



Facilitation Guide

Strong Parents Alaska





Strengthening Families is a framework developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) to prevent child abuse and neglect. This approach helps child welfare systems, early education and other programs work with parents to build the following five protective factors (PF):

- » Parental Resilience
- » Social Connections
- » Concrete Support in Times of Need
- » Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- » Social and Emotional Competence of Children

This guide is a seven-session curriculum that any community can use to bring parents together to recognize their strengths and support their journey to build strong families and communities.

This project was made possible by the collaborative efforts of the following organizations:

- » Nome Community Center
- » Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- » Kodiak Area Native Association
- » UAA Child Welfare Academy

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WORDS OF INSPIRATION

“Believing in the power of the five protective factors, Nome Community Center Family Support Staff embarked on a journey to develop a curriculum using the Strengthening Families platform that would help parents understand some basic concepts to becoming excellent parents.

We have found these factors to be applicable to all families no matter how large or small, no matter how successful they consider themselves to be, these are important for all of us! The result was a tireless effort which has become a part of this final product. What we’ve learned along the way is that courageous parents will do whatever it takes to help their children succeed.

Practical application along with some fun helps to reinforce the skills developed. It was our pleasure to be a part of this great work.”

From Deb Weston, Shoni Evans, & Rhonda Schneider with Nome Community Center

“Having the knowledge and believing in the five protective factors is what will make this program successful. KANA decided to do this seven-week series with some funding we had available. We found that the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors model fits best with our communities and culture. KANA had tried some different parenting models, but Strengthening Families has been the most successful and most receptive by our families.

From our rural villages to the City of Kodiak, we have gained success with families by implementing this series in the community. What we have learned along the way is a lot like parenting, no style is perfect, but trying is the best we can do!”

From Cassie Keplinger with Kodiak Area Native Association

“In the Fathers’ Journeys Program, we continue to highlight the Protective Factors during every class. The groups provide a fun and casual environment for parents to build comradery and friendships, to have courageous conversations, and to develop a proactive and personalized approach to raising their children with love and respect. As a result, I noticed parents having a sense of greater pride, leadership and awareness for their roles and the influence they have in their children’s lives. Because our participants have benefited in so many ways, from incorporating the Protective Factors, we certainly recommend this approach when working with parents and children.”

From Christie Tabisola with Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Overview	5
Guidelines	6
Session 1: Introduction	8
Session 2: Parental Resilience	10
Session 3: Social Connections	12
Session 4: Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development	14
Session 5: Concrete Support in Times of Need	16
Session 6: Social & Emotional Competence of Children	18
Session 7: Putting It All Together	21

For the appendices, reference the tabs of the printed version or separate documents for the electronic version.

Appendix 1: Introduction for Parents

Appendix 2: Toolkit – Community Café

Appendix 3: A Quick Reference Guide for Hosting World Café

Appendix 4: Sign-In Sheet

Appendix 5: Group Agreement

Appendix 6: Defining the Five Protective Factors & Cartoon Family

Appendix 7: Poem “Turning to One Another”

Appendix 8: Blank Eco-map & Example

Appendix 9: Labeling Feelings

Appendix 10: Survey, Evaluation, & Certificate of Attendance

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The **Strong Parents Alaska (SPA)** facilitation guide is divided into the following units:

- » **Guidelines:** Information applicable to all Sessions
- » **Session 1:** Introduction
- » **Session 2:** Parental Resilience
- » **Session 3:** Social Connections
- » **Session 4:** Knowledge of Parenting
- » **Session 5:** Concrete Support in Times of Need
- » **Session 6:** Social/Emotional Competence of Children
- » **Session 7:** Putting It All Together
- » **Appendix:** Supplementary Materials

The Guidelines section contain the following information to be implemented at each session:

- » **Getting Started:** ground rules to practice mutual respect and engagement within the group.
- » **General Supplies:** supplies for each session
- » **Parent Café Setup:** general format

Sessions 1-7 follow this order (agenda):

- » **Getting Started:** tips on how to prepare the room, welcome guests, and steps to start session.
- » **Supplies:** items needed for specific Protective Factor activities.
- » **Ice Breaker:** fun activities to help warm up and energize people.
- » **Protective Factor Lesson:** quick overview on the protective factor for that week along with resources for parents to review and take with them.
- » **Protective Factor Activity:** activity that help focus thinking on a protective factor.
- » **Parent Café:** questions for parents to reflect on in small group/café process.
- » **Closing Activity:** activity that give people something to reflect on what they learned.

GUIDELINES

GETTING STARTED - Step-by-step information to be implemented at each session.

- » Create an environment where everyone is comfortable. Review Appendices 2 and 3 for detailed information.
- » Choose a space with good lighting.
- » Make the space look like an actual café with tables that seat four to five people.
- » Use colorful tablecloths and a small vase of flowers or centerpiece. Natural materials that participants can relate to such as rocks, feathers, seashells, and so on may be used.
- » Place Post-It Notes or flip chart paper on each table with a mug of colorful pens or markers. Encourage scribbling, drawing and writing ideas so people may jot down ideas as they emerge.
- » Have a table at the front for the SPA facilitator's materials.
- » Consider displaying art, Strengthening Families, or other posters to the walls and play music as people arrive and you welcome them.
- » Place appropriate Café Etiquette handouts on each table for participant review. See Appendices 2 and 3 for details.
- » Place the sign-in sheet for participants near the entrance of the room. See Appendix 4 for a copy.
- » Welcome parents as they arrive and children if they are present.
- » If resources allow, give time for sharing food and general conversation. Bring required supplies to serve food such as paper plates, eating utensils, napkins, paper cups, etc.
- » Prizes may be given out after activities if resources allow, but they not are required.
- » When it seems people are settled with food, have the children go to their designated childcare area.
- » Welcome the group and introduce yourself. See Appendix 1 for an example on how to introduce parents to this program.
- » Go over the agenda on the Power Point, flip chart paper, or handout. Having a laptop is optional; this program may be done with paper and writing utensils.
- » Create a Group Agreement with participants during Session 1 and then display the agreement in front of the class for the rest of the sessions. See Appendix 5 for an example.
- » When you get to Session 2, reflect on the previous session. Ask if anyone got to use any of the ideas shared last time. Allow participants the opportunity to share insights or experiences. Repeat this step for remaining sessions.

SUPPLIES

The following items should be provided at each session. If a session requires particular supplies for activities, those will be indicated. You are welcome to add your own supplies.

- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes
- » Sheets of Paper
- » Markers, pens, pencils

PARENT CAFÉ SETUP

Before beginning a Café, review Appendices 2 and 3 for systematic descriptions on how Cafés work. They may be called community, parent, or world cafés but the principles are the same in that by coming together, people are able to share common ideas and goals.



The Café model cultivates different conversations among participants then collects the summary or “harvests” the outcomes of the conversations. Cafés help us to see new ways to make a difference in our lives and work. The power of conversation is so natural that we usually overlook it. Once we become aware of the power of conversation as a way to change things, we can use it more effectively for our mutual benefit.

The following are SPA Facilitator responsibilities:

- » During the conversation, move among the tables.
- » Encourage everyone to participate.
- » Remind people to write, doodle, or draw key ideas.

For each Session, there will be specific questions to ask the group. Choose two to three questions from the list as time allows.

As the group discusses their ideas, each person may write down, doodle, or draw their ideas or comments on Post-It Notes. Everyone is encouraged to share and to listen intently when others are speaking so everyone will feel safe and valued.

- » Decide who will be the table host at each table. Table hosts may be pre-selected for efficiency.
- » Allow time for the group to discuss one question.
- » After the first question is discussed, everyone at each table, except for the hosts, will go to another table with different parents before the next question is presented.
- » When parents arrive at their new tables, each table host will summarize ideas from the previous group at the table.
- » Ask and allow time for groups to discuss a second question.
- » After the second question is discussed, everyone at each table, except for the hosts, will go to another table with different parents before the next question is presented.
- » Repeat each step above with the third question as time allows.
- » After all questions have been discussed, collect the “harvest” which are the outcomes from the different conversations.
- » Connect the discussion to the purpose of the meeting. Make sure key insights are recorded visually or are gathered and posted if possible; this is the harvesting process.
- » Ask the following questions:
 - What did you learn from each other?
 - What were the insights, common themes, or patterns that emerged?
 - What were the things that you heard that maybe you had not heard before?
 - Were there things, ideas, etc. that we should think more about?
 - Is there any action, change, or new behavior you want to start or try?

Session 1: INTRODUCTION



GETTING STARTED

- » For the first session, see Appendix 1 for an example on how to introduce the program.
- » Refer to Guidelines on page 6 for setup details.
- » Create a group agreement to practice mutual respect about what parents expect from the group in order to feel comfortable, safe, and respected. If parents do not identify on their own, see Appendix 5 for an example. Let parents know there will be a handout or poster version to refer to these expectations or ground rules at each session.
- » Continue with the Ice Breaker after the agreement has been completed.

SUPPLIES

- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes/sheets of paper
- » Markers/pens/pencils
- » Strong Families Brochures
- » Bag of M&M's
- » Bowl

ICE BREAKER: M&M Game

- » Pass around a bowl of M&M's asking each person to take some but not eat them.
- » After the bowl has been passed around, ask each parent to share their names and ages of their children. Then share with the group fun facts about their family--one fact for each M&M (if a person has a huge handful limit it to 5).

Note: You may use other items besides M&M's.



PROTECTIVE FACTOR LESSON: Introduction of the Five Protective Factors

Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child maltreatment. The overarching goal is the promotion of child and family well-being. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors that help families succeed and thrive, even in the face of risk and challenges. These protective factors are about all families, builds on your family's strengths, buffers against risk and helps families achieve better outcomes for their families. These protective factors are **parental resilience**, **social connections**, **knowledge of parenting and child development**, **concrete supports in times of need**, and **social and emotional competence of children**. See Appendix 6 for definitions.

You have taken the first step in enhancing your own protective factors so your family can be strong, help children to grow as best they can and reduce stress that can sometimes lead to child maltreatment. This program will focus on your strengths and help you to build on those strengths.



PROTECTIVE FACTOR ACTIVITY: Strong Family Brainstorm

- » Write down the Five Protective Factors on one flip chart paper.
- » Divide parents into groups.
- » Have each group write a list on flip chart paper of as many words possible that describe a Strong Family. Post their lists on the wall, and allow groups to share answers.
- » Relate each of the Five Protective Factors to their words of a Strong Family.

PARENT CAFÉ

For step-by-step instructions and collecting the HARVEST after the Parent Café, refer to Guidelines, page 7. Here are specific session questions to discuss with the group as time allows:

- » When is your family the most happy?
- » What is your favorite thing about being a parent?
- » What are your hopes and dreams for your family?



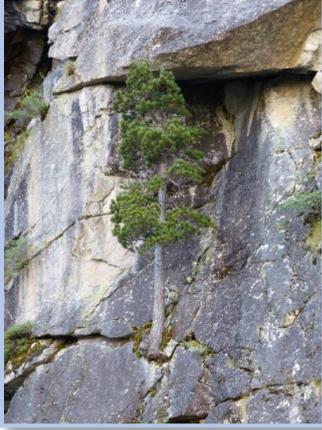
CLOSING ACTIVITY: Cartoon Family

- » Distribute a copy of the Cartoon Family to each parent. See Appendix 6.
- » Give parents three minutes to find as many strengths as they can.
- » Share the different strengths as a group.

CLOSING:

Affirm good learning points, positive participation, connections as a strong group, and thank the parents for their participation. Provide a schedule for next meetings. Highlight activities for the next week. Seek commitment for attendance at the next meeting. Adjourn Session 1.

Session 2: PARENTAL RESILIENCE



GETTING STARTED

- » Refer to Guidelines on page 6 for setup details.
- » Welcome the group.
- » Introduce yourself if there are newcomers and ask them to share their names and ages of their children.
- » Review the Group Agreement. Display the agreement where it is easily visible by the group.
- » Reflect on the last session. Ask if anyone used any of the ideas shared last time. Allow participants the opportunity to share insights or experiences they have had since the last meeting.
- » Continue with the Ice Breaker.

SUPPLIES

- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes/sheets of paper
- » Markers/pens/pencils
- » Sticker Dots

ICE BREAKER: Strong Parent

- » Go around the room and share what a strong parent looks like.
- » Write down key words on the flip chart paper.

PROTECTIVE FACTOR LESSON: Parent Resilience

- » Resilience is the ability to recover from difficult life experiences, and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.
- » Resilient parents have empathy for themselves and others and are able to keep a positive attitude, solve problems creatively and take life's events in stride.
- » Resilience is not about how many bad things you experience. It is about how you respond to them. Each time you are faced with a challenge, your resilience is tested. You might develop greater resilience throughout the experience or have a setback in your resilience. This course examines ways to promote resilience in children and families.
- » Resiliency looks different for everyone and it is not a constant state. Resilience can come or go.



PROTECTIVE FACTOR ACTIVITY: Dot on Hand

- » Give everyone a dot sticker to put on their hand.
- » Have parents write a problem they are having on a dot. For example, “money” or “time.”
- » Have them slowly move their hands close to their faces touching their noses. What do they see? Can they see around the problem? Give them time to answer.
- » Then, have the parents move their hand slowly away from their face. What do they see now?

When our problems are right in front of us, we have a hard time seeing the bigger picture. Sometimes our strength can be asking for someone else to help us see the bigger picture. Stepping back to look at the problem from a different angle can help us to solve it. We can also turn the problem into a strength.

Example: A family has very little money for toys for a child for their birthday. Stepping back and looking around the parent find small boxes and cut out circles for tires and put them on the boxes. Paints the boxes bright colors and lets the children watch a movie while sitting in the car at their home drive-in theater. Turn the fact of very little money into a fun family time that the children will not forget. We can use creativity to turn a negative into positive.

PARENT CAFÉ

For step-by-step instructions and collecting the HARVEST after the Parent Café, refer to Guidelines, page 7. Here are specific session questions to discuss with the group as time allows:

- » What are some big obstacles that you have overcome to be a parent?
- » How do you role model being strong for your children?
- » How do you keep from getting overwhelmed?



CLOSING ACTIVITY: Poem, “Turning to One Another”

- » Distribute the poem, “Turning to One Another” from Appendix 7.
- » Instruct parents to each read one line.
- » Discuss what this poem is saying. Is this something that we can do as parents, as part of this community?

CLOSING:

Affirm good learning points, positive participation, connections as a strong group, and thank the parents for their participation. Provide a schedule for next meetings. Highlight activities for the next week. Seek commitment for attendance at the next meeting. Adjourn Session 2.

Session 3: SOCIAL CONNECTIONS



GETTING STARTED

- » Refer to Guidelines on page 6 for setup details.
- » Welcome the group.
- » Introduce yourself if there are newcomers and ask them to share their names and ages of their children.
- » Review the Group Agreement. Display the agreement where it is easily visible by the group.
- » Reflect on the last session. Ask if anyone used any of the ideas shared last time. Allow participants the opportunity to share insights or experiences they have had since the last meeting.
- » Continue with the Ice Breaker.

SUPPLIES

- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes/sheets of paper
- » Markers/pens/pencils
- » 2 cups plain white flour
- » 1 cup salt
- » 1 TBSP oil
- » 1 cup cold water
- » 2 drops of food coloring
- » Essential oils/spice
- » Have recipes on index cards
- » Copies of the community calendar

ICE BREAKER: Play dough

- » Number bags 1 to 5 and group the parents into 5 groups.
- » Give each group a paper bag with 1 ingredient for play dough.
- » Do not tell the groups what they are making.
- » Ask them if they can create something with their one ingredient.
- » Ask the group with bag #1 to come up and put their ingredient in a big bowl, and continue with each group until all the bags are emptied into the big bowl.
- » Together knead the ingredients into play dough.
- » Provide containers with lids to take home.
- » Pass out recipe cards to each parent.

Discuss how separately we are only one ingredient in a bag all alone. Together, the ingredients made something useful and fun to play with.

PROTECTIVE FACTOR LESSON: Social Connections

- » Social connections help families stay strong, get through the hard times, and enjoy family life. Families can have many different types of social connections that provide different types of support. No matter the type of connection – it should be positive – someone that is there for you, treats you well and helps you be the best person you can be! This saying is very true: “It takes a village to raise a child.”

- » Positive social connections can provide support when you need it. They help you deal with stress and illness and can bring out the best in you. People need people. Parents need people who care about them and their children, who can be good listeners, who they can turn to for well-informed advice, and who they can call on to help solve problems. Parents who have positive social connections find it easier to parent because of the support.
- » When parents have a sense of connectedness, they feel secure and confident that they have others with whom they can share the joys, pains, and uncertainties that come with being a parent.

PROTECTIVE FACTOR ACTIVITY: Eco-map of Our Social Connections

- » Distribute writing utensils and copies of the Eco-map to parents. See Appendix 8.
- » Explain that an eco-map is a commonly used tool for mapping social relationships. Have parents draw a circle in the middle of sheet and write “you” in the middle. Next, write five to six key social connections around their circle. Examples are family, friends, PTA, church groups, neighbor, etc. Then, identify the quality of the relationships through use of different lines. See eco-map example.
- » Have parents identify the relationships they would like to develop.

PARENT CAFÉ

For detailed instructions and collecting the HARVEST after the Parent Café, refer to Guidelines, page 7. Here are specific session questions to discuss with the group as time allows:

- » What kinds of relationships make you stronger?
- » What role does the internet play in your social connections?
- » Who do you have the most fun with and how does that impact your parenting?



CLOSING ACTIVITY: Commonalities & Events

- » Ask parents to partner with someone they do not know and find common things they share. Take three minutes.
- » Hand out Community Calendar (find or create a local calendar for your area).
- » Take time to talk about the things that are going on in our community.
- » Ask the group if there are things that we can add to this calendar.
- » Ask if there are there other ways we can stay socially connected to our community?

CLOSING:

Affirm good learning points, positive participation, connections as a strong group, and thank the parents for their participation. Provide a schedule for next meetings. Highlight activities for the next week. Seek commitment for attendance at the next meeting. Adjourn Session 3.

Session 4: KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING & CHILD DEVELOPMENT



GETTING STARTED

- » Refer to Guidelines on page 6 for setup details.
- » Welcome the group.
- » Introduce yourself if there are newcomers and ask them to share their names and ages of their children.
- » Review the Group Agreement. Display the agreement where it is easily visible by the group.
- » Reflect on the last session. Ask if anyone used any of the ideas shared last time. Allow participants the opportunity to share insights or experiences they have had since the last meeting.
- » Continue with the Ice Breaker.

SUPPLIES

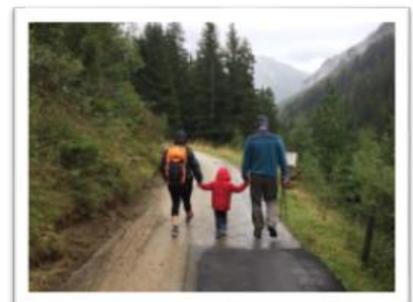
- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes
- » Markers/pens/pencils
- » Sheets of paper
- » Same-size towels for each parent

ICE BREAKER: Parenting

- » Ask parents how they learned to parent.
- » Write answers on flip chart paper.

PROTECTIVE FACTOR LESSON: Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development

- » There is no such thing as a perfect parent, but knowing what to expect does make the job a lot easier. Learning what to expect as your child grows will assist you in knowing how to help them thrive.
- » You can be equipped with new skills to help your child be happy and healthy. You can also learn how to recognize your child's unique needs and understand how to respond in a positive way when your child misbehaves.
- » By learning what our children need to do their best, we can give them a great start in life, enjoy parenting more and build strong healthy families.
- » Parents who have some knowledge of child development are likely to have more realistic expectations of their children.
- » It is easier to parent when they have several different parenting tools in their tool belt.



PROTECTIVE FACTOR ACTIVITY: Potato Salad Recipe

- » Pass out sheets of paper and ask parents to write their potato salad recipe.
- » Discuss the different recipes. Some people boil their potatoes with the skin, some peeled. Some people bake their potatoes. Some add eggs while others do not.

As the discussion progresses, relate the different recipes to different parenting styles. There is more than one way to make a potato salad just as there is more than one way to parent. However, there are guidelines to parenting just like there are guidelines for a potato salad recipe.

We learn our recipes from our parents, neighbors, or friends. Some parenting skills come naturally and some are learned through observation, practice, help from others, and/or reading materials. Neither parents nor professionals have all the answers but there is help for you as a parent.

PARENT CAFÉ

For step-by-step instructions and collecting the HARVEST after the Parent Café, refer to Guidelines, page 7. Here are specific session questions to discuss with the group as time allows:

- » How has parenting surprised you?
- » When your children are grown up, what kind of people do you want them to be and how are you assisting them right now with getting there?
- » What would you like to know more about as a parent?



CLOSING ACTIVITY: Towels

- » Give each parent a same size towel
- » Ask them to fold their towels like they would fold theirs at home.
- » Have parents look how other parents folded their towels. They will see differences.
- » Ask if the towel is going to dry us any differently because of how they are folded.

Noticing that everyone folds theirs differently, use the analogy that everyone parents differently. No one way is better than another. The towel still dries but might fit in their space better based on the way they folded it. Discuss as a group that there is not just one way to parent.

CLOSING:

Affirm good learning points, positive participation, connections as a strong group, and thank the parents for their participation. Provide a schedule for next meetings. Highlight activities for the next week. Seek commitment for attendance at the next meeting. Adjourn Session 4.

Session 5: CONCRETE SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED



GETTING STARTED

- » Refer to Guidelines on page 6 for setup details.
- » Welcome the group.
- » Introduce yourself if there are newcomers and ask them to share their names and ages of their children.
- » Review the Group Agreement. Display the agreement where it is easily visible by the group.
- » Reflect on the last session. Ask if anyone used any of the ideas shared last time. Allow participants the opportunity to share insights or experiences they have had since the last meeting.
- » Continue with the Ice Breaker.

SUPPLIES

- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes/sheets of paper
- » Markers/pens/pencils
- » Staplers
- » 12 balloons filled
- » 10-12 stressor statements on paper cut in strips
- » Community Resource List

ICE BREAKER: Asking for Help

- » Request parents to share the when was the last time they asked someone for help.
- » Who did they ask and for what?

PROTECTIVE FACTOR LESSON: Concrete Support in Times of Need

- » All families go through tough times. However, knowing where to get help in the community can make a difference. It is important that parents know what and where help is available to keep families strong and safe. Getting help when needed is part of being a good parent.
- » When families' basic needs are met, they can spend less time worrying and more time helping their children learn and develop.
- » When you are resilient and have social connections, asking for help is easier.
- » It can be hard to ask for help, but there is nothing wrong with getting help when needed. Many people grow up with a value of NOT asking for help. People are sometimes taught that they should be self-sufficient, do everything for themselves, and that asking for help is the last, almost shameful act of a person who has failed to be successful and independent. Discuss and normalize this value and feeling for the group. Give your own examples and ask for examples from others.

PROTECTIVE FACTOR ACTIVITY: Balloons

- » Prepare statements of 10-12 “stressors” ahead of time that apply to your region. Type or write them out on a piece of paper and cut them out in strips. Examples:
 - Babysitter did not show up and you are late for work
 - Car did not start
 - You spilled coffee on your clothes on your way out the door
- » Have parents help blow up 10-12 large balloons, and ask a volunteer sit in a chair at the front.
- » Distribute the stressor strips and balloons to all the parents and have them read their slips one at a time. After they read their statement, have them hand the balloon to the volunteer. As the volunteer is required to hold more and more balloons, it becomes evident that it is very hard to hold all of the stressors. Ask the parents if they want to step in to help the volunteer.
- » Ask each person to read their strip again but this time offer a possible solution.

PARENT CAFÉ

For step-by-step instructions and collecting the HARVEST after the Parent Café, refer to Guidelines, page 7. Here are specific session questions to discuss with the group as time allows:

- » How have services and service providers been a positive part of your life?
- » When your family has needed help, who has been there and how did they help?
- » When do you allow yourself to accept help?



CLOSING ACTIVITY: List of Services

- » Hand out a Community Resource list from your local community.
- » Prepare ahead of time a list (typed in large font) of all of the services available in your community. Print them out on cardstock and cut in strips. Have staplers available. Hand out the strips to each participant until they are all distributed.
- » Have the participants read the names of the services and staple to make a paper chain.
- » Have each person re-read their stressor from the beginning of the session and identify which community resource could have been a help.

CLOSING:

Affirm good learning points, positive participation, connections as a strong group, and thank the parents for their participation. Provide a schedule for next meetings. Highlight activities for the next week. Seek commitment for attendance at the next meeting. Adjourn Session 5.

Session 6: SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN



GETTING STARTED

- » Refer to Guidelines on page 6 for setup details.
- » Welcome the group.
- » Introduce yourself if there are newcomers and ask them to share their names and ages of their children.
- » Review the Group Agreement. Display the agreement where it is easily visible by the group.
- » Reflect on the last session. Ask if anyone used any of the ideas shared last time. Allow participants the opportunity to share insights or experiences they have had since the last meeting.
- » Continue with the Ice Breaker.

SUPPLIES

- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes/sheets of paper
- » Markers/pens/pencils
- » 1 bag of marshmallows
- » 1 medium container with a lid
- » Magazines
- » Scissors, glue or tape
- » Copies of handouts in Appendix 9

ICE BREAKER: Emotionally Healthy

- » Ask parents to share two characteristics of a child who is emotionally healthy.
- » Write the key words on the flip chart paper

PROTECTIVE FACTOR LESSON: Social & Emotional Competence of Children

- » This protective factor is the only one about children. The other four are about parents.
- » As parents, these are actions that can be done to model and help children learn:
 - Respond warmly and consistently to our children
 - Teach our children the words they need to express how they feel
 - Allow our children to express their emotions
 - Demonstrate kind and positive interactions with other people
- » Helping children develop social-emotional competence allows them to manage their emotions and build healthy relationships with their peers and adults. They will have an easier time in school, make friends and handle stress better when they become adults.



PROTECTIVE FACTOR ACTIVITY: Marshmallows

- » Open one large bag of marshmallows and a medium size container with a lid.
- » Ask the group to say out loud different emotions and feelings. As they call them out, stuff one marshmallow in the container for each emotion or feeling mentioned. Stuff the container to overflowing, being unable to put the lid on the container. Compress the marshmallows so that you can squeeze the lid shut.
- » Discuss how it may feel to be so stuffed with different emotions. Also ask parents what they think it feels like for their children.
- » Remove the lid from the jar and allow the marshmallows to pop out to discuss how adults and children can “burst at the seams” if they are unable to manage the many emotions they might experience in the course of a day.

PARENT CAFÉ

For step-by-step instructions and collecting the HARVEST after the Parent Café, refer to Guidelines, page 7. Here are specific session questions to discuss with the group as time allows:

- » How do your children know you love and respect them?
- » How do assist your children in dealing with their negative feelings?
- » What do you teach your children about being a good friend?



CLOSING ACTIVITY: Labeling Feelings

- » Distribute handouts from Appendix 9 to each parent.
- » For the emotion dice sheet, draw faces or cut out faces from magazines that express the feelings noted on the squares. Once completed, cut along the outer edges. Then, glue or tape the flaps together to form a die. Discuss as a group the different ways we can describe these emotions to our children. When at home, have your children roll the die to talk about the different emotions.
- » Use the “How are you feeling” handout to post at home where your children can easily see these emotions. Explain and review them with your children as needed.

CLOSING:

Affirm good learning points, positive participation, connections as a strong group, and thank the parents for their participation. Provide a schedule for next meetings. Highlight activities for the next week. Seek commitment for attendance at the next meeting. Adjourn Session 6.

Session 7: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER



GETTING STARTED

- » Refer to Guidelines on page 6 for setup details.
- » Welcome the group and explain there will not be an Ice Breaker and Parent Café segments because it is the last session.
- » Review the Group Agreement. Display the agreement where it is easily visible by the group.
- » Reflect on the last session. Ask if anyone used any of the ideas shared last time. Allow participants the opportunity to share insights or experiences they have had since the last meeting.
- » Continue with the Protective Factor Review.

SUPPLIES

- » Flip chart paper
- » Post-It Notes/sheets of paper
- » Markers/pens/pencils
- » Energy Stick
- » Copies of Survey
- » Copies of Evaluation
- » Copies of Certificate

FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS:

- » PARENTAL RESILIENCE
- » SOCIAL CONNECTIONS
- » KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING & CHILD DEVELOPMENT
- » CONCRETE SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED
- » SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF

PROTECTIVE FACTOR REVIEW

Reference chart from Appendix 6 to review each of the five Protective Factors. Ask everyone to reflect on these and then ask the following questions:

- » Which protective factors are you working on the most?
- » Which protective factor do you feel best about practicing?
- » How have all the protective factors worked together to build your parenting skills?
- » How would you parent differently using the protective factors?

Remind parents that all of the protective factors work together. For example, social connections lead to more concrete supports. Concrete supports can lead to more ideas for social connections. Social connections can support the social and emotional development of children. In addition, almost any success in any area builds resilience.



PROTECTIVE FACTOR ACTIVITY: Jeopardy Game with the Five Protective Factors

Prepare before the last session:

- Write the categories and points on index cards as illustrated. If a whiteboard is available at the training site, you may draw them instead before the group arrives.
- Set aside 25 index cards. On one side, write the statement provided below and the point values on the other side. Remember that the easiest statement should be assigned 10 points.

RES	SOC	KNO	CON	SEC
10	10	10	10	10
20	20	20	20	20
30	30	30	30	30
40	40	40	40	40
50	50	50	50	50

- » Divide the group into teams.
- » Explain to the parents they will be given the answer (statements) pertaining to the five protective factors that were covered in the last six sessions. Parents are to answer in question form to receive points. If a parent does not answer in question form, the point value assigned to the statement will be deducted from the overall team's score.
- » The facilitator will keep score for the teams. If it is possible, have a prize for the winning team. Children's books are a great prize.
- » Each parent takes a turn to select a category and a point value.
- » The facilitator will read the statement. If the parent answers correctly, remove the point value from the wall or erase it if drawn on the whiteboard.

Category/Answer: What is Parental Resilience (RES)?

- 10 – One of the traits is coping strategies.
- 20 – Taking care of your health to be there for your children.
- 30 – Knowing when to let go.
- 40 – The ability to recover from difficult life experiences.
- 50 – Having empathy for yourself and others.

Category/Answer: What is Social Connections (SOC)?

- 10 – Reaching out to old friends.
- 20 – Making a coffee date with other parents.
- 30 – People need people.
- 40 – "It takes a village to raise a child."
- 50 – They are church groups, PTA, our neighbor, and so on.

Category/Answer: What is Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development (KNO)?

- 10 – Different potato salad recipes.
- 20 – Learning proper nutrition for your children.
- 30 – There is no such thing as a perfect parent.
- 40 – Learning what to expect as your child grows.
- 50 – Receiving advice on how to parent.

Category/Answer: What are Concrete Supports in Times of Need (CON)?

- 10 – Knowing where to get help in the community.
- 20 – The Food Bank is there should you and your family need assistance.
- 30 – No shame in asking for help when you or your child need it.
- 40 – Engaging in your children’s school to make sure they are receiving the support they need.
- 50 – Some people were taught to be self-sufficient, to not ask for help.

Category/Answer: What is Social-Emotional Competence of Children (SEC)?

- 10 – Helping your children deal with feelings.
- 20 – Teaching your child how to be a good friend.
- 30 – Telling your children it’s okay to express different feelings from their siblings and parents.
- 40 – Modeling kind responses when our children ask us questions.
- 50 – Linking words with feelings so your children get verbally express their emotions without bursting.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES: Survey, Evaluation, & Energy Stick

- » Reference Appendix 10 for the survey, program evaluation, certificate of attendance.
- » Distribute the Protective Factor Survey first along pens/pencils. Explain that this data will be used to show potential benefits of the program.
- » As each person completes and turns in the survey, give him/her the evaluation to do.
- » When everyone has completed the evaluation, gather together in a circle and hold hands.
- » Hold the energy stick on one end and have one of the people beside you hold the other hand. When everyone is holding hands, together you create a chain of human electricity. If someone lets go, the bond is broken.
- » Ask what this activity symbolizes. What’s the importance? Why do this activity?
- » Celebrate each parent as you hand out his/her certificate of attendance.

CLOSING:

**Thank each parent for completing the Strong Parents Alaska Program.
Affirm that they have what it takes to be a strong parent and raise healthy children.
We hope that their participation in the program has helped enhance their protective factors.**