

Step 2

Strengthening Families Self-Assessment & Action Plan



Use this assessment and plan:

- To **determine** how deeply the Strengthening Families Protective Factor framework is embedded in your program, your policies, and in the everyday actions of the staff.
- To **set goals** and track progress toward meeting them.

Instructions:

- Consider each item, and determine if your program is doing it Always, Sometimes, or Not Yet.
- Write clearly defined goals and action steps. Identify who will be responsible, by when and how you will know the goal is met.
- Refer to these goals in your Quality Improvement Plan for Steps to Quality.

Remember:

- Review, revisit, and update this tool regularly. As your program changes, your goals will change.
- Change happens over time. Becoming a Strengthening Families program is an ongoing process of building relationships and shifting from a child-centered to a family-centered mindset.
- It is small but significant everyday actions, done intentionally, that will help both staff members and families build the protective factors.

The Protective Factors:

Social Connection
Parental Resilience
Concrete Support in Times of Need
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
Social and Emotional Competence



Always	Sometimes	Not Yet	<i>Helping families build the Strengthening Families Protective Factors reduces stress, leads to optimal child development, and decreases child abuse and neglect.</i>
Knowledge of the Protective Factors			
			1. Staff have taken basic training in Strengthening Families
			2. The program has a policy in staff and parent handbooks for the prevention of child abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse
			3. Staff can list a few everyday actions that support the development of each of the Protective Factors
			4. Staff intentionally use and reference the Protective Factors in their daily work
			5. Program intentionally uses Protective Factor framework to inform strategic planning, program and staff evaluation, staff training, and parent education
Goals: Action Steps: Who, when & how: (Date all activity)			
To promote Social Connections:			
			1. We know parents' names and greet them at drop off and pick up each day
			2. We provide a comfortable space for parents to interact and meet informally
			3. We offer social events such as potlucks, celebrations, field trips, and special programs on a regular basis
			4. We communicate with parents in a variety of ways, both formally and informally
Goals: Action Steps: Who, when & how: (Date all activity)			
To promote Parental Resilience			
			1. We invite parents to share their skills, talents and cultural traditions with the classroom and overall program
			2. We recognize early signs of stress, crisis, child abuse and neglect and know how to report suspicions of abuse



			3. We maintain policies and procedures for prevention of child sexual abuse and share them with parents
			4. We maintain an "open door policy" and actively listen to parents' concerns
			5. We respond to parents' ideas, and recognize and value parent's contributions
			6. We protect families' right to privacy by consciously maintaining confidentiality
			7. We accept and support diverse family structures (single parents, grandparents, same sex parents)
			8. We consciously recognize families' strengths, and offer parents support and encouragement in a variety of ways
			9. We offer parents opportunities to participate in program development through surveys, board membership, and committee membership
Goals:			
Action Steps:			
Who, when & how: (Date all activity)			
To promote Concrete Support in Times of Need			
			1. We maintain an updated, comprehensive list of community resources, and it is readily available to parents
			2. We provide information concerning respite care and emergency crisis services
			3. We offer community resources for supporting children with special needs
			4. We offer emergency help for families in need, such as an emergency fund, a food pantry, or extra diapers/clothing
			5. We encourage parents to offer concrete support to each other, through carpooling, clothing swaps, bartering for services, etc.
Goals:			
Action Steps:			
Who, when & how: (Date all activity)			
To promote Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development			
			1. We welcome parents to visit their child any time throughout the day



			2. We offer information on parenting in a variety of ways: books, classes, discussion groups, take-home materials, and information campaigns
			3. We work with parents to address their children's behavioral issues
			4. We offer parent teacher conferences to discuss their child's development and family goal setting
			5. We encourage conversation and connection between parents with children of the same age
			6. We model positive methods of discipline and communication
Goals: Action Steps: Who, when & how: (Date all activity)			
To promote Social and Emotional Competence			
			1. We encourage children to express their feeling through words, artwork, and dramatic play
			2. We receive ongoing training in children's development and appropriate expectations
			3. We recognize and affirm the central role of parents in their child's life
			4. We use positive methods of discipline and communication with the children
			5. We discuss children's social and emotional needs with parents to ensure a smooth transition between home and program
Goals: Action Steps: Who, when & how: (Date all activity)			

