

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 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:

