

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SOUTH CAROLINA: STATE PROFILE

Infrastructure

Strengthening Families South Carolina (SFSC) is led by the Children's Trust of South Carolina, which houses Prevent Child Abuse South Carolina, Safe Kids South Carolina and KIDS COUNT South Carolina. Children's Trust strives to strengthen and support public and private prevention efforts that keep South Carolina's children safe.

SFSC partners with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SC DSS), Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) and the Center for Child Care Career Development to train and support a statewide network of prevention trainers. SFSC works with a variety of providers, programs and state agencies to educate on the Protective Factors Framework, including Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) and Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV). All prevention network partners have opportunities to participate in trainings. Partner investments demonstrate the commitment of all these groups to sustaining the work of building strong families for safe children. Children's Trust coordinates training related to Strengthening Families for professionals across the state and across agencies.

Parent Partnerships

SFSC is working to develop parent partnerships by building parent leaders at the local level. All CBCAP grantees are required to bring parent leaders to yearly peer review sessions and to use the Protective Factors Survey with their clients to provide program feedback.

Deepening Knowledge and Understanding

Public and private prevention professionals are offered a variety of training and learning opportunities. In the fall of 2014, SFSC will have the opportunity to bring Strengthening Families Illinois to South Carolina to help train and expand parent cafes in South Carolina. In addition, we will conduct five statewide regional full-day summits around building protective factors in the community.

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.

Nationally, the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) coordinates Strengthening Families and works with more than a dozen national partner organizations to create a new vision in which communities, families, institutions, service systems and organizations:

- Focus on protective and promotive factors
- Recognize and support parents as decision-makers and leaders
- Value the culture and unique assets of each family
- Are mutually responsible for better outcomes for children, youth and families

For more information, visit www.strengtheningfamilies.net.

Implementation Checklist

Protective Factors used in Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems or other early childhood systems planning	✓
Protective Factors used in Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention RFP Process	✓
Protective Factors integrated into state Quality Rating and Improvement System	
Child Care Resource & Referral Network in state supporting program implementation	
Strengthening Families included in State Home Visiting Plan	
Strengthening Families is being implemented into child welfare system	✓

State Coordinator

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Shifting Practice, Policies and Systems

SFSC works to incorporate the Protective Factors Framework across disciplines and into existing early childhood systems and other family support systems around the state. In 2013, Children’s Trust participated in The National Alliance of Children’s Trust Funds’ in-person “training of trainers” in Utah. Children’s Trust staff continues to coordinate training related to Strengthening Families for professionals across the state and across agencies, public and private.

At the systems level, SFSC works to incorporate the Protective Factors Framework and Strengthening Families approach across disciplines and into existing early childhood and other family support systems. Children’s Trust also educates legislators using data on key issues impacting child abuse prevention and safety; develops an array of core competencies and continuum of training/professional development opportunities for the social service sector; and uses Kids Count data to guide communities as they develop systems of support to address their local issues.

Ensuring Accountability

Children’s Trust is currently working to evaluate the quality and fidelity of our current process for training, curricula and implementation of the Parent Café model across our state. We are working with two Doctoral students from the University of North Carolina Charlotte’s *Society for Child and Family Policy and Practice Program* who are helping us develop a tool to evaluate the Parent Café program in South Carolina. In addition to a new evaluation tool, Children’s Trust is doing site monitoring to assess quality and fidelity with the current, trained café facilitators. This process began in late 2013 and will continue to be a fixture in the development and expansion of the Parent Café model for South Carolina.

Evolving Work

SFSC will continue to coordinate training on the protective factors across disciplines and audiences. As described above, additional work on developing parent partnerships is planned. SFSC is also reaching out to the home visiting community to infuse protective factors into the development of core competencies for these

professionals. Additionally, all CBCAP grantee candidates are required to submit all outcomes indicators within the Protective Factors Framework. A closer connection to the annual dissemination of Kids Count data will also ensure more opportunities for prevention messaging on a variety of levels.

Community building is essential and has been the focus for this year’s efforts. Through the Community Café model, Children’s Trust educates legislators, local community stakeholders, professionals and other educators using KIDS COUNT data on key issues impacting child abuse prevention and child safety. Community Cafés are structured around the protective factors and we plan to continue these café opportunities—as well as hosting trainers from Be Strong Families (Chicago, IL)—to train on new curricula for Parent Cafés in 2014. Additionally, in the coming year, Children’s Trust will be integrating the Protective Factors Framework with the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) Essentials for Early Childhood Initiative.

Profile last updated: July 2014