



What you will learn about Committing to Strengthening Families

QRIS Indicator for Step 5 Strengthening Families and Communities Standard: Families have opportunities to participate in program development.

Two parent teacher conferences are offered during the year.

Protective Factors are referenced in strategic planning, program, evaluation, and staff/parent engagement.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: A CHILD CARE PROGRAM COMMITTED TO THE 'STRENGTHENING FAMILIES' PHILOSOPHY CREATES A CULTURE BASED ON A CLEARLY STATED MISSION AND VISION OF PROGRAM QUALITY THAT GUIDES ITS OPERATION TO INCLUDE PARENT PARTNERSHIP, LEADERSHIP, AND HIGH PERFORMANCE OF STAFF

Strive for an environment that respects all people and is free of bias. (Early Learning eGuidelines, Essential Practice, Cultural Context)

Build strong relationships with and among families, teachers, caregivers, and community programs. (ELeG, Essential Practice, Family Support)

Development and learning are rooted in culture and supported by the family. A child's language, knowledge, traditions, and family expectations are the primary influences on development. Learning is enriched by stable, nurturing relationships within the family and community. (ELeG's, Guiding Principle)

The program effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, and fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences. (National Association for the Education of Young Children Program Standards, Standard 10: Leadership and Management)

What does this look like in practice?

- Program mission statement and vision refer to Strengthening Families as a way to build protective factors, support child development, and prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Program offers both staff and parents opportunities to be part of the decision-making process to improve program quality.

- Professional development plans include: training in the Protective Factors Framework, building skills for collaborating as a team member, and for partnering with families and communities.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: COMMITTING TO STRENGTHENING FAMILIES REQUIRES OWNERS, DIRECTORS, AND STAFF TO HAVE A SOLID UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK AND INTENTIONALLY USE EVERYDAY ACTIONS TO PUT EACH OF THE PROTECTIVE FACTORS INTO PRACTICE

Specific everyday actions support the recognition and development of the five Protective Factors: parental resilience, social connection, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social emotional competence. (Center for the Study of Social Policy Strengthening Families; a Protective Factor Framework. The Research Behind Strengthening Families)

The program promotes positive relationships among all children and adults. It encourages each child's sense of individual worth and belonging as part of a community and fosters each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member. (NAEYC Program Standards, Standard 1: Relationships)

What does this look like in practice?

- Staff receive ongoing Strengthening Families training and program support.
- Programs post the five protective factors and regularly discuss their importance to quality care throughout the program, among staff, and with parents.
- Staff performance reviews emphasize the importance of implementation of the protective factor framework.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: COMMITTING TO STRENGTHENING FAMILIES MAY REQUIRE PROGRAM-WIDE CHANGE, WHICH SHOULD BE DONE THROUGH CAREFUL PLANNING

The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture. To support children's optimal learning and development, programs need to establish relationships with families based on mutual trust and respect, involve families in their children's educational growth, and encourage families to fully participate in the program. (NAEYC Program Standards, Standard 7: Families)

What does this look like in practice?

- Program commits time, energy, and resources to promote Strengthening Families.
- Program includes Strengthening Families in its vision, and provides training opportunities and support to staff.