

# building six protective factors to keep families strong and children safe:

1. Parental Resilience  
Parents need to be strong and flexible in order to deal with the stresses of life.
2. Social Connections  
Parents need friends in their community to help them meet practical and emotional needs.
3. Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development  
Being a great parent is part natural and part learned.
4. Concrete Support in Times of Need  
We all need help sometimes, and families that get help when they need it can stay strong.
5. Social & Emotional Competence of Children  
Parents need to help their children communicate.
6. Healthy Parent-Child Relationships  
It is important that parents give their children the love and respect they need.

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## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES ILLINOIS

### Strengthening Families Illinois

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#### Partners

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (Convener)  
All Our Kids (AOK) Early Childhood Networks  
Caregiver Connections  
Carole Robertson Center for Learning  
Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago  
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services  
Chicago Metro Association for the Education of Young Children  
Chicago Public Schools  
Chicago Safe Start / Chicago Department of Public Health  
Childcare Network of Evanston  
Child Care Resource and Referral Agency at John A. Logan Community College  
Children's Home + Aid  
Community Counseling Centers of Chicago  
Crittenton Centers  
ECHO Family Enrichment Program  
Erikson Institute  
Illinois Action for Children

Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children  
Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health  
Illinois Center for Violence Prevention  
Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition  
Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership  
Illinois Department of Human Services  
Illinois Head Start Association  
Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies  
Illinois State Board of Education  
Illinois Violence Prevention Authority  
Kids Hope United  
McCormick Tribune Foundation  
Midwest Learning Center for Family Support, Family Focus, Inc.  
Ounce of Prevention Fund  
Prevent Child Abuse Illinois  
Rockford Public Schools  
Tom Thumb Community Child Care Center  
University of Illinois Extension  
Voices for Illinois Children



# how we keep families strong

Strengthening Families Illinois (SFI) is a statewide collaboration among more than 40 organizations working to build six Protective Factors to keep families strong. Since being chosen as a pilot state for the national Strengthening Families initiative in 2004, SFI has been building family and community resilience and effective partnerships between parents and the systems that serve them and their children. By promoting a strengths-based, family-centered approach in schools, agencies, and organizations serving children and their families, SFI partners are achieving amazing results:

- Early childhood centers are strengthening their relationships with the families they serve by participating in SFI Learning Networks and committing to embedding the approach in their programs.

- Child welfare agencies are partnering with early childhood programs and using system-wide tools and training to keep all families with young children strong.
- Parents are strengthening their leadership skills and taking a lead role in building Protective Factors in their own families and communities.
- Parents are getting information to keep their families strong through the Love Is Not Enough to Keep Your Family Strong public awareness campaign and building Protective Factors at Love Is Not Enough Parent Cafés.

**“By coming together as providers, we figure out the best way to serve families as a whole.”**

—Heather Bradley, Peoria Strengthening Families Illinois Learning Network

# benefits of partnership

Through SFI, more than 40 organizations are working together to implement a strengths-based, family-centered practice.

**Early education programs are:**

- Improving the quality of their programs by strengthening families in ways that support Head Start, NAEYC, and Title I standards
- Partnering with parents to respond effectively to challenging behaviors in children
- Building the resilience of their communities by developing relationships between parents and staff

**Child welfare agencies are:**

- Protecting children by strengthening and supporting their families
- Using the Protective Factors as a framework for all child welfare services
- Helping parents access resources that keep their children, families, and communities safe and strong

**Parents are:**

- Joining regional and statewide parent leadership teams to strengthen families and communities
- Increasing parent engagement in early childhood education programs
- Helping themselves and each other to strengthen their families by taking part in Love Is Not Enough Parent Cafés

To get involved in any of these activities, visit [www.strengtheningfamiliesillinois.org](http://www.strengtheningfamiliesillinois.org) or call 312/421-5200 x 125.

**“The child welfare system should not be in the child rearing business, we should be in the strengthening families business.”**

—Erwin McEwen, Director, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

# sfi logic model

Program strategies that build the Protective Factors are effective in keeping families strong and children safe:

