

Supporting Families = Safe Communities

When we start with the common understanding that parents need support so children can thrive, we can work together as a community to raise healthy and well loved children. Communities that offer universal support to all parents create an opportunity to normalize the process of seeking and receiving help. They also engage a higher proportion of those families reluctant to accept interventions for fear of stigmatization.

Isolated families can benefit from help to develop a support system. Parents with a social network often find it less stressful to care for their children and themselves. Most parents need people they can call on once in a while when they need a sympathetic listener, advice, or concrete support. Support systems are friends, family, neighbors, and community and faith-based organizations. These connections help ease the burden of parenting. Conversely, research has shown that parents who are isolated, with few social connections, are at higher risk for child abuse

and neglect. It takes everyone's help to stop the cycle of abuse.

Join our goal to promote a sense of community responsibility for children, families, and neighbors. Supporting families equates to safeguarding our community. Additionally we need to empower community members to reach out and offer assistance when they see a parent or caregiver under stress. All parents need to know they can reach out for help when needed and that help will be provided without penalty.

We know that when parents do well, kids do well. When families are supported, children are less likely to be at risk for child abuse and more likely to grow up happy and healthy. We must all work together to provide children with safe, supportive surroundings, so they may grow and flourish. Together, our community, our families, and our children can thrive.

Support Families

- **Be empathetic, not critical** when you see parents having a hard time.
- **Reach out to parents** and offer to help.
- **Volunteer your time.** Family Resource Centers and youth serving agencies are great places to support.
- **Learn more about child abuse** and the services in your area. Call the Child Abuse Prevention Council at 252-1123 to obtain more information.
- **Wear a blue ribbon** and tell people that it stands for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Supporting Families
EQUALS
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