



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES IMPLEMENTATION IN CHILD WELFARE

Over the last fifteen years, the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) has built Strengthening Families into one of the most widely recognized approaches to child abuse and neglect prevention in the country. At its heart, Strengthening Families is about how families are supported to build key protective factors that enable children to thrive.

States and communities are integrating Strengthening Families into at least one of four key sectors: early care and education, child abuse and neglect prevention, home visiting, and child welfare. In each of these fields, Strengthening Families offers:

- An intuitive explanation of what families need to thrive, and what programs can do to support them
- A common framework and a shared set of results for families
- A broad range of concrete, low- and no-cost actions that many types of programs can implement
- Free and easily accessible tools to support implementation at the program, policy and systems levels

How Strengthening Families is used in Child Welfare

States and communities are implementing Strengthening Families in their child welfare systems in many different ways. Key strategies states and communities have used include:

- The Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework are integrated into **training for child welfare workers**.
- The Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework are integrated into **training for foster parents**.
- The Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework are part of the **child welfare practice model**.
- The Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework are integrated into **assessment tools**.
- The Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework are used in **differential or community response** efforts in the child welfare system.
- The Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework are being used in planning for and/or implementation of the **Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)**
- Child welfare systems are **partnering with early care and education (ECE) programs** using the Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework.

The grid on the following page shows which of these strategies states report using in their implementation of Strengthening Families.

Strengthening Families

Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children

Using the Strengthening Families framework, more than 30 states are shifting policy and practice to help programs working with children and families focus on protective factors. States apply the Strengthening Families approach in early childhood, child welfare, child abuse prevention and other child and family serving systems.

For more information, visit www.strengtheningfamilies.net.



Implementation in Child Welfare

State	Last updated	Training for Child Welfare workers	Training for Foster Parents	Child Welfare Practice Model	Assessment Tools	Differential Response	Family First (FFPSA)	Partnerships with ECE
Alabama*	2020	X	X					X
Alaska	2020	X	X	X	X		X	
Arkansas	2020	X				X		
Arizona	2020	X					X	
Colorado*	2020	X						
Georgia	2020			X			X	
Guam	2020	X						
Indiana	2020	X		X	X			
Maine*	2020				X	X	X	
Maryland *	2020	X		X	X			
Missouri	2020		X					
New Hampshire	2020			X			X	
North Carolina	2020	X	X				X	
Pennsylvania *	2020	X						
Utah	2020	X	X	X	X			
West Virginia	2020	X						
Wisconsin*	2020	X	X			X		
TOTAL		13	6	6	5	3	6	1

Based on state reports, last updated January 2021

** Child Welfare System is locally controlled, so implementation varies by jurisdiction*