

Motivation Monday, May 4, 2020

We All Have a Part in Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

“Perhaps it takes courage to raise children.” -John Steinbeck

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

The Family Support Program Team and Early Intervention Team would like to thank everyone for their time in April’s Child Abuse Prevention Month! As we transition into May, it is important to continue with prevention strategies.

To conclude Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Family Support Team is sharing resources for the Strengthening Families TM 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: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development.

Why Is This Protective Factor Important?

It is not a surprise to anyone that knowledge about parenting and child development helps a caregiver ‘parent’ more effectively. Understanding child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development provides insight on how to develop a broader range of strategies for positive parenting actions.

As CSSP points out, this protective factor helps to define what parenting looks like when families have good information and skills to help their children at every stage of development. It is especially important when parents are committed to change the parenting patterns they experienced as children – and need alternatives for their own children.

How This Ties to Child Abuse Prevention & How to Talk About This

When caregivers have an [understanding of parenting and child development](#) they are able to better strategize and recognize all the different needs of children during development. It is important to acknowledge that what caregivers do, and how they treat children, is often a reflection of the way they were parented. Let caregivers know that if they want to develop their own style of parenting that acquiring knowledge of parenting strategies and child development enables them to look at their past and make different choices in their current parenting practices. Interested in your [role](#)? Check out CSSP’s [Protective Factors: Action Sheets](#).

Resources for This Protective Factor

- Help caregivers better understand parenting and child development by providing knowledge and support. Check out these [23 easy to read Tip Sheets](#) from the Administration for Children and Families and Children’s Bureau on topics such as:
 - Keeping Your Family Strong;
 - Dealing With Temper Tantrums; and
 - Parenting Your Child With Developmental Delays and Disabilities.
 - And many more! Recursos en español.

- The Child Mind Institute has released [*Single Parenting During the Coronavirus Crisis*](#), helping caregivers who find themselves alone during a time that could be overwhelming.
- The [Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University](#) has released *What is COVID-19? And How Does It Relate to Child Development?* Please see the infographic attached, or visit their website to find podcast suggestions!
- Looking for a quick bite? This one-minute read, [*When You're Too Busy and Too Tired for a Self-Care Practice*](#), discussed how to work on self-care when you're feeling overwhelmed.
- The United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) [Child Development](#) page offers resources, [Mini Parenting Challenges](#), and family-friendly policies that make a positive difference in families. **Bonus?** Most of their articles and infographics can be posted to your social media page with the easy click of a button!
- An additional resource from the Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance (PFSA): [Co-Parenting During A Shelter In Place Mandate: Using the Strengthening Families Protective Factors As A Guide](#)

Our Communities' Response

The Westmoreland County Behavioral Health |Developmental Services (BH/DS) team is supporting caregivers who are currently pregnant or postpartum during COVID-19 through The Postpartum Depression Project and virtual support. Please see the attached flyer, *Westmoreland Moms COVID Support Group*. Interested in sharing something positive from your community? Please send a message to your designated Family Support Consultant or Technical Assistance Specialist!

Social Media

[Every Mother Counts](#) has created [shareable social media templates](#) for agencies and friends to share to celebrate the #MaternalHealthHeroes since the outbreak of COVID-19. *If you tag @everymomcounts, they'll do the best to repost you!*

Not only was April Child Abuse Prevention Month, but it was also the [Month of the Military Child](#). This is was a special time to honor the sacrifices made by families worldwide. In observance of this month, the Military Community and Family Policy program collaborated with key partners to celebrate and support military children. They're featuring resources from across programs to help caregivers and families discover more support they can turn to throughout the year. Check out Military OneSource's Toolkit, and the [Month of the Military Child 2020 Fact Sheet](#) which describes how parents can access *free* positive parenting classes that teach empowering skills!

The 2020 Census is underway! It is important to know that there are [2020 Census Operational Adjustments Due to COVID-19](#). Want to learn more about the revised schedule? Visit the [United States Census](#) page to learn more about the status of current operations.

Trying to get your families to make themselves count? The National Institute for Children's Health Equity have released a [Census Social Media Toolkit](#), which helps to ensure that all children and families receive the resources and representation they deserve!

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 *Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development* in the menu on the right hand side of the page. Please note that ChildLine is still 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 responses have not changed because staff are teleworking from their homes.