

Motivation Monday, April 13, 2020

We All Have a Part in Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: Building Social and Emotional Competence in Families

"In times of stress, the best thing we can do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers." -Fred Rogers

A Parent's Definition of Concrete Supports, Adapted from the [PA Strengthening Families Website](#)

To acknowledge the importance of Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Family Support Team is continuing to work to increase awareness and understanding of the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework through **Motivation Mondays!** This is important because when these five Protective Factors are present and robust in families, children are safe and families thrive.

This week, the Family Support Team is focusing on the Strengthening Families Protective Factor: Social and Emotional Competence.

Why Is This Protective Factor Important?

Family and child interactions help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships. Building social and emotional competence in children help children develop a positive cultural identity and interact in a diverse society.

Preventing Child Abuse with Concrete Supports

Partner with families to help caregivers foster their child's social and emotional development. When caregivers have a strong, nurturing bond with their child, it helps children to be able to express their feelings, which makes parenting less stressful and we know that stress can sometimes lead to maltreatment. Providing families with tips to develop their child's social and emotional competence may also support the prevention of the unintended neglect that sometimes occurs when parents are unable to provide nurturing support for their children. A couple ways family support professionals can help parents to build their child's social and emotional competence are:

Check out the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovation's [Family Engagement](#) page, filled with resources for caregivers and families:

- [Help Us Have a Good Day: Positive Strategies for Families \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Help Us Stay Calm: Strategies that help you and your child during challenging behavior \(Spanish\)](#)

Check out these [Action Sheets](#) from CSSP, which provides more concrete ways that you can help families build Social Emotional Competence with their families!

Resources for This Protective Factor

- Accessing concrete supports, and building social and emotional help, during this unprecedented time has gotten a little easier with the support of The Department of Human Services (DHS) newly developed [Support & Referral Helpline](#).
- Learning to cope with grief is an important aspect of building social and emotional competence. During this time, grieving may be especially difficult for families and children. Highmark Caring Place: A Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents, and Their Families has released [COVID-19 Resources for Grieving Families](#) to provide extra resources to families. During such challenging times, the Highmark Caring Place's pledge becomes even more meaningful: *"I am here for you. You are here for me. We are here for each other."*
- Zero to Three released a Parenting Resource, [Staying Connected While Separated from Your Young Child](#), which reviews ideas to keep parent-child connections strong even if caregivers cannot be together with their child.

- Zero to Three is offering a free webinar series, *Addressing Abuse and Neglect during COVID-19*, which addresses how stress and abuse could be affecting children, families, and professionals during this pandemic.
- The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovation's [Family Engagement](#) page has Family Articles on:
 - [Teaching Your Child to: Cooperate With Requests \(Spanish\)](#)
 - [Teaching Your Child to: Identify and Express Emotions \(Spanish\)](#)
 - [Responding to Your Child's Bite \(Spanish\)](#)

Our Communities' Response

Finding Fun in Quarantined Philly: Dozens of Philadelphia caregivers and parents are finding solace in a social-distance-friendly activity that's sweeping cities around the nation: the rainbow hunt. Colorful rainbows are starting to pop up in Philadelphia, entire neighborhoods have come together online to participate. Residents create some kind of rainbow art and hang it visibly in their windows, and then parents lead their kids on walks to find them. It's an excuse to get outside and see your neighborhood, while keeping a safe separation to prevent the viral spread.

Interested in sharing something positive from your community? Please send a message to your designated Family Support Consultant or Technical Assistance Specialist!

Social Media

The [Highmark Caring Place](#) is sharing a new social media campaign! The Highmark Caring Place knows that our world looks very different these days. The COVID-19 pandemic has left us feeling anxious, scared and isolated. At the Highmark Caring Place, they believe that even in the darkest times, finding HOPE is always possible. Across the world, the butterfly is recognized as a symbol of transformation, endurance and HOPE. Using the butterfly as our basis, we have created a social media campaign called Holding On To HOPE. This is an opportunity for all of us to come together and *Hold On To HOPE* for everyone affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please review the attachment *Highmark Caring Place Campaign* for further details, and how we can all work on Holding On To Hope! **#hope4COVID19**.

Special Thanks

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning would like to thank Early Intervention Technical Assistance and the Center for Schools and Communities for their support in this messaging.

Resources

For Family Support Programs all resources provided in this email will be posted the next day to: <http://www.pa-home-visiting.org/covid-19/> under the appropriate Protective Factor heading. Please look for Social and Emotional Competence in the menu on the right hand side of the page.

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) believes that protecting vulnerable Pennsylvanians from abuse and neglect is a shared responsibility. Especially as we are in this unprecedented public health crisis, the teams encourages all Pennsylvanians to educate themselves on [potential signs of abuse](#) and make the call to ChildLine if you suspect abuse or neglect. ChildLine is available 24/7 to anyone wishing to report child abuse and general child well-being concerns at **1-800-932-0313** and at www.KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov. ChildLine response will not change because staff are teleworking from their homes.