early emotional attachments or who grow up fearful and expecting to be hurt will have a difficult time relating to peers.

As children grow, nurturing by parents and other caregivers remains important for healthy physical and emotional development. While physical contact may become less important, listening and talking are always vital to the relationship. Parents nurture their older children by making time to listen to them, being involved and interested in the child's school and other activities, staying aware of the child or teen's interests and friends, and being willing to advocate for the child when necessary.

When parents spend time and energy discovering and paying attention to their children's needs, they are rewarded with positive, open, and trusting relationships with their children. Parents who develop the ability to respond sensitively to the needs of their child, no matter what age, will find parenting easier and more enjoyable.

**Exploring Strengths and Needs**

Regardless of the child’s age, parents can take advantage of opportunities in their sometimes hectic lives to listen and respond to their child in a nurturing way. Even a few minutes of quality time in the car, at the store, or while cooking dinner mean so much to a child. Your role as a partner with the parent is to model and acknowledge nurturing behaviors as parents make connections with their baby, child, or teen.

Some parents have chosen to communicate the importance of nurturing and attachment in terms of the desired outcomes: “My children feel loved, believe they matter, and can get along with others.” Or simply, “My child(ren) and I regularly show each other how much we love each other.”

In order to explore . . .	Ask the parent . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent observes and attends to the child</li> <li>● Specific play or stimulation behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How much time are you able to spend with your child or teen?</li> <li>● When you spend time with your child or teen, what do you like to do together?</li> <li>● How do you engage your child or teen during everyday activities (diapering, meals, driving in the car)?</li> <li>● What games or activities does your child or teen like?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent responds to the child’s behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What does your child or teen do when he/she is sad, angry, tired?</li> <li>● What happens when your child (cries for a long time, has a tantrum, wets the bed, skips school)?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent responds to emotional needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you know when your child or teen is happy? Sad? Lonely? Hurt?</li> <li>● How do you comfort your child?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent demonstrates affection</li> <li>● How the parent models caring behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you show affection in your family?</li> <li>● How do you let your child know that you love him or her?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent recognizes accomplishments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What are your child’s greatest gifts and talents?</li> <li>● How do you encourage these talents?</li> <li>● What do you do when your child does something great?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent provides a safe and stable home and family environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How many people provide care for your baby or toddler? How often do these people change?</li> <li>● What routines do you keep in caring for your young child?</li> <li>● All families experience conflict from time to time. What happens when there is conflict in your house?</li> <li>● How do you keep your child or teen safe at home? In your neighborhood or community?</li> </ul>

## Nurturing and Attachment

### Sharing Strategies and Resources to Strengthen Nurturing and Attachment

You can share resources available from your agency and throughout the community on how parents can connect with their children, listen to them, and become more involved in their lives. It is important to note that bonding is a two-way street. As children grow and develop the ability to socialize, relate, and communicate, it is easier for parents to respond positively to them. When a child does not show a positive response to the parent (due to age, a disability, or other factors), the parent may need additional support.

Resources to promote nurturing may include information, examples, and opportunities to practice and receive feedback in the areas of:

#### *Impact of nurturing on development*

- Information about infant and toddler development, including brain development
- The importance of an early secure attachment between parents and young children
- Information on abusive head trauma and sudden infant death syndrome
- Examples of secure parent-child attachment at all ages
- Examples of how secure parent-child attachment supports positive child behavior

#### *Parenting strategies that promote nurturing*

- Infant care and strategies that promote bonding and attachment (e.g., breastfeeding, rocking, using a baby carrier, responding to crying, talking lovingly, consistency within and across caregivers, and stability of primary caregivers)
- Cultural differences in how parents and children show affection
- What to do when your child has an emotional or behavioral disability that limits his or her ability to respond to parental nurturing
- Ways to nurture children at every age
- How fathers nurture children
- Ways to engage other important adults as part of a child's "nurturing network"
- Ways to create and sustain healthy marriages that better support a nurturing home environment for children
- Ways to create quality time to play with children in the context of daily activities
- Communicating effectively with older children and resolving conflicts
- Using positive discipline

Many parents, especially parents of infants, find that home visits are a convenient way to access resources. For providers, home visits allow you to meet with parents in an environment where parents and children may be most comfortable. Home visits also give you a chance to talk to parents about any material or safety needs in the home.

However, some families may not feel comfortable having strangers in their home and may prefer to meet in another setting, such as a church, school, park, or office. For some families, a "neighborhood helper" or other person who shares the family's ethnic and cultural background may provide a bridge for connecting with the parent or caregiver.

## Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development

Parents know their children best—their unique behaviors, interests, and abilities. But no parent can be an expert on all aspects of infant, child, and teenage development or the most effective ways to support a child at each stage. When parents are not aware of normal developmental milestones, interpret their child’s behaviors in a negative way, or do not know how to respond to and effectively manage a child’s behavior, they can become frustrated and may resort to harsh discipline or emotional withdrawal.

There is extensive research linking healthy child development to effective parenting. Children thrive when parents provide not only affection, but also respectful communication and listening, consistent rules and expectations, and safe opportunities that promote independence. Successful parenting fosters psychological adjustment, helps children succeed in school, encourages curiosity about the world, and motivates children to achieve. Parenting skills are not static; as children grow and mature, parents need to change the way they respond to their children’s needs. In addition, parenting styles need to be adjusted for each child’s individual temperament and unique circumstances.

Knowledge of parenting and child development also changes over time. Many parenting practices that were common only a generation ago—laying children to sleep on their stomachs, for example—are not recommended today. New research, social expectations, social structures, and even laws have combined to make parenting a different task than it was even 20 years ago. Parents need access to information that is grounded in the latest research.



## Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development

### Exploring Strengths and Needs

All parents have questions about raising their children, and they need timely answers and support from someone they trust. One way to describe this is simply to acknowledge, “Parenting is part natural and part learned.”

Parents may feel more comfortable voicing concerns and exploring solutions when providers:

- Focus on the parents’ own hopes and goals for their children
- Help parents identify and build on their strengths in parenting
- Model nurturing behavior by acknowledging frustrations and recognizing the parents’ efforts

In order to explore . . .	Ask the parent . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The parent’s view of his/her child’s strengths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What does your child do best?</li> <li>● What do you like about your child?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent views his/her own role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What do you like about being a parent of an infant (or preschooler, or teenager)?</li> <li>● What are some of the things that you find challenging as a parent?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent observes and interprets the child’s behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What kinds of things make your child happy?</li> <li>● What kinds of things make your child frustrated, sad, or angry?</li> <li>● What does your child do when happy? Frustrated? Sad? Angry?</li> <li>● Why do you think your child (cries, eats slowly, says “no,” breaks rules)?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ways the parent is currently responding to the child’s needs and behaviors</li> <li>● How the parent encourages positive behavior through praise and modeling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What works best for your child when he/she is sad, angry, or frustrated?</li> <li>● How have you let your child know what you expect?</li> <li>● What happens when she/he does what you asked?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Whether the parent can identify alternative solutions for addressing behaviors</li> <li>● Community, cultural, and ethnic expectations and practices about parenting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How have you seen other parents handle this? What would your parents have done in this situation?</li> <li>● What teaching (discipline) methods work best for you?</li> <li>● How does your child respond?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent understands the child’s development</li> <li>● Any parental concern that the child’s behavior appears to be outside the normal range</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you think your child compares to other children his/her age?</li> <li>● Are there things that worry you about your child?</li> <li>● Have others expressed concern about your child’s behavior?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent encourages healthy development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you respond to your baby’s attempts to communicate?</li> <li>● How do you encourage your child to explore his/her surroundings, try new things, and do things on his/her own?</li> <li>● What works in encouraging your child to be more independent and competent?</li> </ul>

## Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development

### Sharing Strategies and Resources to Strengthen Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development

When parents share their concerns and perspectives on their children, there is an opportunity to explore solutions and share resources. Educational materials about parenting and child development may help parents more accurately assess their child's development relative to others of the same age, have realistic expectations for their child's behavior, and explore ways to communicate those expectations effectively.

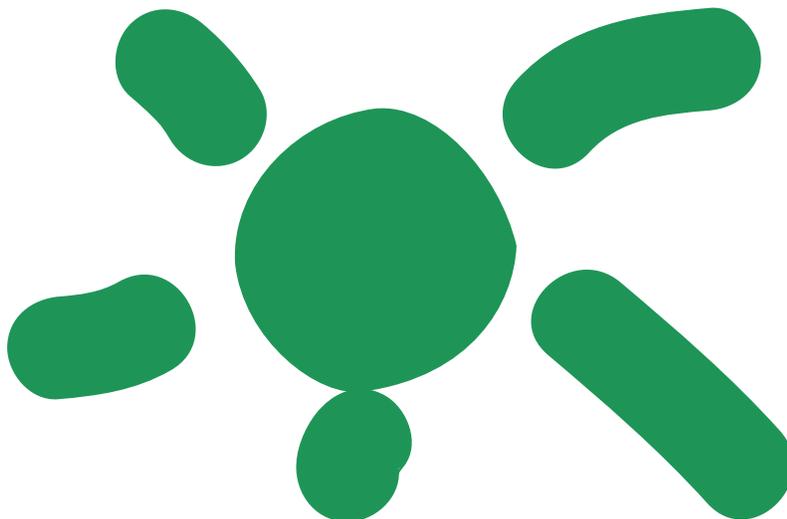
Helpful resources for enhancing parenting knowledge and skills may include information and opportunities to practice in the areas of:

#### *Child and youth development*

- What parents can expect and look for as the child or youth grows
- The ability of children or teens to understand and control their behavior at different ages
- Addressing developmental challenges such as inconsolable crying, bedwetting, eating or sleeping problems, lying, school issues, problems with peers, and puberty
- How to keep children safe, including information on shaken baby syndrome, sudden infant death syndrome, childproofing strategies, appropriate child care, and safety in the community

#### *Parenting*

- How a parent can guide a child's behavior and reinforce desired/appropriate behavior
- Ways that a parent can model desirable behavior
- Nonpunitive disciplinary/teaching techniques, such as setting routines and limits, redirecting attention or behavior, and logical consequences for actions



## Parental Resilience



Parents who can cope with the stresses of everyday life, as well as an occasional crisis, have resilience; they have the flexibility and inner strength necessary to bounce back when things are not going well. Parents with resilience are generally able to cope on their own, but they also know how to seek help in times of trouble. Their ability to deal with life's ups and downs serves as a model of coping behavior for their children.

Multiple life stressors, such as a family history of abuse or neglect, physical and mental health problems, marital conflict, substance abuse, and domestic or community violence—and financial stressors such as unemployment, financial insecurity, and homelessness—may reduce a parent's capacity to cope effectively with the typical day-to-day stresses of raising children.

All parents have inner strengths or resources that can serve as a foundation for building their resilience. These may include faith, flexibility, humor, communication skills, problem-solving skills, mutually supportive caring relationships, or the ability to identify and access outside resources and services when needed. All of these qualities strengthen the capacity to parent effectively, and they can be nurtured and developed through concrete skill-building activities or through supportive interactions with others.

In addition, community services that help families in crisis include mental health programs, substance abuse treatment, family and marital counseling, and special education and treatment programs for children with special needs.

**Exploring Strengths and Needs**

The term “resilience” will not resonate with all parents. Explore alternate ways of talking about these skills, such as the affirmation, “I will continue to have courage during stressful times or after a crisis.”

By partnering with parents, you can help them pinpoint the factors contributing to their stress, as well as their successful coping strategies and their personal, family, and community resources.

In order to explore . . .	Ask the parent . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What the parent identifies as his or her coping strengths and resilience</li> <li>● The parent’s strengths in parenting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What helps you cope with everyday life?</li> <li>● Where do you draw your strength?</li> <li>● How does this help you in parenting?</li> <li>● What are your dreams for yourself and your family?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What the parent identifies as everyday stressors</li> <li>● Problem-solving skills</li> <li>● Stressors precipitated by crises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What kinds of frustrations or worries do you deal with during the day?</li> <li>● How do you solve these everyday problems as they come up?</li> <li>● Has something happened recently that has made life more difficult?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Impact of stress on parenting</li> <li>● Impact of parenting on stress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How are you able to meet your children’s needs when you are dealing with stress?</li> <li>● How are your children reacting to (crisis)?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the parent communicates with his or her spouse or partner</li> <li>● Whether there is marital stress or conflict</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you and your spouse communicate about concerns?</li> <li>● How does your spouse or partner support you in times of stress?</li> <li>● How do you and your spouse or partner work together in parenting?</li> <li>● What happens when you and your spouse or partner disagree?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Needs that might be identified by a different family member (not all family members may identify the same needs)</li> <li>● Actions that a parent may need to take when additional needs are identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Are other family members experiencing stress or concern?</li> <li>● Has anyone in your family expressed concern about drug or alcohol abuse?</li> <li>● What steps have you taken to address those concerns?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Short-term supports (respite care, help with a new baby, help during an illness)</li> <li>● Long-term strategies (job training, marital counseling, religious or spiritual practices)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● When you are under stress, what is most helpful to you?</li> <li>● Are there places in the community where you can find help?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The parent’s ability to set and work toward personal goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What are your goals for your family or children in the next week (or month)?</li> <li>● What are your long-term goals for yourself? For your children and family?</li> <li>● What steps might you take toward those goals in the next week (or month)?</li> </ul>

## Parental Resilience

### Sharing Strategies and Resources to Promote Parental Resilience

When parents identify and communicate what worries them most, there is an opportunity to offer some coping strategies and resources to begin to deal with the stress. Parents are not always aware how their ability to cope with stress may impact their capacity to parent and their children's development. You can help parents recognize that they can model coping behaviors for their children, since children observe and imitate parents in many ways. Empowering parents to seek help and take steps to combat stress is part of building both resilience and hope.

Some needs are obvious to all family members and to providers. Other needs, such as marital counseling or substance abuse treatment, may become apparent when one family member expresses concern about another. Partnering with the family includes helping all family members translate their concerns into specific needs that can be discussed and resolved. Many community resources and services are available to help families cope. Faith communities, community colleges, self-help groups, and social service agencies can help parents and caregivers develop problem-solving and communication skills that strengthen their ability to deal effectively with crisis, so they can continue to provide for their children.

Resources for building resilience may include information about:

#### *Stress—causes and results*

- How stress happens, including the “little things” that add up
- Ways to recognize stress and its triggers
- How stress affects health and coping
- How stress affects parenting, marriage, and family life

#### *Finding ways to build resilience*

- Stress management techniques, such as regular exercise, relaxation to music, and meditation or prayer
- How to prevent stress by planning ahead, anticipating difficulties, and having resources in place
- How to anticipate and minimize everyday stress
- How to handle major stressors, including accessing resources and supports from family, friends, faith communities, and other community resources
- Family management techniques, such as effective ways of communicating needs and concerns
- Programs that offer family-to-family help or mentoring for personalized, intensive, sustained services or support, especially in times of crisis
- Community supports such as mental health and counseling services, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence programs, and self-help support groups
- Concrete skill building in areas such as problem solving, goal setting, communication, and self-care

## Social Connections

Parents with a social network of emotionally supportive friends, family, and neighbors often find that it is easier to care for their children and themselves. Most parents need people they can call on once in a while when they need a sympathetic listener, advice, or concrete support. Conversely, research has shown that parents who are isolated, with few social connections, are at higher risk for child abuse and neglect.

Some parents may need to develop self-confidence and social skills to expand their social networks. Helping parents identify resources and/or providing opportunities for them to make connections within their neighborhood or community may encourage isolated parents to reach out. Often, opportunities exist within faith-based organizations, schools, hospitals, community centers, and other places where support groups or social groups meet.



## Social Connections

### Exploring Strengths and Needs

Identifying and building on parents' current or potential social connections, skills, abilities, and interests can be a great way to partner with them as they expand their social networks. For parents who have difficulty establishing and maintaining social connections, your discussion may help them identify what is holding them back.

Encourage parents to express goals regarding social connections in their own terms, such as, "I have friends and at least one person who supports my parenting."

In order to explore . . .	Ask the parent . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parent's current social support system, including family, friends, and membership in any formal groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have family members or friends nearby who help you out once in a while?</li> <li>Do you belong to a church, temple, mosque, women's group, men's group?</li> <li>Do you have a child in the local school or Head Start program?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parent's social skills and capacity to make and keep friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who can you call for advice or just to talk?</li> <li>How often do you see them?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parent's desire for new friends and social connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What kinds of things do you like to do for fun or to relax?</li> <li>Would you be interested in meeting some other moms and dads who also (have a new baby, have a teenager, like to cook, sing in a choir)?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parent's potential strengths and challenges in making social connections (including concerns such as parent's language, comfort level in groups, access to babysitting and transportation, recent arrival in community)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are some benefits of getting out or joining a group?</li> <li>What kind of support would you need in order to be able to get out for an evening?</li> <li>How does your spouse or partner help out so that you have some time with friends?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs that might be met with better social connections (for instance, respite care, a sympathetic listener, a role model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would it help you to have more friends or acquaintances to call about _____?</li> <li>Would it help you to know other moms and dads who are dealing with _____?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The parent's interest in starting or facilitating a community group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What would it take to get a group of parents together to _____?</li> </ul>

### Sharing Strategies and Resources to Strengthen Social Connections

If parents express an interest in making social connections, you may want to offer suggestions, information, or services. Sometimes parents will not identify a lack of social connections or emotional support as an issue. Instead, they may express concern about a child's behavior problem or their own depression. In addressing the parent's concerns, you can also provide information about how these needs might be met by connecting with others (e.g., a support group for parents with similar issues). You can also provide general information on how expanding social connections can reduce isolation and support parents.

Consider sharing the following:

#### *Benefits of a broad social network*

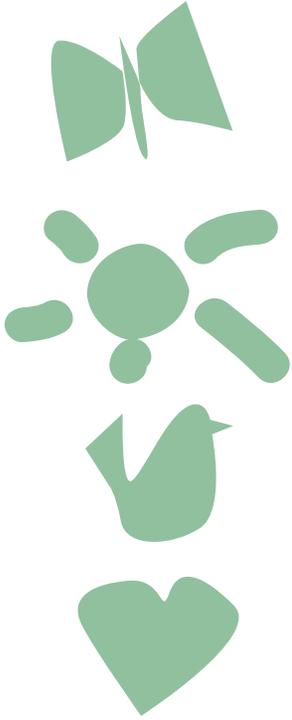
- Helps ease the burden of parenting
- Models positive social interactions for children and gives children access to other supportive adults
- Provides support in crises
- Offers opportunities to help others

#### *Ways to broaden a social network*

- Overcome transportation, child care, and other barriers—for instance, taking a bus or carpool to a play group or joining a babysitting co-op to meet other parents and have occasional child care
- Access community resources, especially those with which the parent has some experience (a church he or she attended, a Head Start program where the child is enrolled, a cultural center that offers services in the parent's native language)
- Join a parent's group or play group in the neighborhood, or start a new group

Some neighborhoods and communities provide ample opportunities for neighbors to come together and friendships to develop. In other cases, agencies and organizations may welcome help in starting groups that bring families together for mutual support. These groups might start as an outgrowth of a widely recognized need in the community, such as new families that have just moved to the area or concerned citizens working against community violence. Community involvement is critical for these groups to be sustained over time. As a service provider, your role might be bringing individuals together (including parents), providing a meeting place, or simply encouraging a community leader to establish a group to meet a particular need.

## Concrete Supports for Parents



Many factors affect a family's ability to care for their children. Families who can meet their own basic needs for food, clothing, housing, and transportation—and who know how to access essential services such as child care, health care, and mental health services to address family-specific needs—are better able to ensure their children's safety and well-being. Some families may also need assistance connecting to social service supports such as alcohol and drug treatment, domestic violence counseling, or public benefits. When parents do not have steady financial resources, lack health insurance, or suffer a family crisis such as a natural disaster or the incarceration of a parent, their ability to care for their children may be at risk.

Financial insecurity is associated with greater rates of child abuse and neglect, and families living in poverty often benefit from specific concrete supports, such as help with housing, food, transportation, child care, clothing, furniture, and utilities. Partnering with parents to identify and access these resources in the community may help prevent the stress that sometimes precipitates child maltreatment. Offering concrete supports may also help prevent the unintended neglect that sometimes occurs when parents are unable to provide for their children.

### Exploring Strengths and Needs

Most parents are unlikely to use or identify with the words “concrete supports.” Instead, they might express a goal such as, “My family can access services when they need them.”

Working with parents to identify their most critical basic needs and locate concrete supports keeps the focus on family-driven solutions. As a partner with the family, your role may simply be making referrals to the essential services, supports, and resources that parents say they need.

In order to explore...	Ask the parent...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The parent’s view of the most immediate need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What do you need to (stay in your house, keep your job, pay your heating bill)?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Steps the parent has taken to deal with the problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How have you handled this?</li> <li>● What kind of response have you gotten?</li> <li>● Why is this working or not working?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ways the family handles other problems</li> <li>● Current connections that might offer help for the new problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What has worked well in the past?</li> <li>● Are there community groups or local services that have been or might be able to offer assistance?</li> <li>● Do you belong to a faith community? Do you have a relationship with a pediatrician? Is your child enrolled at a local school?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Other services and supports that would help the family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have you thought about _____ (local program that provides housing or food)?</li> <li>● Did you know that _____ provides (free homework help, meals on weekends, low-cost child care)?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The parent’s desire and capacity to receive new services, including completing applications, keeping appointments, and committing to the solution process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What kind of help do you need to get to these appointments?</li> <li>● When would be a good time for me to give you a call to see how it’s going?</li> </ul>

## Concrete Supports for Parents

### Sharing Strategies and Resources to Strengthen Concrete Supports

Parents may not always know about community resources that can help meet their basic needs or how to access essential services. Language or cultural barriers may make it difficult for some parents to identify services and make the necessary contacts. Providing information and connections to concrete supports can be a tremendous help to families under stress or in crisis. You might provide contact information (a person's name is most helpful) or help parents make the initial calls or appointments, depending on what parents say they need.

When specific services do not exist in your community, you may be able to work with parents or community leaders to help establish them. Parents can become powerful advocates for a particular cause, such as low-cost, after-school programs or safe transportation for teens, if they know the process for forming groups and creating services.

Your expertise may be most helpful in the following ways:

#### *Linking families with services*

- Parents may not be aware of services that could help. You can let them know about all available resources, so they may select what is most appropriate for their needs.
- Parents are more likely to use culturally appropriate services. If you can link them with a service provider who speaks their language or comes from a similar background, parents may feel more comfortable and experience a greater benefit.
- Parents with many needs may be overwhelmed by the different requirements for accessing various services. A “systems of care” approach may be most useful, in which different helping systems work together to support the family. (See “Engaging Community Partners” in the next chapter.)

#### *Building community services*

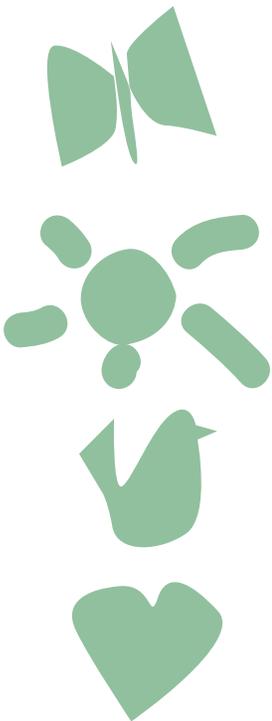
- Linking parents with community leaders and others to organize support, advocacy, and consulting groups gives parents the opportunity to use their experience to help others.
- Parents who go public with their need or cause usually find that they are not alone. The fact that a parent is willing to publicize a need or cause may mobilize the community.
- Parents who are new to advocacy may need help connecting with the media, businesses, funding, and other parts of the community to have their needs heard and identify solutions.

## Chapter 3

# Engaging Your Community



## Tools for Engaging Your Community



An investment in children is an investment in community and economic development. Likewise, when we support communities, we support the families that live in them. And when families are supported, children are more likely to grow up happy and healthy, free from the risk of maltreatment.

Broad-based partnerships, working across systems, are necessary to create lasting change in how communities think about prevention and support families. Working with others provides greater opportunities to identify strategies for ensuring that all parents in your community have the skills, supports, and resources they need to care for their children.

This chapter offers suggestions, tools, and resources for engaging your community in supporting and strengthening families through the five protective factors. These include:

- Tips for engaging community partners and working with specific groups
- Talking points (English and Spanish)
- Sample press release (English and Spanish)
- Sample public service announcements (PSAs) (English and Spanish)

More information about engaging your community is available in the Public Awareness & Creating Supportive Communities section of the Child Welfare Information Gateway website:  
[www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/communities](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/communities).

### *Adapted From the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families Initiative*

Successful family strengthening initiatives involve community leaders, agencies, and families working together to make lasting improvements to the community's infrastructure. Partnerships are a great way to make communities more supportive of families and help ensure family health and safety.

Protective factors can serve as a helpful framework for community partnerships supporting stressed and vulnerable families. Many life events bring stress and risk into a family's life—domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, loss of a job, having a child with special needs, even just the process of entering into parenting. When the community works together to strengthen families by building protective factors, families are better able to create a safe and stable base that allows them to respond more effectively to issues that cause stress.

For example, conversations with families struggling with a child's challenging behavior reveal that they often feel very isolated. Their child's behavior can serve as a barrier to accessing both formal and informal supports and services. Parents may feel depressed or self-critical. In these cases, child-centered therapeutic services may be complemented by a broader array of supports that help the family build protective factors.

This section discusses how protective factors can further community prevention work and suggests some activities to support adoption of a communitywide protective-factors framework. The next section offers tips for engaging specific groups in support of a communitywide effort.

### **Using the Protective Factors**

The protective factors can support your community-based prevention work in many ways. Protective factors can:

- **Serve as a framework to help community partners understand what you can offer.** Opening the conversation with a discussion around the protective factors will provide an opportunity to identify concrete collaborations that address issues for families under stress.
- **Provide continuity for families.** Families under stress often access services from multiple systems and service providers. When a protective-factors approach is used across these systems, it helps ensure a consistent experience for families.



## Engaging Community Partners

- **Provide a common set of outcomes.** Each service system has its own set of goals for the families they serve and the services they provide. Often these goals are focused on preventing specific negative outcomes. Protective factors can provide a common framework for fostering positive outcomes for families across systems.
- **Define a new audience and environment for prevention and family support activities.** Traditional prevention activities can also help build the capacity of those who work with families on a day-to-day basis. For example, many family resource centers experience low utilization during the daytime, when many parents are working. This could be an ideal time to work with home-based child care providers who may need family support services themselves, and who can serve as an important channel to reach another set of families who may need support.

### Suggested Activities

The following activities may be useful in support of adopting a communitywide protective-factors framework:

- **Cross-training.** Community partners each have their own ways of working with children and families. Training across disciplines can help to create a common understanding of what the protective factors are, which strategies are most effective for strengthening families, and how a protective-factors approach supports each partner's work with children and families.
- **Adapting intake and assessment tools and protocols.** Central to this process is moving from a needs-assessment approach to a more comprehensive assessment that looks at the family's needs, strengths, and protective factors. Encourage community providers to integrate a common set of questions, based on the protective factors, into their intake and assessment tools and protocols. This can help ensure that strategies to build protective factors are an integral part of service planning with all families.
- **Creating a consumer voice in relation to protective factors.** Many Strengthening Families sites have worked to build plain-language tools that help parents understand what the protective factors are, why they are important, and what families can expect from community partners that are committed to a protective-factors approach. These tools help to ensure that protective factors are built *with* families.
- **Creating service collaborations.** While the protective factors are universal to all families, they may need to be augmented or adapted for families experiencing particular stressors or traumas. In these cases, collaborations based on the protective factors may yield the most effective support system for families. For example, an organization that understands social networking might work with a domestic violence shelter to develop a social-connections strategy that is sensitive to safety-planning issues.

## Tips for Working With Specific Groups

Everyone has something to contribute to a community family strengthening effort. The following are suggestions for ways your partnership might engage and collaborate with specific groups.

### Partnering With Faith Communities

- Attend regularly or make a one-time presentation on protective factors to interfaith groups working on community needs and services. (See Talking Points on page 44.)
- Listen and seek to understand the faith communities' beliefs and values regarding protecting children and strengthening families. Demonstrating respect for their faith is important when approaching religious and lay leaders.
- Train religious and lay leaders about the five protective factors, as well as how to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, work with victims and their families, and make appropriate referrals.
- Organize parent education and support group meetings at faith community facilities.
- Support the development of mentoring programs within congregations for children and families under stress.
- Encourage religious and lay leaders to publicly acknowledge child abuse and neglect as a major concern for the faith community, and affirm that they are dedicated to supporting families and protecting children.

### Partnering With Parents and Caregivers

- Reach out to community parent councils or forums. Support the development of such councils where they do not currently exist.
- Provide community-based family mentoring services to strengthen family relationships.
- Organize workshops to teach parents how to access services to meet their families' needs, including finding adequate medical care, pursuing educational opportunities, and accessing job information. Include parent leaders as presenters.
- Create opportunities for parent volunteers to participate in community activities such as safety initiatives, after-school programs, mentoring programs, food drives, and other events.
- Ask experienced parent leaders to serve as mentors for family members who are just joining the group.



## Tips for Working With Specific Groups

### Partnering With the Courts

- Provide information, tools, and training about protective factors to judges, guardians *ad litem*, and others involved in making best interests determinations for children.
- Create substantive roles for parents and community stakeholders in the juvenile dependency court system to promote a better understanding of the challenges faced by those who come before the court.
- Set up formal referral systems to direct parents to legal service providers within the community.
- Create support groups among parents currently or previously involved with the court system.

### Partnering With the Media

- Develop a clear communications plan that includes your initiative's key messages, communication objectives, and targeted outreach to media outlets.
- Plan a communitywide campaign that gives increased visibility to community partners and families being served by the community partnership. Use the sample press release and the public service announcements on pages 50-53.
- Consider inviting media representatives to participate in your communitywide effort, and keep them informed regularly of your progress and challenges.
- Propose an editorial briefing on the protective factors and how community members can help families stay healthy and strong.
- Offer members of your community partnership as experts on family health and safety, protective factors, and child abuse prevention.

### Partnering With Early Childhood Centers and Schools

- Attend parent meetings or conduct community forums or workshops with early childhood centers and schools to talk with parents about protective factors.
- Schedule joint trainings with staff about the protective factors and child abuse prevention, and how this information can be incorporated into their work with parents.
- Seek opportunities to sponsor joint events with early childhood centers and schools.
- As these relationships develop, you may offer to provide onsite services to children and families. This can be an important first step in building families' comfort with pursuing services.

### Partnering With Business Leaders

- Recruit a high-profile community business leader to serve on the governance board for your community-based partnership. Encourage him or her to challenge other business leaders to contribute to the effort.
- Publicly recognize companies with family-friendly services and policies, such as onsite child care, flexible scheduling, and telecommuting.

## Tips for Working With Specific Groups

- Identify ways that employee volunteer programs could work to support safe and healthy families in the community.
- Partner with businesses to offer workshops for employees on the protective factors, child development, parenting skills, and stress reduction.
- Ask businesses to consider including family-strengthening messages in their advertising or product packaging.

### Partnering With Policymakers

- Write or call your local legislator and make him or her aware of the research demonstrating how the five protective factors help prevent child abuse and neglect. Briefly point out your community's current strengths and needs.
- Host a community event with your legislator at a local school or family center and invite community partners and families.
- Organize a town hall meeting with your legislator and other community leaders to address issues affecting local families.
- Build long-term relationships with your legislator and his or her staff; keep them informed of community issues.

### Partnering With Culturally Diverse Families and Communities

Partnering with families and communities of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, lifestyles, and beliefs requires an organizational investment in addressing differences in positive and productive ways. Here are a few examples:

- Different cultures define the concept of “family” in very different ways. Respect each family's own definition.
- Begin a workshop or retreat with a demonstration of spirituality drawn from the culture of one or more of the families present. This can prepare participants emotionally and mentally for the activities of the day, while acknowledging a strength of that family's culture to the entire group.
- Classes that introduce traditional child-rearing practices from various cultures may help young parents raise their children in a positive and culturally knowledgeable manner.
- Ethnic street fairs offer families a way to enjoy their cultural heritage in the company of others. Community organizations can provide prevention information and educational materials at booths and through family-friendly activities like parent-child art workshops and puppet shows.

For more information about culturally competent work with families, visit:  
[www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/cultural/preventing.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/cultural/preventing.cfm).

## Talking Points



The following talking points might be useful to those just starting a communitywide strengthening families initiative, or when inviting new partners to join. They can be used with community groups or the media. Tailor your presentation to fit the unique circumstances. Engage your audience by inviting them to contribute their own ideas about how your community can better support families, and close with a clear call to action.

### **What do we know about protecting children?**

- We all want to live in a prosperous, innovative, and healthy nation.
- Investing in child development is an investment in community and economic development.
- Getting prevention right early is less costly to society, and to individuals, than trying to fix things later.
- When a parent treats a child with respect, love, and understanding, it affects the child for a lifetime—making it easier to develop and keep friendships, succeed in school and work, sustain a happy marriage, and parent effectively.
- Unfortunately, many factors can limit parents' ability to protect and nurture their children. These can put families at risk for abuse and neglect.
- Certain factors have been shown to serve as buffers against these risks, enhancing parents' coping skills and helping them to raise happy, healthy children, even under stress.

### **What are the protective factors that strengthen families?**

The best thing our community can do to protect children is to help strengthen families by promoting the following five protective factors:

#### *Nurturing and attachment*

Parents and caregivers who bond with and respond to the basic needs of their babies and young children lay the foundation for a positive and loving relationship. They also stimulate the growth of their child's brain and help their child learn how to interact in positive ways with others.

Ways our community can promote parental nurturing and attachment:

- Sponsor workshops for caregivers on playing with infants and young children.
- Provide quiet, private places for mothers to breastfeed and for all caregivers to tend to their babies' needs.
- Recognize local businesses with family-friendly policies, such as flexible work schedules, paid maternity/paternity leave, and paid family sick leave, that give parents time to bond with or care for their children.

### *Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development*

Helping parents learn about normal infant, childhood, and teen development will help them understand what to anticipate as their children grow and develop, and what types of support and discipline may work best at each stage.

Ways our community can enhance knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development:

- Supply local pediatricians with reproducible factsheets about child development that can be given to parents during well-child exams.
- Sponsor classes and support programs for new parents.
- Offer trainings for child care providers and teachers about key aspects of child development and the relationship between effective parenting and brain development.
- Disseminate information to the community about normal crying and activity levels of children at different ages to increase understanding and help reduce pressures on parents.

### *Parental resilience*

Parenting can be stressful, especially when parents are also managing work demands or unemployment, financial worries, illness, or difficulties with a spouse or others. Parents who have support and skills for managing stress will be better able to cope with day-to-day challenges.

Ways our community can strengthen parental resilience:

- Explore how local faith communities organize members to support new parents or other families under stress. Share effective models with other groups.
- Offer free or low-cost stress management classes at local community centers, businesses, or schools.
- Sponsor communication and conflict resolution classes for couples.
- Provide brochures and other resources for teachers and child care providers to share with parents who are under significant stress.

## Talking Points

### *Social connections*

For most of us, family, friends, and neighbors form a network that provides social interaction, recreation, advice, and help. When parents have the opportunity to interact with, learn from, and seek the support of other adults, their children benefit.

Ways our community can help parents build social connections:

- Sponsor multigenerational activities like picnics and street fairs that reflect the community's culture through music, food, and games. Involve parents in organizing these events.
- Recruit volunteers for mentoring programs such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Befriend-a-Child, or Family to Family.
- Provide safe, accessible venues for young families to meet and socialize, such as libraries, parks, and preschools.

### *Concrete supports for parents*

When parents are not employed or face other challenges, they may need assistance in order to provide adequate food, clothing, housing, and medical care for their children. These supports may reduce the stress parents feel in difficult circumstances, giving them more energy to nurture and support their children.

Ways our community can help ensure adequate concrete supports for families:

- Provide a communitywide “system of care” for families needing services, to ensure they do not fall through the cracks.
- Make information about accessing community resources (e.g., housing, health care, employment assistance) readily available no matter where families initially turn for services.
- Educate candidates and elected officials about issues in our community and the need for services and programs that support healthy and safe children and families.
- Encourage service providers to collaborate, leverage funding, and share resources to address specific needs.

### **Call to action: How can we work together to strengthen our community?**

Mention some of the supports currently available in your community, including the efforts of your communitywide family strengthening partnership, if applicable.

Anything we do to strengthen and support families in our community helps reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. This month and throughout the year, let's focus our attention on prevention efforts that support parents and create healthier communities for children.

- Which needs are most urgent in our community?
- Which of the ideas we have talked about today would help address those needs?
- How can you help?

## Temas de conversación

Los siguientes temas de conversación pueden servir a las personas que apenas comienzan a preparar una iniciativa comunitaria para fortalecer a las familias o a los que buscan nuevos socios comunitarios. Además, los temas pueden servir para dirigirse a diferentes grupos comunitarios o a los medios de comunicación. Adapte su presentación para que se ajuste a las circunstancias específicas. Cuando dé una presentación, deje que los demás participen para que den sus ideas respecto a lo que la comunidad puede hacer para apoyar a las familias, y cierre su presentación haciendo un llamado claro a la acción.

### ¿Qué sabemos sobre la protección de menores?

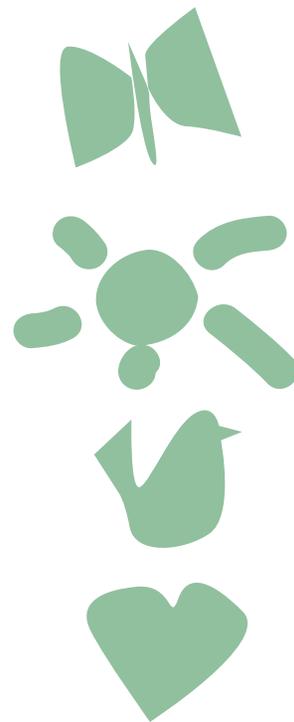
- Todos queremos vivir en una nación próspera, innovadora y saludable.
- Invertir en el desarrollo infantil es invertir en el desarrollo económico y comunitario.
- Es menos costoso para la sociedad y para los individuos aplicar la prevención correctamente desde un principio que tratar de corregir las cosas más adelante.
- Cuando un padre trata a un niño con respeto, amor y paciencia, afecta al niño de por vida—facilitando su capacidad para cultivar y mantener amistades, para sobresalir en la escuela y el trabajo, para mantener un matrimonio feliz y para que un día él sea un buen padre.
- Desafortunadamente, existen muchos factores que pueden limitar la habilidad de los padres de proteger y cuidar a sus hijos. Estos factores pueden poner a las familias en riesgo de abuso y negligencia.
- Se ha demostrado que existen ciertos factores que disminuyen estos riesgos y mejoran la capacidad de los padres de superar dificultades, ayudando a los padres a criar niños sanos y felices aun en situaciones de estrés.

### ¿Cuáles son los factores de protección que fortalecen a las familias?

Lo mejor que puede hacer nuestra comunidad para proteger a los niños es fortalecer a las familias promoviendo estos cinco factores de protección:

#### *El cariño y la cercanía*

Los padres y cuidadores que desarrollan un lazo afectivo y que satisfacen las necesidades básicas de sus bebés e hijos pequeños establecen las bases de una relación amorosa y positiva. También estimulan el desarrollo del cerebro de sus hijos y los enseñan a relacionarse de manera positiva con los demás.



## Temas de conversación

Lo que nuestra comunidad puede hacer para promover el cariño y la cercanía de los padres:

- Patrocinar talleres para enseñar a los padres o cuidadores cómo jugar con bebés y niños pequeños.
- Disponer de lugares donde las madres puedan dar pecho a sus hijos y donde los cuidadores puedan hacerse cargo de sus bebés.
- Dar reconocimiento a las empresas locales que dispongan de horarios flexibles, beneficios de maternidad o paternidad, o políticas para el bienestar de la familia que permitan a los padres formar un vínculo afectivo con sus hijos.

### *Conocimientos de crianza y del desarrollo infantil y juvenil*

Ayudar a los padres a aprender sobre el desarrollo normal de los bebés, los niños pequeños y los adolescentes los ayudará a entender lo que pueden anticipar conforme sus hijos crecen, y los tipos de ayuda y disciplina más adecuados a cada etapa de desarrollo.

Lo que nuestra comunidad puede hacer para promover los conocimientos de crianza y del desarrollo infantil y juvenil:

- Repartir folletos reproducibles sobre el desarrollo de los niños a los pediatras que tienen consultas frecuentes con familias hispanohablantes.
- Patrocinar clases y programas de apoyo para los padres que esperan su primer bebé.
- Ofrecer entrenamientos para maestros y proveedores de cuidado infantil sobre los aspectos clave del desarrollo de los niños y la relación entre la crianza efectiva y el desarrollo cerebral.
- Difundir información en la comunidad sobre los niveles normales de actividad y de llorar en las diferentes edades para aumentar el entendimiento y ayudar a reducir las presiones en los padres.

### *La capacidad de los padres para salir adelante*

Ser padre o madre puede ser estresante. Sobre todo cuando los padres trabajan o están desempleados o cuando tienen preocupaciones financieras, están enfermos o experimentan dificultades en su matrimonio o con otras personas. Los padres que cuentan con el apoyo para sobreponerse al estrés están en mejor posición para enfrentar retos cotidianos.

Lo que nuestra comunidad puede hacer para fortalecer la capacidad de los padres para salir adelante:

- Aprender de las comunidades religiosas locales que dan apoyo a padres primerizos y otras familias estresadas. Compartir estrategias efectivas con otros grupos.
- Ofrecer clases para controlar el estrés gratuitas o de bajo costo en centros comunitarios, empresas o escuelas.
- Organizar clases de comunicación y resolución de conflictos para las parejas.
- Proveer folletos y otros recursos para maestros y proveedores de cuidado que trabajan con familias hispanohablantes.

### *Vínculos sociales*

La familia, los amigos y los vecinos forman una red de apoyo que beneficia a la familia. Con frecuencia, estos contactos sociales nos proporcionan momentos de diversión, apoyo financiero o información para tomar buenas decisiones. Los niños se benefician cuando los padres se mantienen en contacto con otros adultos o con sus familias.

Lo que nuestra comunidad puede hacer para promover los vínculos sociales de las familias:

- Patrocinar actividades intergeneracionales como picnics o ferias comunitarias que reflejen la cultura de la comunidad por medio de juegos, música o comida. Promover la participación de los padres al organizar estos eventos.
- Reclutar voluntarios para programas de apoyo a la juventud como Big Brothers Big Sisters, Befriend-a-Child o Family to Family.
- Ofrecer lugares seguros y accesibles (bibliotecas, parques, escuelas) donde las familias puedan conocerse y socializar.

### ***Apoyos concretos para los padres***

Cuando los padres están desempleados o cuando enfrentan otros retos, es posible que necesiten ayuda para que sus hijos cuenten con un lugar para vivir, cuidado médico, una alimentación adecuada, ropa y otras cosas necesarias para su desarrollo. Estos apoyos concretos pueden reducir el estrés de los padres que atraviesan circunstancias difíciles, dándoles más energía para cuidar y apoyar a sus hijos.

Lo que nuestra comunidad puede hacer para proveer apoyos concretos a las familias:

- Ofrecer servicios comunitarios de cuidado y asistencia para las familias que necesiten estos servicios. Asegurarse de que estas familias no queden olvidadas.
- Diseminar y hacer accesible la información sobre los recursos comunitarios (vivienda, cuidado médico, asistencia laboral) sin importar el lugar donde las familias acudan en busca de ayuda.
- Educar a los funcionarios públicos y a los candidatos para puestos públicos sobre temas comunitarios de importancia y la necesidad de servicios y programas para promover familias sanas y seguras.
- Animar a los proveedores de servicio para que colaboren y encuentren opciones de financiamiento y para que compartan los recursos destinados para iniciativas específicas.

### **Un llamado a la acción: ¿cómo podemos trabajar juntos para fortalecer a nuestra comunidad?**

(Mencione los apoyos disponibles en su comunidad, incluyendo las iniciativas de su alianza comunitaria para fortalecer a las familias, en caso de haberlas.)

Lo que hagamos juntos para fortalecer a las familias en nuestra comunidad ayudará a reducir la incidencia del maltrato de menores. Durante el mes de abril y en el transcurso del año hay que promover las iniciativas de prevención para apoyar a los padres y crear comunidades sanas y seguras para los niños y la juventud.

- ¿Cuáles son las necesidades urgentes de nuestra comunidad?
- De todas las ideas de las que hemos hablado hoy día, ¿cuáles pueden servir para dar respuesta a estas necesidades urgentes?
- Y usted, ¿cómo puede ayudar?

# Sample Press Release for National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Release Date: [DATE]  
Contact: [NAME & TITLE]

Phone: [PHONE NUMBER]  
[CELL PHONE]  
Email: [EMAIL]

## We All Can Play a Part in Strengthening Families

April Is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

**CITY, STATE – [MONTH DAY, YEAR]** – [Start with a summary of essential information about your story. This lead paragraph should be brief and answer who, what, when, where, and why questions. Some suggestions: (1) Details of your organization’s Child Abuse Prevention Month kickoff event; (2) An upcoming meeting or activity of your community’s family-strengthening initiative; (3) How one parent benefited from the assistance of local community organizations.]

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. This month and throughout the year, **[ORGANIZATION NAME]** encourages all individuals and organizations to play a role in making **[COMMUNITY NAME]** a better place for families. By ensuring that parents have the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to care for their children, we can help prevent child abuse and neglect by strengthening families and communities.

Research shows that five important factors are present in healthy families. Promoting these factors is among the most effective ways to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. They are:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports for parents

“April is a time to celebrate the important role that communities play in protecting children,” said **[YOUR SPOKESPERSON’S NAME AND TITLE]**. “Everyone’s participation is critical. Focusing on ways to promote the five protective factors, in every interaction with families, is the best thing our community can do to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.”

### [ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT LOCAL EVENTS AND/OR PROGRAMS]

In support of these efforts, 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 and the Center for the Study of Social Policy—Strengthening Families have created *Strengthening Families and Communities: 2011 Resource Guide*. The guide, designed for service providers who work throughout the community to strengthen families, is available online at [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/guide2011](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/guide2011)

For more information about child abuse prevention programs and activities during the month of April and throughout the year, contact **[ORGANIZATION’S CONTACT INFORMATION]**.

###

[Incluya su información de contacto]

## Todos podemos participar en el fortalecimiento de las familias

Abril es el Mes Nacional para la Prevención del Maltrato de Menores

**Ciudad, Estado—[Día del mes, año]**—[Empiece con un resumen de la información que quiere comunicar. Este párrafo debe ser breve y dar el quién, cuándo, dónde, qué y por qué del asunto. Algunas sugerencias: (1) Dé detalles sobre el evento para la prevención del maltrato de menores que promueve su organización. (2) Hable de una actividad que forme parte de la iniciativa para fortalecer a las familias en su comunidad. (3) Dé el ejemplo de un padre o una familia que se haya beneficiado gracias al trabajo de su organización.]

Abril es el Mes Nacional para la Prevención del Maltrato de Menores. Durante el mes de abril y a lo largo del año, **[nombre de su organización]** seguirá trabajando para que los individuos y las organizaciones jueguen un papel importante en lograr que **[nombre de la comunidad/ciudad]** sea un lugar más seguro para las familias. Podemos ayudar a prevenir el abuso y la negligencia de menores dando a los padres el apoyo que necesitan para cuidar de sus hijos, fortaleciendo a las familias de **[nombre de la comunidad/ciudad]**.

Los expertos en el campo del bienestar de menores identifican cinco factores importantes que caracterizan a las familias sanas. Cuando se promueven dichos factores se reduce el riesgo del abuso y la negligencia de menores. Estos factores son:

- El cariño y la cercanía
- Conocimientos de crianza y del desarrollo infantil y juvenil
- La capacidad de los padres para salir adelante
- Vínculos sociales
- Apoyos concretos para los padres

“El mes de abril es una buena oportunidad para celebrar el papel que juega la comunidad en la prevención del abuso y la negligencia de menores,” opinó **[nombre y título del vocero de su organización]**. “La participación de todos es fundamental. Lo mejor que podemos hacer en nuestra comunidad es encontrar estrategias para fortalecer a las familias promoviendo los cinco factores de protección que previenen el abuso y la negligencia de menores.”

### [Detalles adicionales sobre eventos locales o programas]

Para apoyar esta iniciativa, la Oficina para los Niños del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos junto con la Oficina del Abuso y la Negligencia de Menores, Child Welfare Information Gateway y el Centro Nacional de Recursos FRIENDS para las Iniciativas Comunitarias de Prevención, han creado la guía de recursos y la Centro para el estudio de la política social— fortalecimiento de familias *Strengthening Families and Communities* (2011) (incluye secciones en español). La guía fue diseñada para los proveedores de servicio que trabajan en sus comunidades para fortalecer a las familias y a los individuos. Disponible en Internet: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/guide2011](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/guide2011)

Para más información sobre los programas de prevención del abuso y la negligencia de menores durante el mes de abril y a lo largo del año, contacte a **[nombre de su organización]**.

## Sample Public Service Announcements



### **[30-second public service announcement aimed at building community involvement, including 10-second tag for local organization identity]**

**Voiceover (:20 sec.):** By working together as a community, we all can play a part in strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. During this month and throughout the year, **[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME]** is dedicated to supporting families to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect.

Find out more about how you can play a part and help create positive change in our community.

**Tag (:10 sec.):** Contact **[INSERT LOCAL INFORMATION HERE]** today at **[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]** or go to **[INSERT WEBSITE ADDRESS]** for more information.

### **[30-second public service announcement aimed at building parent and caregiver awareness, including 10-second tag for local organization identity]**

**Voiceover (:20 sec.):** Being the best parent you can be involves taking steps to strengthen your family and finding support when you need it. Parenting isn't something you have to do alone.

When you have the knowledge, skills, and resources you need, you can raise a happy, healthy child. Find out more about activities and programs in your community that support parents and promote healthy families.

**Tag (:10 sec.):** Contact **[INSERT LOCAL INFORMATION HERE]** today at **[INSERT PHONE NUMBER]** or go to **[INSERT WEBSITE ADDRESS]** for more information.

## Ejemplo de anuncio de servicio público para radiodifusión

### [Anuncio de 30 segundos para promover el trabajo comunitario, incluyendo un comentario de 10 segundos para identificar a su organización]

**Voz (20 segundos):** Trabajando juntos en la comunidad podemos jugar un papel importante en el fortalecimiento de las familias y la prevención del maltrato de menores.

Abril es el Mes Nacional para la Prevención del Maltrato de Menores, y [nombre de su organización] está dedicada a apoyar a las familias para reducir el riesgo del abuso y la negligencia de menores.

Usted puede jugar un papel en su comunidad para promover familias sanas y fuertes.

**Comentario (10 segundos):** Comuníquese con [nombre de su organización] hoy mismo llamando al [teléfono] o visite nuestro sitio de Internet para obtener mas información.



### [Anuncio de 30 segundos para poner de relieve la importancia de los padres y los cuidadores, incluyendo un comentario de 10 segundos para identificar a su organización.]

**Voz (20 segundos):** Un buen padre o una buena madre busca fortalecer a su familia y no teme buscar ayuda cuando la necesita. Todos los padres y las madres necesitan ayuda.

Para criar hijos sanos y felices los padres necesitan el apoyo y los recursos de su comunidad. Aprenda más sobre los programas y las actividades para promover familias sanas en su comunidad.

**Comentario (10 segundos):** Comuníquese con [nombre de su organización] hoy mismo llamando al [teléfono] o visite nuestro sitio de Internet para obtener mas información.



## Chapter 4

# Protecting Children



# Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect



When children are nurtured, they can grow up to be happy and healthy adults. But when they lack an attachment to a caring adult, receive inconsistent nurturing, or experience harsh discipline, the long-lasting consequences can affect their health, well-being, and relationships with others.

This section provides information to help service providers and others concerned about the health and well-being of children to understand child abuse and neglect, its effects, and what each of us can do to address it when it occurs.

## What is child abuse and neglect?

Child abuse and neglect often takes place in the home and comes from a person the child knows well—a parent, relative, babysitter, or friend of the family. There are four major types of child maltreatment. Although any of the forms may be found separately, they often occur together.

Each State is responsible for establishing its own definitions of child abuse and neglect that meet Federal minimum standards. Most include the following:

- **Neglect** is failure to provide for a child’s basic needs.
- **Physical abuse** is physical injury as a result of hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or otherwise harming a child.
- **Sexual abuse** is any situation where a child is used for sexual gratification. This may include indecent exposure, fondling, rape, or commercial exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.
- **Emotional abuse** is any pattern of behavior that impairs a child’s emotional development or sense of self-worth, including constant criticism, threats, and rejection.

Find more information on the Child Welfare Information Gateway website:

- [www.childwelfare.gov/can/defining](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/defining)
- [www.childwelfare.gov/can/identifying](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/identifying)

### Why does child abuse occur?

Child abuse and neglect affect children of every age, race, and family income level. However, research has identified many factors relating to the child, family, community, and society that are associated with an increased risk of child abuse and neglect. Studies have also shown that when multiple risk factors are present, the risk is greater.

Young mothers and fathers unprepared for the responsibilities of raising a child; overwhelmed single parents with little support; and families placed under stress by poverty, divorce, or a child's disability are all at greater risk. Some families are stressed by worries about employment, health, substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, or other problems, or are simply unaware of how to care for their children's basic needs.

These circumstances, combined with the inherent challenges of raising children, can result in otherwise well-intentioned parents causing their children harm or neglecting their needs.

### How many children are abused and neglected in the United States?

In 2009, the most recent year for which national child maltreatment statistics are available, about 3.3 million reports were made to child protective services concerning the safety and well-being of approximately 6 million children.<sup>1</sup> As a result of these reports, a nationally estimated 702,000 unique count of children were found to be victims of child abuse or neglect (unique count is defined as counting each child only once regardless of the number of reports of abuse and neglect). Four-fifths (78.3%) of unique victims were neglected, more than 15 percent (17.8%) were physically abused, less than 10 percent (9.5%) were sexually abused, and less than 10 percent (7.6%) were emotionally maltreated.

Child deaths are the most tragic results of maltreatment. In 2009, an estimated 1,770 children died due to abuse or neglect. More than 30 percent (35.8%) of these deaths were attributed to neglect alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics on this page are taken from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2010). Child Maltreatment 2009. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved December 17, 2010, from: [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm09](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm09).

## Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect

### What are the consequences?

The impact of child maltreatment can be profound. Research shows that child maltreatment is associated with adverse health and mental health outcomes in children and families, and those negative effects can last a lifetime. The long-term effects can be physical, psychological, or behavioral.

A history of child abuse or neglect has been associated with increased risk of:

- Mental illness
- Substance abuse
- Developmental disabilities and learning problems
- Social problems with other children and with adults
- Teen pregnancy
- Lack of success in school
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Domestic violence
- Chronic illnesses

In addition to the impact on the child and family, child abuse and neglect affects various systems—including medical and mental health, law enforcement, judicial, public social services, and nonprofit agencies—as they respond to the incident and support the victim. One analysis of the immediate and long-term economic impact of child abuse and neglect suggests that child maltreatment costs the nation approximately \$103 billion each year.



## Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect

### What are the warning signs?

The first step in helping or getting help for an abused or neglected child is to identify the symptoms of abuse.

The table that follows lists some symptoms of the four major types of child maltreatment. The presence of a single sign does not prove child abuse is occurring in a family; however, when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination you should consider the possibility of maltreatment.

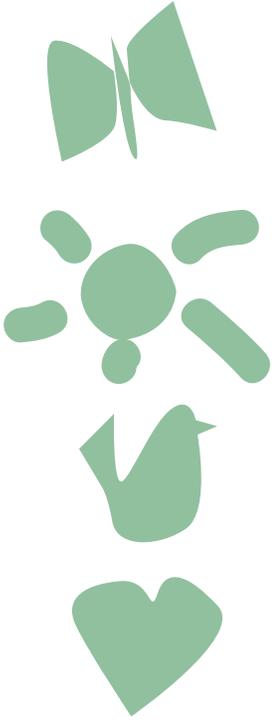
Maltreatment Type	Symptoms
<i>Neglect</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Signs of malnutrition</li><li>● Poor hygiene</li><li>● Unattended physical or medical problems</li></ul>
<i>Physical abuse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Unexplained bruises, burns, or welts</li><li>● Child appears frightened of a parent or caregiver</li></ul>
<i>Sexual abuse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Pain, bleeding, redness, or swelling in anal or genital area</li><li>● Age-inappropriate sexual play with toys, self, or others</li><li>● Age-inappropriate knowledge of sex</li></ul>
<i>Emotional abuse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Extremes in behavior, ranging from overly aggressive to overly passive</li><li>● Delayed physical, emotional, or intellectual development</li></ul>

### On the Child Welfare Information Gateway Website

For more information about:

- Why child abuse occurs: [www.childwelfare.gov/can/factors](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/factors)
- How many children are abused: [www.childwelfare.gov/can/statistics](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/statistics)
- Consequences of child abuse and neglect: [www.childwelfare.gov/can/impact](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/impact)
- Warning signs: [www.childwelfare.gov/can/identifying](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/identifying)

# Reporting Child Maltreatment



Anyone can and should report suspected child abuse or neglect. If you think a child is being mistreated, take immediate action.

Most States have a toll-free number for reporting. You can also call the Childhelp® National Child Abuse Hotline at 1.800.4.A.CHILD (1.800.422.4453). When you call to make a report, you will be asked for specific information, such as:

- The child's name and location
- The name and relationship (if known) of the person you believe is abusing the child
- What you have seen or heard regarding the abuse or neglect
- The names of any other people who might know about the abuse
- Your name and phone number (voluntary)

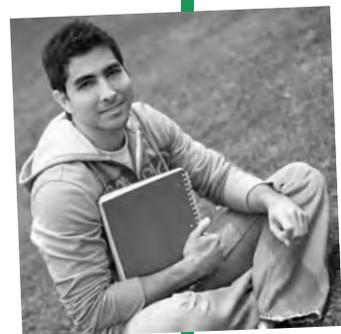
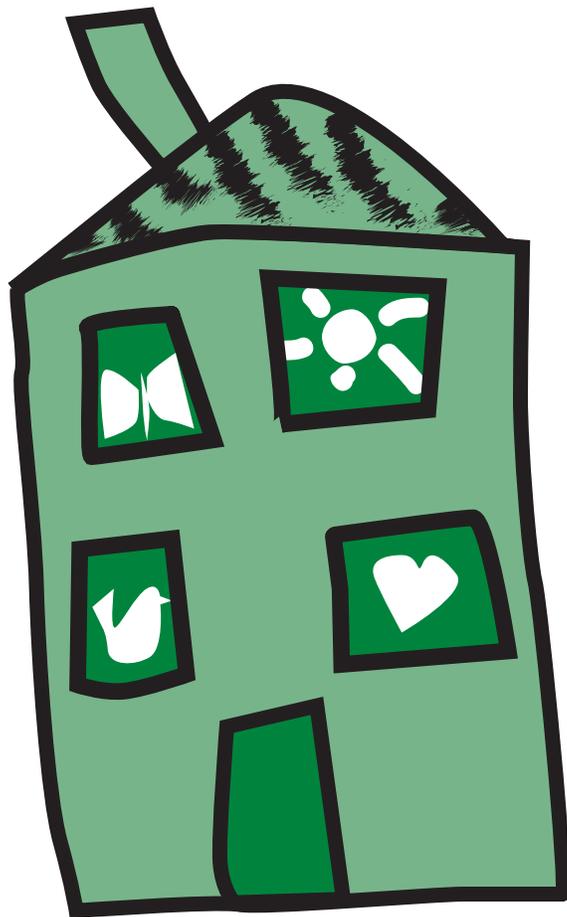
We can all help prevent child abuse by recognizing the risk factors, protecting children who are at risk, and supporting families who are experiencing stressors. Reporting the situation may protect the child and get additional help for the family. Some States provide training for professionals who are required by law to report child abuse and neglect (e.g., child care providers, teachers, doctors, clergy) and workshops on responding to signs of stress in families.

Many nonprofit, public, education, social service, and child care organizations in your community play a role in providing supports and services to children, youth, and families. Parenting education, crisis/respice care, transitional housing, and literacy programs, as well as family resource centers, teen parent support groups, fatherhood groups, and marriage education classes, support families in important ways.

Find more information on the Child Welfare Information Gateway website: [www.childwelfare.gov/responding](http://www.childwelfare.gov/responding)

## Chapter 5

### Resources



## National Child Abuse Prevention Partners



More information about national organizations that work to strengthen families and communities is available on the Child Welfare Information Gateway website at: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/overview/relatedorgs.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/overview/relatedorgs.cfm)

### **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**

141 Northwest Point Boulevard  
P.O. Box 927  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
847.434.4000  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

### **American Humane Association (AHA)**

63 Inverness Drive East  
Englewood, CO 80112  
800.227.4645  
[www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org)

### **American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC)**

350 Poplar Avenue, CHO 3B-3406  
Elmhurst, IL 60126  
877.402.7722  
[www.apsac.org](http://www.apsac.org)

### **Annie E. Casey Foundation**

701 St. Paul Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410.547.6600  
[www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)

### **ARCH National Respite Coalition (NRC)**

4016 Oxford Street  
Annandale, VA 22003  
703.256.9578  
[www.archrespite.org](http://www.archrespite.org)

### **Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)**

1575 Eye Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.371.1565  
[www.cssp.org](http://www.cssp.org);  
[www.strengtheningfamilies.net](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net)

### **Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago**

1313 East 60th Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
773.753.5900  
[www.chapinhall.org](http://www.chapinhall.org)

### **Childhelp®**

15757 North 78th Street  
Scottsdale, AZ 85260  
480.922.8212  
[www.childhelp.org](http://www.childhelp.org)

### **Child Welfare Information Gateway**

Children's Bureau/ACYF  
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW, Eighth Floor  
Washington, DC 20024  
800.394.3366  
[www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

### **Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)**

2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 250  
Arlington, VA 22202  
703.412.2400  
[www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)

### **Circle of Parents®**

2100 South Marshall Boulevard, Suite 305  
Chicago, IL 60623  
773.257.0111  
[www.circleofparents.org](http://www.circleofparents.org)

### **Darkness to Light**

7 Radcliffe Street, Suite 200  
Charleston, SC 29403  
843.965.5444  
[www.darkness2light.org](http://www.darkness2light.org)

### **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**

650 Fifth Avenue, 19th Floor  
New York, NY 10019  
212.974.7000  
[www.ddcf.org](http://www.ddcf.org)

## National Child Abuse Prevention Partners

### **FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)**

Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project  
800 Eastowne Drive, Suite 105  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
919.490.5577 x222  
[www.friendsnrc.org](http://www.friendsnrc.org)

### **National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds**

5712 30th Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA 98105  
206.526.1221  
[www.ctfalliance.org](http://www.ctfalliance.org)

### **National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions (NACHRI)**

401 Wythe Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
703.684.1355  
[www.childrenshospitals.net](http://www.childrenshospitals.net)

### **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

1509 16th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
800.424.2460  
[www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

### **National Association to Prevent Sexual Abuse of Children (NAPSAC)**

2314 University Ave W, Suite 14  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
651-714-4673  
[www.napsac.us](http://www.napsac.us)

### **National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)**

215 West 125th Street, 3rd Floor  
New York, NY 10027  
646.284.9600  
[www.nccp.org](http://www.nccp.org)

### **National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (NCSBS)**

2955 Harrison Boulevard, #102  
Ogden, UT 84403  
888.273.0071 or 801.627.3399  
[www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)

### **National Children's Alliance (NCA)**

516 C Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
800.239.9950 or 202.548.0090  
[www.nationalchildrensalliance.org](http://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org)

### **National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association (National CASA Association)**

100 West Harrison Street  
North Tower, Suite 500  
Seattle, WA 98119  
202.270.0072 or 800.628.3233  
[www.CASAforChildren.org](http://www.CASAforChildren.org)

### **National Exchange Club (NEC) Foundation**

3050 Central Avenue  
Toledo, OH 43606-1700  
800.924.2643 or 419.535.3232  
[www.preventchildabuse.com](http://www.preventchildabuse.com)

### **National Family Preservation Network (NFPN)**

3971 North 1400 East  
Buhl, ID 83316  
888.498.9047  
[www.nfpn.org](http://www.nfpn.org)

### **National Fatherhood Initiative® (NFI)**

20410 Observation Drive, Suite 107  
Germantown, MD 20876  
301.948.0599  
[www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

### **National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC)**

1620 Eye Street NW, Suite 210  
Washington, DC 20006  
866.916.4672  
[www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org)

### **National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA)**

5100 S.W. Macadam Avenue, Suite 300  
Portland, OR 97239  
503.222.4044  
[www.nicwa.org](http://www.nicwa.org)

### **National Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood (QIC-EC)**

Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)  
1575 Eye Street, NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.371.1565  
[www.qic-ec.org](http://www.qic-ec.org)

### **National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFC)**

20410 Observation Drive, Suite 107  
Germantown, MD 20876 877.432.3411  
[www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)

## National Child Abuse Prevention Partners

### **Nurse-Family Partnership**

National Service Office  
1900 Grant Street, Suite 400  
Denver, CO 80203  
866.864.5226

[www.nursefamilypartnership.org](http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org)

### **Parents Anonymous® Inc.**

675 West Foothill Boulevard, Suite 220  
Claremont, CA 91711-3475  
909.621.6184

[www.parentsanonymous.org](http://www.parentsanonymous.org)

### **Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America)**

228 South Wabash Avenue, 10th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60604  
312.663.3520

[www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org)

### **Search Institute**

The Banks Building  
615 First Avenue NW, Suite 125  
Minneapolis, MN 55413  
800.888.7828

[www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)

### **Stop It Now!**

351 Pleasant Street, Suite B-319  
Northampton, MA 01060  
413.587.3500

[www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org)

### **ZERO TO THREE**

National Center for Infants,  
Toddlers and Families  
2000 M Street NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.638.1144

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

# Federal Interagency Work Group on Child Abuse and Neglect

More information about the Work Group and its members can be found on the Children's Bureau website: [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/fediawg](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/fediawg)

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)  
Office on Child Abuse and Neglect (OCAN)**

**Children's Bureau  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF)  
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)**  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb)

The Children's Bureau seeks to provide for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children through leadership, support for necessary services, and productive partnerships with States, Tribes, and communities.

The Office on Child Abuse and Neglect provides leadership and direction on the issues of child maltreatment and the prevention of abuse and neglect under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and the Children's Justice Act. The director of the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect chairs the Federal Interagency Work Group on Child Abuse and Neglect and coordinates the Work Group's activities.

The following is a list of Federal agencies that participate on the workgroup.

**Child Welfare Information Gateway  
ACYF, ACF**  
[www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

**Family Violence Prevention & Services  
Family and Youth Services Bureau  
ACYF, ACF**  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/programs/fv.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/programs/fv.htm)

**Child Care Bureau**  
Office of Family Assistance, ACF  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb)

**Division of Child and Family Development**  
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), ACF  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre)

**Office of Refugee Resettlement, ACF**  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr)

**Office of Human Services Policy  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)**  
[http://aspe.hhs.gov/\\_/office\\_specific/hsp.cfm](http://aspe.hhs.gov/_/office_specific/hsp.cfm)

**Division of Behavioral Health  
Indian Health Service (IHS)**  
[www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Behavioral](http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Behavioral)

**Office of Minority Health**  
[www.omhrc.gov](http://www.omhrc.gov)

**Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research**  
National Institutes of Health (NIH)  
<http://obssr.od.nih.gov>

**Child Development and Behavior Branch**  
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NIH  
[www.nichd.nih.gov/about/org/crmc/cdb](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/org/crmc/cdb)

**Child Abuse and Neglect Program**  
Division of Developmental Translational Research  
National Institute of Mental Health, NIH  
[www.nimh.nih.gov/about/organization/ddtr](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/about/organization/ddtr)



## Federal Interagency Work Group on Child Abuse and Neglect

### **Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)**

Office of Policy, Coordination and Planning  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services  
Administration (SAMHSA)

<http://csat.samhsa.gov>

### **Maternal and Child Health Bureau**

Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services  
Health Resources and Services Administration  
(HRSA)

<http://mchb.hrsa.gov>

### **National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: Violence Prevention**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

[www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention)

### **U.S. Department of Agriculture**

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

[www.csrees.usda.gov](http://www.csrees.usda.gov)

### **U.S. Department of Defense**

Family Advocacy Program  
Military Community and Family Policy  
Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense

[www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil)

### **U.S. Department of Education**

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative  
Services (OSERS)

Office of Special Education Programs

[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers)

### **U.S. Department of the Interior**

Indian Affairs

[www.bia.gov](http://www.bia.gov)

### **U.S. Department of Justice**

Office of Justice Programs (OJP)  
National Institute of Justice (NIJ)  
Office of Research and Evaluation  
Victim and Victimization Division

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/topics/victims-victimization/welcome.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/topics/victims-victimization/welcome.htm)

### **Office for Victims of Crime**

OJP

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc)

### **Office on Violence Against Women**

OJP

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/topics/crime/violence-against-women](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/topics/crime/violence-against-women)

### **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)**

OJP

[www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov)

### **Child Protection Division**

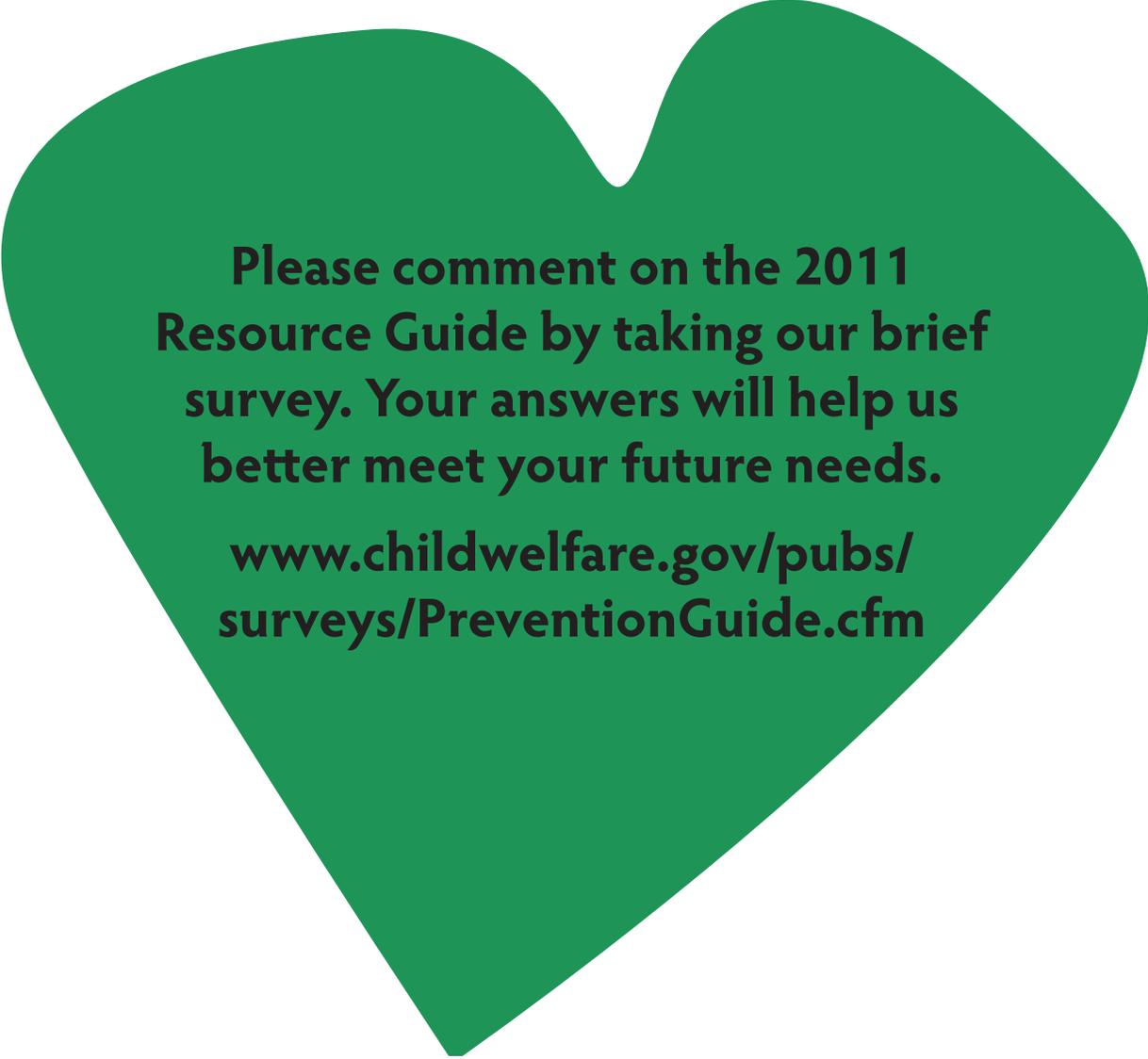
OJJDP, OJP

[www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/about/DivProgram.asp?di=5&pp=division](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/about/DivProgram.asp?di=5&pp=division)

### **U.S. Department of State**

Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons  
Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs

[www.state.gov/g/tip](http://www.state.gov/g/tip)



**Please comment on the 2011  
Resource Guide by taking our brief  
survey. Your answers will help us  
better meet your future needs.**

**[www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/  
surveys/PreventionGuide.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/surveys/PreventionGuide.cfm)**



## Chapter 6

### Tip Sheets for Parents and Caregivers



## Using the Tip Sheets for Parents and Caregivers

This section of the Resource Guide provides tip sheets on specific parenting issues. Each is designed for service providers to distribute to parents and caregivers in the context of a particular concern or question. The tip sheets are not intended to tell the whole story, but merely to provide a starting point for a discussion between parent and provider that is grounded in the five protective factors.

The information is easy to read and focuses on concrete steps that parents and caregivers can take to care for their children and strengthen their family. A Spanish version appears on the back of each tip sheet. The Spanish versions convey similar messages to the English versions, but they have been adapted slightly for readability and cultural appropriateness.

We encourage you to make additional copies of the tip sheets that are most useful to the families with whom you work.

The tip sheets address the following topics:

- **Bonding With Your Baby**—Written to help new parents understand the importance of early and secure attachment.
- **Dealing With Temper Tantrums**—Includes tips on how to prevent and handle toddler tantrums while modeling calm behavior.
- **Connecting With Your Teen**—Designed to help parents maintain strong bonds with their teens as they move toward independence.
- **Teen Parents... You're Not Alone**—Tips to help teen parents cope with the challenges of raising a new baby and find support.
- **Ten Ways to Be a Better Dad**—Encourages fathers to be involved and help their children live happy, healthy lives.
- **Raising Your Grandchildren**—Written to help caregivers deal with some of the unique challenges of parenting grandchildren and find concrete supports in the community.
- **Military Families**—Written to show how communities can appreciate and encourage military parents and other caregivers.
- **How to Develop Strong Communities**—Provides how families can develop strong communities. It includes tips what each person can do in their community.
- **Parenting Your Child With Developmental Delays and Disabilities**—Written to help parents and caregivers who are raising a child with developmental delays and disabilities.

These tip sheets, like the other resources in this guide, were created with input from experts from national organizations that work to protect children and strengthen families. Additional resources are available through the national organizations listed in Chapter 5.

Download the tip sheets or find more parenting tips in the Parenting Resources section of the Child Welfare Information Gateway website: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting).

# Bonding With Your Baby



## What's Happening

Attachment is a deep, lasting bond that develops between a caregiver and child during the baby's first few years of life. This attachment is critical to the growth of a baby's body and mind. Babies who have this bond and feel loved have a better chance to grow up to be adults who trust others and know how to return affection.

## What You Can Do

No one knows your child like you do, so you are in the best position to recognize and fulfill your child's needs. Parents who give lots of loving care and attention to their babies help their babies develop a strong attachment. Affection energizes your child to grow, learn, connect with others, and enjoy life.

### Here are some ways to promote bonding:

- Respond when your baby cries. Try to understand what he or she is saying to you. You can't "spoil" babies with too much attention—they need and benefit from a parent's loving care even when they seem inconsolable.
- Hold and touch your baby as much as possible. You can keep him close with baby slings, pouches, or backpacks (for older babies).
- Use feeding and diapering times to look into your baby's eyes, smile, and talk to your baby.
- Read, sing, and play peek-a-boo. Babies love to hear human voices and will try to imitate your voice and the sounds you make.
- As your baby gets a little older, try simple games and toys. Once your baby can sit up, plan on spending lots of time on the floor with toys, puzzles, and books.

***The best gift you can give your baby is YOU. The love and attention you give your baby now will stay with him or her forever and will help your baby grow into a healthier and happier child and adult.***

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## What You Might Be Seeing

Normal babies:

- Have brief periods of sleep, crying or fussing, and quiet alertness many times each day
- Often cry for long periods for no apparent reason
- Love to be held and cuddled
- Respond to and imitate facial expressions
- Love soothing voices and will respond with smiles and small noises
- Grow and develop every day; they learn new skills quickly and can outgrow difficult behaviors in a matter of weeks

# Usted y su bebé: El lazo que los une



Los bebés necesitan más que alimento, calor y protección. También necesitan amor, atención y cariño. Formar lazos ayuda a su bebé a crecer fuerte y sano, tanto física como mentalmente.



## Los recién nacidos:

- Duermen, lloran, se quejan y ven el mundo a su alrededor muchas veces por día
- Les encanta que los mimen y que les hablen
- Lloran sin motivo aparente, a veces por mucho tiempo
- Les encantan las voces tranquilas y responden con sonrisas y gorgoritos de bebé feliz
- Crecen y cambian todos los días

## Formar lazos es bueno para el bebé ... ¡y para usted!

Cuando usted forma lazos con su bebé, sabrá mejor lo que el bebé quiere y necesita. Y su bebé se sentirá amado y protegido. El lazo que usted forma ahora ayuda a que el cuerpo y el cerebro de su bebé crezcan sanos. Esto afectará al bebé toda su vida: su temperamento, sus decisiones y las relaciones futuras que pueda tener. Le ayudará a tener una vida mejor.

## La mejor manera de crear ese lazo es pasar tiempo con su bebé.

Éstas son algunas cosas que usted puede hacer:

- Responda cuando lllore el bebé. Los recién nacidos no se vuelven “consentidos” por exceso de atención.
- Tómelo en brazos, mímelo y toque a su bebé a menudo. Use un canguro o una mochila especial para mantener a su bebé cerca.
- Léale, cántele y juegue a que se esconde y aparece. A su bebé le encanta oír su voz y tratará de imitarlo.
- Sonríale y mírelo a los ojos.
- Juegue juegos sencillos a medida que su bebé crezca. Pase tiempo en el piso con juguetes, rompecabezas y libros.

***El mejor regalo que le puede hacer a su bebé es ¡USTED MISMO! El amor y la atención que le dé ahora permanecerán con él para siempre. Le ayudarán a tener relaciones sanas y a tomar buenas decisiones más adelante en la vida.***

*Esta hoja informativa para los padres fue desarrollada con la colaboración de profesionales vinculados a diversas organizaciones nacionales que protegen a la juventud y promueven familias sanas. Para descargar esta publicación o para obtener más consejos para los padres (en inglés), vea: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) o llame al 1.800.394.3366.*



# Dealing With Temper Tantrums

## What's Happening

Two- and three-year-olds have many skills, but controlling their tempers is not one of them. Tantrums are common at this age because toddlers are becoming independent and developing their own wants, needs, and ideas. However, they are not yet able to express their wants and feelings with words. Take comfort in the fact that most children outgrow tantrums by age 4.



## What You Might Be Seeing

Normal toddlers:

- Love to say “no!” “mine!” and “do it myself!”
- Test rules over and over to see how parents will react
- Are not yet ready to share
- Need lots of fun activities, play times, and opportunities to explore the world
- Respond well to a routine for sleeping and eating (a regular schedule)
- Like to imitate grownups and to “help” mom and dad

## What You Can Do

**It is often easier to prevent tantrums than to deal with them once they get going. Try these tips:**

- Direct your child’s attention to something else. (“Wow, look at that fire engine!”)
- Give your child a choice in small matters. (“Do you want to eat peas or carrots?”)
- Stick to a daily routine that balances fun activities with enough rest and healthy food.
- Anticipate when your child will be disappointed. (“We are going to buy groceries for dinner. We won’t be buying cookies, but you can help me pick out some fruit for later.”)
- Praise your child when he or she shows self-control and expresses feelings with words.

**If you cannot prevent the tantrum, here are some tips for dealing with it:**

- Say what you expect from your child and have confidence that your child will behave.
- Remain calm. You are a role model for your child.
- Holding your child during a tantrum may help a younger child feel more secure and calm down more quickly.
- Take your child to a quiet place where he or she can calm down safely. Speak softly or play soft music.
- Some children throw tantrums to seek attention. Try ignoring the tantrum, but pay attention to your child after he or she calms down.
- Resist overreacting to tantrums, and try to keep your sense of humor.

**When your child is having a floor-thumping tantrum, the most important thing you can do is remain calm and wait it out. Do not let your child’s behavior cause you to lose control, too.**

*This tip sheet was created with input from experts in national organizations that work to protect children and strengthen families. To download this tip sheet or for more parenting tips, go to [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) or call 800.394.3366.*



## Los berrinches

Es común que los niños pequeños hagan berrinches. Entre los 2 y 4 años los niños van desarrollando sus propias ideas, necesidades y deseos. Pero todavía no los pueden expresar en palabras. Esto puede ser frustrante para su hijo... ¡y para usted!



### Los niños pequeños:

- Les encanta decir: ¡No!... ¡Mío!... y ¡Yo solo!
- Ponen a prueba las reglas una y otra vez para ver cómo reacciona usted
- Necesitan mucho tiempo para jugar, hacer cosas divertidas y explorar el mundo
- No saben compartir todavía
- Se comportan mejor cuando tienen horarios fijos para comer y dormir
- Les gusta imitar a los “grandes” y “ayudar” a mami y a papi

### A veces los padres pueden prevenir los berrinches.

Estas son algunas cosas que usted puede hacer:

- Siga una rutina diaria de actividades divertidas, con suficiente descanso y comida sana.
- o Anticipe lo que puede desilusionar a su hijo. (“Vamos a comprar comida para la cena. Esta vez no vamos a comprar galletitas pero, ¿me ayudas a elegir fruta para el postre?”)
- Ayude a su hijo a concentrarse en otra cosa. (*¡Mira ese camión de bomberos!*)
- Deje que su hijo tome decisiones sobre cosas pequeñas. (*¿Quieres comer chícharos o zanahorias?*)
- Felicite a su hijo cuando se controle a sí mismo y exprese sus sentimientos en palabras.

### Pero a veces los berrinches ocurren de todos modos.

Si no puede prevenir un berrinche, pruebe estas sugerencias:

- Aunque un berrinche en un lugar público puede ser penoso, no pierda la calma.
- Algunos niños se calman más rápido si los ayuda a sentirse seguros y protegidos.
- Lleve a su hijo a un lugar tranquilo para que se calme. Háblele en voz baja o ponga música suave.
- Si su hijo está tratando de comunicarse con usted, trate de entender lo que quiere. Si sólo quiere llamar la atención, no haga caso a su berrinche. Préstele atención *después* de que se haya calmado.
- Trate de no perder el sentido del humor. ¡No haga berrinche usted!

**Lo mejor que puede hacer es guardar la calma, incluso cuando el niño hace un berrinche en pleno piso. No pierda la paciencia, trate de entender lo que el niño le quiere decir. Recuerde que la mayoría de los niños dejan de hacer berrinches alrededor de los 4 años de edad.**

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# Connecting With Your Teen



## What's Happening

Many teens spend less time with their families than they did as younger children. As they become more independent and learn to think for themselves, relationships with friends become very important. Sometimes it may feel like your teen doesn't need you anymore. But teens still need their parents' love, support, and guidance.



## What You Can Do

Simple, everyday activities can reinforce the connection between you and your teen. Make room in your schedule for special times when you can, but also take advantage of routine activities to show that you care.

### Tips to keep in mind:

- **Have family meals.** If it's impossible to do every night, schedule a regular weekly family dinner night that accommodates your child's schedule.
- **Share "ordinary" time.** Look for everyday opportunities to bond with your teen. Even times spent driving or walking the dog together offer chances for your teen to talk about what's on his or her mind.
- **Get involved, be involved, and stay involved.** Go to games and practices when you can. Ask about homework and school projects. Look for chances to learn about your teen's latest hobby.
- **Be interested.** Make it clear that you care about your teen's ideas, feelings, and experiences. If you listen to what he or she is saying, you'll get a better sense of the guidance and support needed. Get to know your teen's friends and their parents, too, when possible.
- **Set clear limits.** Teens still need your guidance, but you can involve your teen in setting rules and consequences. Make sure consequences are related to the behavior, and **be consistent** in following through. Choose your battles. Try to provide choices in the matters that are less important.

***Your words and actions help your teen feel secure. Don't forget to say and show how much you love your teen!***

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## What You Might Be Seeing

Normal teens ...

- Crave independence
- Question rules and authority
- Test limits
- Can be impulsive
- Make mature decisions at times, and childish ones at others

# Cómo relacionarse con su hijo adolescente



## Lo que está pasando

Muchos adolescentes comparten menos tiempo con su familia. Conforme se hacen más independientes y aprenden a pensar por sí mismos, las relaciones con sus amigos se hacen más importantes. A veces puede parecer que su hijo adolescente ya no lo necesita. Pero en realidad los adolescentes siguen necesitando el amor, el apoyo y los consejos de sus padres.

## Los adolescentes normales...

- Desean independizarse
- Cuestionan las reglas y la autoridad
- Ponen a prueba los límites
- Pueden ser impulsivos
- A veces toman buenas decisiones, a veces malas

## Lo que usted puede hacer

Cualquier actividad normal puede mejorar su relación con su hijo adolescente. Dedique tiempo para compartir ocasiones especiales con su hijo cuando pueda, pero también aproveche las actividades que forman parte de la rutina familiar para demostrarle que le interesa lo que hace en la escuela y con sus amigos.

### Estas actividades familiares pueden fortalecer la relación con su hijo:

- **Coma con la familia.** Si no pueden comer juntos todos los días, aparte un día de la semana para la cena familiar.
- **Comparta más tiempo con su hijo.** Busque oportunidades para acercarse a su hijo. Usted puede platicar con su hijo aun cuando estén en el supermercado o cuando vayan en el auto.
- **Manténgase involucrado en la vida de su hijo.** Vayan juntos a partidos y entrenamientos de la escuela. Hablen de la tarea y los proyectos escolares. Busque información sobre la actividad favorita de su hijo, o ayúdelo a buscar una actividad o pasatiempo.
- **Demuestre interés.** Demuestre interés por las ideas, sentimientos y experiencias de su hijo. Si pone atención a lo que su hijo le dice, sabrá cómo guiarlo y ayudarlo a tomar decisiones. Conozca a los amigos de su hijo y, de ser posible, también a sus padres.
- **Establezca límites claros.** Déle consejos a su hijo adolescente, pero involúcrelo a la hora de establecer las reglas y las consecuencias por no seguirlas. Asegúrese de que las consecuencias tengan que ver con el comportamiento, y sea consecuente a la hora de aplicarlas. Escoja sus batallas. Ofrezca varias opciones cuando se trate de situaciones de menor importancia.

**Sus palabras y sus acciones ayudan a que su hijo se sienta seguro. ¡Demuéstrele a su hijo adolescente cuanto lo quiere!**

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# Teen Parents... You're Not Alone!



## What's Happening ??

Being a parent is a 24-hour-a-day job, and sometimes it can feel overwhelming. You may be juggling the demands of a baby, your family, school, and work. Chances are you're not able to do all of the things you enjoyed before your baby was born.

## What Can I Do ??

Every parent needs support sometimes. If you think stress may be affecting how you treat your baby, it's time to find some help. Try the following:

- **Join a support group.** A group for young moms or dads could give you time with new friends who have lives similar to yours. Your children can play with other children, and you can talk about your problems with people who understand. Look on the Internet or call your local social services agency for information about support groups in your community.
- **Find ways to handle stress.** Take a break while someone reliable cares for your baby. Take a walk with the baby in a stroller, or rest while your baby naps. A social worker or nurse can help you learn other ways to manage stress.
- **Finish school.** Even though it may be difficult, finishing high school (or getting a GED) is one of the most important things you can do to help your baby and yourself. A diploma will help you get a better job or take the next step in your education (such as vocational training or college).
- **Improve your parenting skills.** Don't be afraid to ask for advice from experienced parents. Classes for parents can also help you build on what you already know about raising a happy, healthy child.
- **Call a help line.** Most States have help lines for parents. Childhelp® runs a national 24-hour hotline (1.800.4.A.CHILD) for parents who need help or parenting advice.

**Stay in contact with friends and family who support you and make you feel good about yourself. Remember, help is just a phone call away!**

*This tip sheet was created with input from experts in national organizations that work to protect children and strengthen families. To download this tip sheet or for more parenting tips, go to [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) or call 800.394.3366.*

## Many teen parents sometimes feel...

- Confused and uncertain—about their future or their skills as a parent
- Overwhelmed—they don't know where to begin or they feel like giving up
- Angry—at the baby's other parent, their friends, or even their baby
- Lonely—like they are the only person dealing with so many problems
- Depressed—sad and unable to face their problems

***These feelings do not mean you are a bad parent!***

# Hay muchos padres adolescentes como usted



## Lo que está pasando

Ser padre o madre es como tener un trabajo de 24 horas al día, y a veces puede ser muy pesado. Es probable que usted tenga que cuidar a un bebé y ocuparse de la familia además de ir a la escuela y al trabajo. Quizás ya no tenga tiempo para hacer todo lo que le gustaba antes de que naciera el bebé.

## Lo que usted puede hacer

Todos los padres necesitan apoyo tarde o temprano. Si usted siente que el estrés está afectando la manera como trata a su bebé, es mejor que busque ayuda. Considere estas opciones:

- **Encuentre un grupo de apoyo.** Puede hacer nuevos amigos entre las personas y los padres jóvenes que tienen una vida parecida a la suya. Sus hijos pueden jugar con los hijos de estos padres jóvenes, y usted puede hablar de sus problemas con personas que lo entiendan. Busque por Internet o llame a su agencia local de servicios sociales para obtener más información sobre los grupos de apoyo en su comunidad.
- **Encuentre maneras de sobreponerse al estrés.** Tome un descanso mientras alguien de confianza cuida a su bebé. Vaya a caminar con su bebé en la carriola, o dese un baño de burbujas mientras duerme su bebé. Una enfermera o trabajador social le puede ayudar a sobreponerse al estrés.
- **Termine la escuela.** Aunque parezca difícil, terminar la preparatoria o high school (u obtener su GED) es una de las cosas más importantes que puede hacer para mejorar su situación y la de su bebé. Con su diploma, usted puede encontrar un trabajo mejor pagado y puede seguir sus estudios en el futuro (como la escuela vocacional o la universidad).
- **Adquiera más experiencia de crianza.** No tenga miedo de preguntar a los padres con más experiencia. Las clases para los padres también le ayudan a mejorar sus habilidades como padre o madre para criar a un niño sano y feliz.
- **Llame a un número de apoyo.** Casi todos los estados tienen números de teléfono para ayudar a los padres. La organización Childhelp® le brinda una línea de apoyo las 24 horas del día (1.800.4.A.CHILD) donde le ofrecen asistencia en español.

**Manténgase en contacto con los familiares y los amigos de confianza que lo apoyan y lo hacen sentir bien. ¡Recuerde: usted puede encontrar ayuda en español solo marcando un teléfono!**

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## Muchos padres adolescentes a veces se sienten...

- Confundidos o indecisos sobre su futuro o su habilidad como padre o madre
- Abrumados por no saber dónde empezar, o por sentirse con ganas de renunciar a todo
- Enojados con el otro padre del bebé, sus amigos o hasta con el bebé
- Solitarios por sentir que son la única persona que enfrenta problemas similares
- Deprimidos y tristes o incapaces de enfrentar sus problemas

**¡Experimentar estos sentimientos no quiere decir que sea un mal padre o una mala madre!**

# Ten Ways to Be a Better Dad

## What's Happening

Children need both parents. Involved fathers can help children lead lives that are happier, healthier, and more successful than children whose fathers are absent or uninvolved. Fathers who spend time with their children increase the chances that their children will succeed in school, have fewer behavior problems, and experience better self-esteem and well-being.



## What You Can Do

- 1. Respect your children's mother**  
When children see their parents respecting each other, they are more likely to feel that they are also accepted and respected.
- 2. Spend time with your children**  
If you always seem too busy for your children, they will feel neglected no matter what you say. Set aside time to spend with your children.
- 3. Earn the right to be heard**  
Begin talking with your kids when they are very young and talk to them about all kinds of things. Listen to their ideas and problems.
- 4. Discipline with love**  
All children need guidance and discipline, not as punishment, but to set reasonable limits and help children learn from natural or logical consequences. Fathers who discipline in a calm, fair, and nonviolent manner show their love.
- 5. Be a role model**  
Fathers are role models whether they realize it or not. A girl with a loving father grows up knowing she deserves to be treated with respect. Fathers can teach sons what is important in life by demonstrating honesty, humility, and responsibility.
- 6. Be a teacher**  
A father who teaches his children about right and wrong and encourages them to do their best will see his children make good choices. Involved fathers use everyday examples to teach the basic lessons of life.
- 7. Eat together as a family**  
Sharing a meal together can be an important part of healthy family life. It gives children the chance to talk about what they are doing, and it is a good time for fathers to listen and give advice.
- 8. Read to your children**  
Begin reading to your children when they are very young. Instilling a love for reading is one of the best ways to ensure they will have a lifetime of personal and career growth.
- 9. Show affection**  
Children need the security that comes from knowing they are wanted, accepted, and loved by their family. Showing affection every day is the best way to let your children know that you love them.
- 10. Realize that a father's job is never done**  
Even after children are grown and leave home, they will still look to their fathers for wisdom and advice. Fatherhood lasts a lifetime.

*Adapted from National Fatherhood Initiative. The NFI website now has FIVE ways to be a better dad at: [www.fatherhood.org/Page.aspx?pid=409](http://www.fatherhood.org/Page.aspx?pid=409)*

# Diez maneras de ser un mejor padre

## Lo que está pasando

Los niños necesitan a ambos padres. Los padres que participan en la vida de sus hijos los ayudan a tener vidas más saludables, felices y exitosas. En cambio, los niños cuyos padres se ausentan o no participan en la vida de sus hijos no tienen las mismas oportunidades. Cuando los padres dedican tiempo a sus hijos, éstos tienen más probabilidades de sobresalir en la escuela, tener menos problemas de comportamiento y experimentar mejor autoestima y bienestar.



## Lo que usted puede hacer

- 1. Respete a la madre de sus hijos**  
Cuando los niños ven que sus padres se respetan, es más probable que ellos aprendan a respetar y a sentirse respetados.
- 2. Dedique tiempo a sus hijos**  
Si siempre está muy ocupado para encargarse de sus hijos, tarde o temprano se sentirán abandonados sin importar lo que les diga. Deje tiempo libre para dedicarse a sus hijos.
- 3. Gánese el derecho de ser escuchado**  
Empiece a platicar con sus hijos desde pequeños y hableles de muchas cosas. Escuche sus ideas y sus problemas.
- 4. Imponga disciplina, pero con amor**  
Todos los niños necesitan consejos y disciplina, pero no como un castigo, sino para establecer límites razonables y para ayudar a los niños a aprender consecuencias lógicas y naturales. Los padres que disciplinan a sus hijos de forma tranquila, justa y sin violencia demuestran su amor.
- 5. Sea un padre modelo**  
Quieran o no, los padres dan el ejemplo a sus hijos. Una niña con un padre cariñoso y respetuoso crece con la idea de que merece ser respetada. Los padres les enseñan a sus hijos las cosas importantes de la vida al demostrar humildad, honestidad y responsabilidad.
- 6. Sea un buen maestro**  
Los padres que enseñan sus hijos la diferencia entre el bien y el mal, animándolos a hacer lo mejor que puedan con sus vidas, se sentirán recompensados cuando sus hijos tomen buenas decisiones. Bastan ejemplos comunes y de todos los días para enseñarles las cosas que valen la pena en la vida.
- 7. Coma con la familia**  
Comer en familia es una parte importante de una vida familiar saludable. La comida con la familia da a los niños la oportunidad de hablar de sus actividades, y los padres, a su vez, pueden escucharlos y aconsejarlos.
- 8. Lea con sus hijos**  
Lea con sus hijos desde pequeños. Cultive su amor por la lectura para que tengan una vida rica y llena de posibilidades profesionales.
- 9. Demuestre afecto**  
Los niños necesitan sentirse seguros sabiendo que son queridos, aceptados y amados por su familia. Demuéstreles su afecto para que se sientan queridos y apreciados.
- 10. Comprenda que el trabajo de un padre nunca termina**  
Aun después de que los niños crezcan y se vayan de casa seguirán respetando los consejos y la sabiduría de sus padres. Un padre es para toda la vida.

Adaptado de la Iniciativa Nacional para la Paternidad. Encuentre el folleto completo en: [www.fatherhood.org/Page.aspx?pid=409](http://www.fatherhood.org/Page.aspx?pid=409)

# Raising Your Grandchildren

## What's Happening

No matter why or how they came to live with you, your grandchildren will benefit from being in your home. When children cannot be with their parents, living with a grandparent may provide:

- Fewer moves from place to place
- The comfort of a familiar language and culture
- A chance to stay with siblings
- More contact with their parents, depending on the situation

## What You Can Do

It will take time for your grandchildren to feel safe and secure in their new home with you. You can encourage these good feelings in a number of ways:

- Set up a daily routine of mealtimes, bedtime, and other activities.
- Help your grandchildren feel “at home” by creating a space just for them.
- Talk to your grandchildren, and listen when they talk to you.
- Set up a few rules and explain your expectations. Then, enforce the rules consistently.
- Reward positive behavior. When children make mistakes, focus on teaching rather than punishing.
- Be as involved with their school as you can, and encourage your children to participate in school activities.

This is a big job, and you may need help from your community. Here are some suggestions:

- Help with housing or other bills, clothing, or school supplies may be available specifically for grandparents raising grandchildren in your community.
- Join a support group. Often there are local groups for grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Ask for help and referrals from a church leader, the counselor at your child’s school, or a social services agency.
- If necessary, get professional help to address your grandchild’s special needs, such as medical care, mental health care, or special education.

***Parenting the second time around brings special challenges and special joys. Do not hesitate to ask for help or seek services in your community for yourself and your grandchildren.***

*This tip sheet was created with input from experts in national organizations that work to protect children and strengthen families. To download this tip sheet or for more parenting tips, go to [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) or call 800.394.3366.*



## What You Might Be Seeing

Despite these benefits, the children will face some unique challenges:

- They may feel insecure and unsure that you will take care of them.
- They may act out or challenge you.
- They will miss their parents.
- They may be anxious or depressed.
- They may seem young or act too old for their ages.

# Cómo criar al hijo de un pariente



Es muy importante que los niños se sientan parte de una familia que los quiere y los respeta.

## Su hogar puede ser el mejor lugar para los hijos de un pariente.

Cuando un niño no puede estar con sus padres, el hogar de un pariente le puede dar:

- El consuelo de estar con una persona que conoce, y que comparte su idioma y cultura.
- La oportunidad de quedarse con sus hermanos
- Menos mudanzas de un lugar a otro
- A veces más contacto con sus padres

## Usted puede ayudar a que el niño se sienta seguro y protegido en su hogar.

- Tenga un sitio especial sólo para él, para que se sienta en casa.
- Tenga una rutina diaria de comidas, actividades y horas de irse a la cama.
- Háblele y escúchelo cuando le habla.
- Ponga unas pocas reglas y explíquele lo que espera de él. Haga que se cumplan las reglas sin falta.
- Si el niño hace algo bueno, ¡dígaselo! Si comete un error, explíquele lo que debe hacer la próxima vez.
- Participe en su escuela y en sus actividades escolares.

## Criar al hijo de un pariente no es fácil. Es posible que usted necesite ayuda.

Su comunidad puede tener recursos para ayudarle con:

- Comida, vivienda y algunas de sus cuentas
- Ropa, útiles escolares y enseñanza individual
- Apoyo y asesoramiento
- Visitas al médico, atención de la salud mental o educación especial

***Tenga paciencia. Tomará tiempo para que el niño se sienta protegido y seguro con usted. Si usted necesita apoyo, hable con el consejero de la escuela o con un trabajador social. Si usted necesita apoyo adicional solicítelo en su iglesia o en una agencia comunitaria.***

*Esta hoja informativa para los padres fue desarrollada con la colaboración de profesionales vinculados a diversas organizaciones nacionales que protegen a la juventud y promueven familias sanas. Para descargar esta publicación o para obtener más consejos para los padres (en inglés), vea: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) o llame al 1.800.394.3366.*

## Los niños extrañan a sus padres.

Los niños que no viven con sus padres tienen necesidades especiales. Pueden:

- Sentirse inseguros y no saber con certeza si usted los va a cuidar
- Portarse mal o desafiarlo
- Estar preocupados o deprimidos
- No comportarse de acuerdo con su edad

# Military Families

## What You Can Do

### What's Happening

Military families live in almost every community. Some parents in the military may be on active duty and wear a uniform every day. Other parents may be in the National Guard or Army Reserves and only wear a uniform when they are called to active duty for periods of time.

These families face unique stresses. The military parent must deal with periodic absences and the stresses associated with transitions such as preparing for duty or re-entering civilian life. Children in military families experience challenges related to a parent's service:

- The parent may be absent from the family and, in some cases, in harm's way due to deployment
- Children must adjust to the parent's return and reintegration back into the family
- Many military children must deal with a number of transitions such as frequent moves, changing schools, and adjusting to new caretakers

### What You Might Be Seeing

A spouse, partner, or extended family member may face new and increased responsibilities while a military parent is away. All of this can add stress to the family unit and make the already hard job of parenting even harder.

- A parent in uniform in your neighborhood, school, place of worship, or other community setting
- A civilian mother or father parenting solo for extended periods of time
- A grandparent, aunt, uncle, or other extended family member caring for a child with a deployed military parent
- A change in a child's behavior, either acting out or withdrawing, when a military parent is absent

### Parental Resilience

Seize opportunities to acknowledge and express appreciation for the family's service to our country. Invite parents and children to share their experiences of military life.

### Social Connections

Reach out and get to know your military neighbors, particularly if they serve in the National Guard or Reserves. Include them in neighborhood and community opportunities for recreation, participation, and growth. Become a friend and lend a hand. Don't wait for your neighbor to ask for help—offer to mow the grass, share a meal, help with small household repairs, or provide some respite by offering to care for the children for a few hours.

### Concrete Supports in Times of Need

Share information about community resources, especially those that provide support in times of need. Ask military parents what resources would help them when they move to active duty status or are facing a military-related separation, and help them to connect with these supports early.

### Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Military parents and the other caregivers in their family may need extra support in understanding how transitions, separation, and anxiety can affect their child's behavior. Understanding that behavior changes and acting out or withdrawing are normal and can be expected can make these challenges easier to deal with.

### Children's Social Emotional Development

If you have military children in your program or neighborhood, invite them to share their thoughts and feelings about the separations and transitions they may be experiencing. If you plan activities for children in your community, remember to create a way a child with a faraway parent can participate.

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# Familias de Militares

## ¿Qué está sucediendo?

En casi todas las comunidades viven familias de militares. Algunos padres en las fuerzas militares pueden encontrarse en servicio activo y vestir su uniforme todos los días. Otros padres pueden pertenecer a la Guardia Nacional o a las Reservas del Ejército y solo usar un uniforme cuando son llamados al servicio activo durante ciertos períodos.

Estas familias enfrentan un estrés particular. El padre militar debe enfrentar las ausencias periódicas y el estrés asociado con las transiciones tales como prepararse para el servicio o volver a integrar la vida civil. Los niños de las familias militares experimentan desafíos relacionados con el servicio del padre:

- El padre puede ausentarse de la familia y, en algunos casos, de manera riesgosa debido al despliegue.
- Los niños deben adaptarse al regreso del padre y a su reintegro a la familia.
- Muchos niños de militares enfrentan una serie de transiciones tales como mudanzas frecuentes, cambios de escuela y adaptarse a nuevos cuidadores.

El cónyuge, pareja o miembro de la familia adicional puede tener que enfrentar nuevas y mayores responsabilidades mientras que el padre militar está ausente. Todo esto puede agregar estrés a la unidad familiar y hacer que la ya difícil tarea de la crianza de los hijos sea aun más difícil.

## Lo que usted puede ver:

- Un padre en uniforme en su vecindario, escuela, lugar de culto u otro lugar de la comunidad
- Una madre o padre civil criando a sus hijos solo o sola durante períodos extensos
- Un abuelo o abuela, tía, tío u otro miembro adicional de la familia cuidando a un niño con un padre militar alistado
- Modificaciones en la conducta de un niño, ya sea manifestándose o retrayéndose cuando el padre militar está ausente.

## Qué puede hacer:

### Solidaridad con los padres

Busque oportunidades para agradecer y expresar su reconocimiento por el servicio que esta familia brinda a nuestro país. Invite a los padres y a los hijos a compartir sus experiencias de la vida militar.

### Relaciones sociales

Acérquese y conozca a sus vecinos militares, en particular si sirven en la Guardia Nacional o las Reservas. Inclúyalos en las oportunidades de recreación, participación y crecimiento del vecindario y la comunidad. Hágase amigo y ofrezca una mano. No espere a que su vecino le pida ayuda: ofrézcase a cortar el césped, compartir una comida, ayudar en pequeñas reparaciones de la vivienda o brinde algún respiro ofreciéndose para cuidar a los niños por algunas horas.

### Apoyo concreto en tiempos de necesidad

Comparta información sobre los recursos comunitarios, en particular sobre aquellos que ofrecen apoyo en momentos de necesidad. Pregunte a los padres militares qué recursos pueden ayudarlos cuando se trasladan al estado de servicio activo o cuando enfrentan una separación relacionada con las actividades militares y ayúdelos a ponerse en contacto con estos apoyos de manera temprana.

### Conocimiento de la crianza de los hijos y el desarrollo infantil

Los padres militares y los demás cuidadores de la familia pueden necesitar ayuda adicional para entender cómo las transiciones, la separación y la ansiedad pueden afectar la conducta de su hijo. Entender que esos cambios de comportamiento y sus manifestaciones o retraimiento son normales y esperables puede hacer que sea más fácil manejar estos desafíos.

### Desarrollo social y emocional de los hijos

Si usted tiene niños de familias de militares en su programa o vecindario, invítelos a compartir sus pensamientos y sentimientos sobre las separaciones y experiencias que pueden estar experimentando. Si planifica actividades para niños en su comunidad, recuerde crear una manera en la que un niño con un padre distante pueda participar.

*Esta hoja de consejos fue creada con información de expertos en organizaciones nacionales que trabajan para proteger a los niños y fortalecer a las familias. Para descargar esta publicación o para obtener más consejos para los padres (en inglés), vea: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) o llame al 1.800.394.3366.*

# How to Develop Strong Communities



## What's Happening

Communities have a great influence in families' lives. Just as plants are more likely to thrive in a garden with good soil and plenty of sunlight and water, families are more likely to thrive in nurturing communities. A safe place for children to play is one feature of a nurturing community. Other features include the availability of food, shelter, and medical care for families, as well as a culture that encourages neighbors to get to know and help one another. Nurturing communities can help build strong families. They are critical in helping build protective factors.\*

## What You Can Do

### Baby steps

- Meet and greet your neighbors
- Go to a parents meeting at your child's school
- Participate in an activity at your local library or community center

### Small steps

- Set up a playgroup in your community at homes or local park (consider inviting people who may not have children at home, like local seniors)
- Organize a community babysitting co-op
- Volunteer at your child's school through the school's administration or the parent's organization
- Encourage local service providers to produce a directory of available services that are easy to find in the community

### Big steps

- Organize a community event (a block party, father/daughter dance, parent support group)
- Run for an office in the parent organization at your child's school
- Attend local government meetings (city council or school board meetings) and let them know how important resources are in your community. Let them know how parks, strong schools, and accessible services help to strengthen your family and other families.

\* To learn more about the protective factors, visit [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors).

This tip sheet was created with input from experts in national organizations that work to protect children and strengthen families.

To download this tip sheet or for more parenting tips, go to [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) or call 800.394.3366.

## What You Might Be Seeing

Strong, nurturing communities that are supportive of families will have:

- Parks and recreation facilities that are accessible, safe, and inviting places for families
- Resources to help families in need access food, shelter, medical care, and other important resources
- Early education programs that are easily accessible and welcoming
- Safe, affordable housing available to all families
- Clean air and water

# Cómo desarrollar comunidades fuertes



## ¿Qué está sucediendo?

Las comunidades tienen gran influencia en la vida de las familias. Al igual que las plantas que florecen más fácilmente en un jardín con buena tierra y mucho sol y agua, las familias tienen más oportunidades de prosperar en comunidades estimulantes. Un lugar seguro para que los niños jueguen es una característica de una comunidad estimulante. Otras características incluyen la disponibilidad de alimento, refugio y atención médica para familias, así como una cultura que aliente a los vecinos a conocerse y ayudarse entre ellos. Las comunidades estimulantes pueden ayudar a construir familias fuertes. Son esenciales en ayudar a generar factores de protección\*.

## Lo que usted puede ver:

Las comunidades fuertes y estimulantes que apoyan a las familias contarán con:

- Parques e instalaciones de recreación que sean lugares accesibles, seguros y atractivos para las familias
- Recursos para ayudar a las familias que necesiten alimento, refugio, atención médica y otros recursos importantes
- Programas de educación temprana que sean fácilmente accesibles y acogedores
- Viviendas seguras y accesibles, disponibles para todas las familias
- Agua y aire puros

## Qué puede hacer:

### Pasitos de bebé

- Encuéntrese y salude a sus vecinos.
- Asista a las reuniones de padres en la escuela de sus hijos.
- Participe en actividades de su biblioteca local o centro comunitario.

### Pequeños pasos

- Establezca un grupo de juego en su comunidad, en hogares o parques locales (considere invitar a personas que no tienen niños en su casa como adultos mayores locales).
- Organice una cooperativa de cuidado infantil comunitario.
- Ofrézcase como voluntario en la escuela de sus hijos a través de la administración de la escuela o la organización de padres.
- Aliente a los proveedores de servicios locales a crear un directorio de servicios disponibles en la comunidad que sean fáciles de encontrar.

### Grandes pasos

- Organice un evento comunitario (una fiesta de la cuadra, un baile de padres/hijas, un grupo de apoyo a padres).
- Postúlese para un cargo en la organización de padres de la escuela de su hijo.
- Asista a las reuniones del gobierno local (reuniones del ayuntamiento o del consejo escolar) y explíqueles cuán importante que son los recursos en su comunidad. Hágales saber cómo los parques, las escuelas bien establecidas y los servicios accesibles ayudan a fortalecer su familia y la de los demás.

\* Para obtener más información sobre los factores de protección, visite [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/protectfactors). Esta hoja de consejos fue creada con la participación de expertos en organizaciones nacionales que trabajan para proteger a los niños y fortalecer a las familias. Para descargar esta publicación o para obtener más consejos para los padres (en inglés), vea: [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) o llame al 1.800.394.3366.



# Parenting Your Child With Developmental Delays and Disabilities

## What You Can Do

### What's Happening

Children develop in many ways and at different rates. While each child is unique, there are developmental milestones or skills that children are expected to develop by certain ages. As parents we expect these age-specific tasks to occur naturally. Children don't necessarily learn skills at the same pace, but when milestones don't develop within the expected broad timeframe or don't appear at all; parents and caregivers may become concerned.

### What You Might Be Seeing

Parents and primary caregivers are in the best position to note any ongoing concerns about their child's development that may require action. Although children develop at their own rate, some differences may be signs of developmental delays or disabilities. You may want to observe your child in the following areas to decide if your child is on a typical developmental path:

- **Gross motor skills:** Using large groups of muscles to sit, stand, walk, run, etc.; keeping balance; and changing positions
- **Fine motor skills:** Using hands to eat, draw, dress, play, write, and do many other things
- **Language:** Speaking, using body language and gestures, communicating, and understanding what others say
- **Cognitive:** Thinking skills including learning, understanding, problem-solving, reasoning, and remembering
- **Social:** Interacting with others, having relationships with family, friends, and teachers, cooperating, and responding to the feelings of others

### First Steps

- If your child's development worries you, share your concerns with someone who can and will help you get clear answers about your child's development. Don't accept others dismissing your concerns by saying "You worry too much," or "That will go away in a few months." You know your child and are his or her best advocate.
- If your child seems to be losing ground—in other words, starts to not be able to do things they could do in the past—you should request an evaluation right away. Get professional input for your concerns.
- If you think your child may be delayed or have a disability, take him or her to a primary health-care provider or pediatrician and request a developmental screening. If you don't understand the terminology used to assess or describe your child, be sure to ask questions such as, "What does that mean?"

### Next Steps

- If your child is diagnosed with a developmental delay or disability, remember that you are not alone. Meet and interact with other families of children with special needs, including those with your child's identified disability. You may have many questions about how your child's diagnosis affects your whole family.
- Seek information. Learn the specifics about your child's special needs. When your child is diagnosed with a delay or a disability, you should begin interventions as early as possible so your child can make the best possible progress.
- Find resources for your child. Seek referrals from your physician or other advisors to find professionals and agencies that will help your child. Keep in mind that some services that assist your child may also provide programs to benefit your entire family.

### Ongoing Strategies

- Locate or start a support group. You may appreciate the opportunity to give and receive assistance or encouragement from others who can truly identify with your experience.
- Take a break and give yourself the gift of time to regroup, re-establish your relationships with family members, or reconnect with friends. You will be a better champion for your child when you take the time to care of yourself as well.
- Don't let your child's delay or disability label become the entire focus. Your child has special challenges but is also a member of your family. Seeing your child grow and develop as an individual and part of the family is one of the great pleasures of being a parent.

*This tip sheet was created with information from experts in national organizations that work to protect children and strengthen families. To download this tip sheet or for more parenting tips, go to [www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting) or call 800.394.3366.*

# Criar a su hijo con retrasos de desarrollo y discapacidades



## Qué puede hacer:

### ¿Qué está sucediendo?

Los niños se desarrollan de muchas maneras y a diferentes ritmos. Aunque cada niño es único, existen capacidades o hitos de desarrollo que se espera que los niños desarrollen a determinadas edades. Como padres, esperamos que estas tareas específicas de la edad ocurran naturalmente. Los niños no necesariamente aprenderán las habilidades al mismo ritmo, pero cuando no desarrollan los hitos dentro de los amplios marcos de tiempo esperados o cuando sencillamente no ocurren, los padres y los cuidadores pueden preocuparse.

### Lo que usted puede ver:

Los padres y cuidadores primarios están en la mejor situación para notar cualquier problema que esté ocurriendo en el desarrollo de su hijo, que pueda requerir una acción. Aunque los niños se desarrollan a su propio ritmo, algunas diferencias pueden ser señales de retrasos en el desarrollo o de discapacidades. Puede querer observar a su hijo en las siguientes áreas para decidir si su niño se encuentra en un curso de desarrollo típico.

- **Habilidades de motricidad gruesa:** Uso de grupos mayores de músculos para sentarse, pararse, caminar, correr, etc.; mantener el equilibrio; y cambio de posiciones.
- **Habilidades de motricidad fina:** Uso de las manos para comer, dibujar, vestirse, escribir y para muchas otras cosas
- **Lenguaje:** Hablar, uso del lenguaje corporal y gestos, comunicación y comprensión de lo que uno dice
- **Cognitivo:** Habilidades de pensamiento incluida la resolución de problemas, el razonamiento y la memoria
- **Sociales:** Interactuar con otros, tener relacionamiento con la familia, los amigos y los maestros, cooperar y responder a los sentimientos de otros

### Primeros pasos

- Si le preocupa el desarrollo de su niño, comparta sus preocupaciones con alguien que pueda ayudarlo a responder sus preguntas sobre el desarrollo del niño. No acepte que otros descarten sus preocupaciones diciendo: "Te preocupas demasiado" o "Eso pasará en unos meses". Usted conoce a su hijo y es su mejor protector.
- Si el niño parece estar perdiendo terreno —en otras palabras, comienza a no poder hacer cosas que podía hacer antes— debe solicitar una evaluación de inmediato. Obtenga una opinión profesional para sus preocupaciones.
- Si piensa que su hijo puede estar retrasado o tener una discapacidad, llévelo a un proveedor de atención médica primaria o a un pediatra para solicitar un estudio de desarrollo. Si usted no entiende la terminología utilizada para evaluar o describir a su hijo, asegúrese de hacer preguntas como: "¿Qué significa eso?"

### Pasos siguientes

- Si a su hijo se le diagnostica un retraso en el desarrollo o una discapacidad, recuerde que no está solo. Reúnase e interactúe con otras familias de niños con necesidades especiales, incluidos aquellos niños con la discapacidad que se ha identificado a su hijo. Puede tener muchas preguntas de cómo el diagnóstico de su hijo afecta a toda su familia.
- Busque información. Aprenda la información específica de las necesidades especiales de su hijo. Cuando a su hijo se le diagnostica un retraso o discapacidad, debe comenzar las intervenciones tan pronto como sea posible, de modo que su niño pueda hacer el mejor progreso.
- Encuentre los recursos para su hijo. Pídale al médico o a otros consejeros que lo refieran a profesionales y agencias que ayudarán a su hijo. Tenga en cuenta que algunos servicios que ayudan a su hijo también brindan programas que benefician a toda la familia.

### Estrategias continuas

- Encuentre o inicie un grupo de apoyo. Puede valorar la oportunidad de brindar y recibir asistencia o aliento de otros que realmente pueden identificarse con su experiencia.
- Tómese un descanso y otórguese el regalo de un tiempo para reagruparse y restablecer las relaciones con los miembros de su familia, o para volver a conectarse con amigos. Podrá ayudar mejor a su hijo si puede también puede tomarse un tiempo para cuidarse de usted mismo.
- No deje que la etiqueta del retardo o discapacidad de su hijo se convierta en todo su enfoque. Su hijo tiene desafíos particulares pero también es un miembro de su familia. Ver a su hijo crecer y desarrollarse como individuo y parte de la familia es uno de los mayores placeres de ser padres.

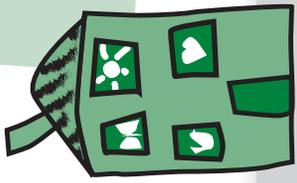
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# **Activity Calendar**

**“30 Ways to Strengthen  
Families During National  
Child Abuse Prevention Month”**

Use the attached calendar  
to put the Five Protective Factors  
to action with your families every day.





# April 2011

## 30 Ways to Strengthen Families During National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Protective Factors:  
Children's Social and Emotional Development

Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development

Parental Resilience

Social Connections

Concrete Supports for Parents

Nurturing and Attachment

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday



strengthening families  
[www.strengtheningfamilies.net](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net)



[www.childwelfare.gov/preventing](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing)



[www.friendsnrc.org](http://www.friendsnrc.org)

**3**

Create a calendar of community events for families.

**4**

Add children's books about feelings to your program's library.

**5**

Praise good parenting when you see it.

**6**

Invite someone in to help parents learn about managing stress.

**7**

Organize "stroller walks" with new parents. Talk about their challenges as you walk.

**8**

Create a handout for families with community resources linked to each protective factor.

**9**

Help a parent "catch their child being good."

**10**

Hold your next event or support group at the local laundromat.

**11**

Role play emotions with kids—what do you do when you're happy, sad, or frustrated?

**12**

Have parenting tips handy for parents dealing with a challenging issue.

**13**

Make "how are you?" phone calls to families in the program.

**14**

Host a potluck or cultural celebration.

**15**

Invite a community partner to present a new resource for families.

**16**

Create a board game library for families.

**17**

Remember something special about every parent you serve.

**18**

Train your staff on how trauma and loss affect children.

**19**

Learn about parenting practices of a different culture.

**20**

Recognize parent accomplishments.

**21**

Encourage parents to support each other through phone trees, car pools, or play groups.

**22**

Visit a program where you refer families, so you'll know what it's like.

**23**

Ask children who is important to them.

**24**

Create opportunities for parents to contribute to your program.

**25**

Teach kids to resolve conflicts peacefully.

**26**

Talk to parents in your program about discipline alternatives.

**27**

Help parents set goals and solve problems.

**28**

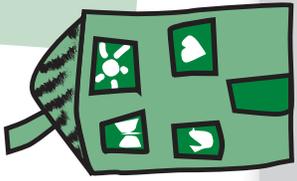
Create a "positive parenting club" where parents can share their success stories.

**29**

Let parents use the center's computers for personal business (e.g., writing resumes, email).

**30**

Create an arts and crafts activity that parents can do with their children.



# Abril de 2011

## 30 Formas de Fortalecer a las Familias durante el Mes Nacional de Prevención del Abuso Infantil

Factores de protección:

Desarrollo Social y Emocional de los Niños

Conocimiento de la Crianza y del Desarrollo Juvenil e Infantil

Capacidad de Recuperación de los Padres

Conexiones Sociales

Apoyos Concretos para los Padres

Afecto y Apego

**Domingo**



[strengtheningfamilies.org](http://strengtheningfamilies.org)



[www.childwelfare.gov/preventing](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing)

[www.friendsnrc.org](http://www.friendsnrc.org)



**Lunes**

**3** Prepare un calendario de eventos comunitarios para las familias.

**4** Añada libros infantiles sobre los sentimientos a la biblioteca de su programa.

**5** Elogie las buenas prácticas de crianza cuando las vea.

**6** Invite a alguien a que venga a ayudar a los padres a aprender sobre cómo manejar el estrés.

**7** Organice "caminatas con cochecitos" para los padres novicios. Hable de sus desafíos mientras caminan.

**Martes**

**10** Celebre su próximo evento o grupo de apoyo en la lavandería local.

**11** Simule las emociones con los niños - ¿qué haces cuando te sientes feliz, triste o frustrado?

**12** Tenga sugerencias de crianza a la mano para los padres que enfrentan desafíos cotidianos.

**13** Haga llamadas a las familias del programa para ver como están.

**14** Ofrezca una cena tipo potluck o una celebración cultural.

**Miércoles**

**24** Cree oportunidades para que los padres contribuyan con su programa.

**17** Recuerde algo especial sobre cada padre al que presta servicios.

**18** Capacite a su personal sobre cómo el trauma y la pérdida afectan a los niños.

**19** Aprenda sobre prácticas de crianza de diferentes culturas.

**20** Reconozca los logros de los padres.

**21** Anime a los padres a apoyarse mutuamente por medio de llamadas en cadena, transportes compartidos o grupos de juego.

**Jueves**

**25** Enseñe a los niños a resolver conflictos de forma pacífica.

**26** Hable con los padres en su programa sobre alternativas de disciplina.

**27** Ayude a los padres a establecer metas y resolver problemas.

**28** Organice un "club de crianza positiva" donde los padres puedan compartir sus éxitos.

**Viernes**

**1** Actualice su directorio de recursos.

**8** Prepare un folleto para las familias con recursos comunitarios vinculados a cada factor de protección.

**9** Ayude a un padre a "descubrir a su hijo portándose bien."

**Sábado**

**2** Organice una cita de juegos para padres y niños. Destaque cómo las actividades fortalecen las conexiones.

**16** Cree una biblioteca de juegos de mesa para las familias.

**23** Pregunte a los niños quiénes son importantes para ellos.

**30** Cree una actividad de Arte y manualidad que los padres pueden hacer con su hijo.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Children's Bureau  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb)



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