

FAMILY STRENGTHENING MONTH

2023 TOOLKIT



April is Family Strengthening Month

Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. Please join us in promoting the safety and well-being of Wisconsin children. In April 2022, we began transforming Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month into **Family Strengthening Month**. This toolkit aims to support programs in Wisconsin that will introduce activities to help strengthen families during the month of April and throughout the year.

Children are the foundation of our society, our community, and our future. Children raised in loving and supportive environments are more likely to prosper academically and financially, becoming successful contributing members of society. Wisconsin must be a leader and champion for all of our children. We need to enhance the success of our communities by promoting programs and policies that seek to support the lives of children and families. Research has shown the most effective way to prevent child abuse and neglect is to provide support to families so children can grow up in an environment that fosters their well-being. Preventing child abuse and neglect results in better childhoods.

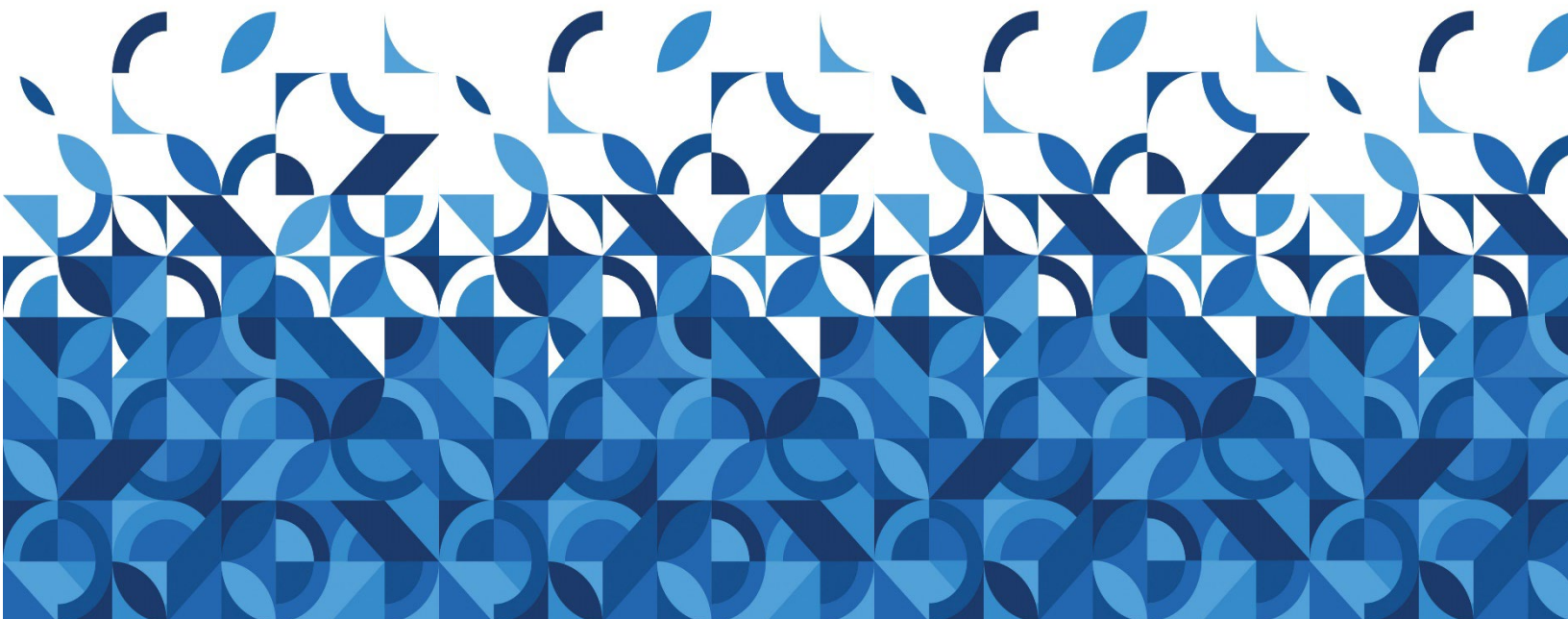


This toolkit provides information to communities, organizations, and individuals on how to promote Family Strengthening efforts in April and throughout the year. Please feel free to use the ideas presented or use the information to develop your own ideas. It doesn't matter how big or small your effort. Prevention is not only about preventing something negative from occurring, but also about promoting something positive happening. Join the WI Family Strengthening Month Committee and other organizations throughout the state that support children and families in our Family Strengthening Month activities.



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Create a Plan for Action!



This toolkit provides ideas for planning a Family Strengthening campaign for the month of April and continuing throughout the year. Developing a strategy early will ensure the best outcomes for your organization. Use these steps to create your action plan:

- Develop a timeline
- Identify the audience(s) you are trying to reach
- Tailor your message to each identified audience
- Choose activities to implement in your community
- Use social media. See pages 7 to 11 for tips.

Check back for more

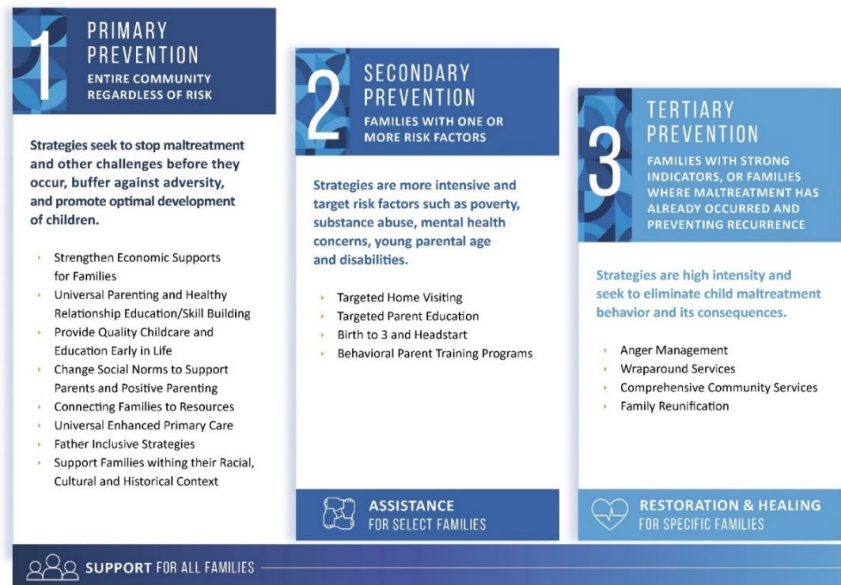
Family strengthening occurs all year-long so check back for new ideas and activities to use throughout the year. See information on page 8: Stay Connected.

Build a community partnership

The power of building community awareness relies on strengths in numbers. Join resources by partnering with other organizations, business leaders, faith-based groups, families, teachers, law enforcement, students, or other adults to implement effective family strengthening strategies that promote safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children and families.

Definitions

Primary Prevention focuses on the general public, addressing root causes and underlying factors to stop child maltreatment prior to occurrence. Primary prevention activities with a universal focus are broadly accessible and seek to benefit all members of a population regardless of risk.



Ideas to Promote Family Strengthening



Public Awareness

- Five for Families is a statewide public awareness campaign developed as a universal prevention strategy by the Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board. The primary goal of the campaign is to increase knowledge of the Protective Factors Framework, an evidence-informed, strengths-based approach to child maltreatment prevention and family well-being promotion created by the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Visit FiveforFamilies.org for more information.
- Get involved with the statewide *CLICK for Babies* Campaign, clickforbabies.org.



CLICK for Babies
Period of **PURPLE** Crying Caps



- Set up a display, here are some examples:
 - Number of children/families who participated in your programs (playgroups, parenting classes, etc.) this past year.
 - Number of children born in your service area during 2022.
- Have children color pinwheel or garden-themed coloring sheets (available at www.preventchildabusewi.org) and display them at your site or in public places such as a bank, library, etc.
- Decorate “Donation Jars” and put them in stores to collect money for a family strengthening program in your area (family resource center, home visitation program, after-school care, day care) or for Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin.
- Decorate your site with flowers or pinwheels. You can purchase pinwheels from Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin at www.preventchildabusewi.org.
- At work, employees give a donation to wear blue jeans on one day. Monies raised would be given to a family strengthening agency.
- Join Children’s Advocacy Network to stay up-to-date on Children’s Wisconsin’s policy work and what they are doing to help children and families. Learn more at <https://childrenswi.org/ways-to-help/advocacy>



Community Involvement

- Ask local businesses to display informational or promotional materials that promote Family Strengthening Month. Host a parent support group in a local church, school, library, or social service agency. Host a family fun event, such as a family story time, craft event, family game, or movie night.
- Work with a local Family Resource Center, Community Center, Family Respite Center or Crisis Nursery to collect items needed by families in your community.
- Involve Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops, church groups, youth groups, school groups, or classes, and other volunteers to distribute pinwheel pictures or pinwheels throughout your community.
- Ask schools, faith organizations, businesses, and others to share messages about strengthening families in their newsletter and bulletins.
- Advocate in local healthcare systems to promote the *Period of PURPLE Crying* or other Abusive Head Trauma Prevention initiatives.



- Connect with your local home visiting services or advocate to start one if none are available in your community.
- Contact local area politicians to advocate for city/county recognition of April Family Strengthening Month.
- Connect with other organizations that have awareness events that align with April Family Strengthening Month messaging.
- Distribute seed packets with information on growing strong families and children.

Trainings



- Arrange to host a *Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work* training to educate professionals who work with children and families on effective strategies to strengthen families and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. To request more information or to schedule a training, please complete the [Training Request Form](#) found on the Prevention Board's website. Arrange a *Triple P* session for parents and caregivers. Triple P is an approach to parenting that helps families gain the skills and confidence to handle life's ups and downs. Contact PreventionBoard@wisconsin.gov to discuss options and to schedule a training.
- Host a Stewards of Children™ training to educate adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. It is the job of adults to protect our children. Find out more at a2awisconsin.org
- Work with area organizations, youth sports leagues, schools, faith communities, and anyone interested in assuring safe environments for kids while participating in programs by arranging for a training on policies and procedures to protect children from child sexual abuse. Find out more at a2awisconsin.org.





Media Tips

Consider the message

We encourage organizations to share the vision that all Wisconsin children and families have the opportunities and support they need to be safe, stable, and connected in their communities. We can often get a better response by sharing stories that illustrate the benefits and impacts of programs. Some ways to promote the importance of building productive and prosperous futures for our children include:

- Educating and engaging community members to focus on family strengthening programs.
- Reminding the community that while being a parent is challenging, there are approaches and resources that provide parents and families with support.
- Highlighting approaches and resources that provide families with support.
- Encouraging community members to help lead, plan, and participate in events so that they have the opportunity to contribute and become invested.

Establish Your Message for Strengthening Families

Build your message to motivate people to action.



- Create a call to action through your social media platforms indicating how individuals, groups, and organizations can participate in family strengthening efforts.
- Share success stories from family strengthening and support efforts both within and outside the community.
- Be clear and consistent in your commitments to support family strengthening programs and efforts.
- State the importance of family strengthening and support in combating child maltreatment.
- Use images to portray a positive and engaged community.



Social Media Tips

Social media is a perfect way to get people excited about your campaign. Use social media to engage communities and organizations not just in April but throughout the year. Start a dialogue and follow the conversations that take place. By monitoring and being actively involved in the discussion about family strengthening you are able to:

- Positively influence how the public perceives family strengthening efforts.
- Share positive responses through retweets, shares, and likes.
- Control the flow of incorrect information by answering questions or responding to misconceptions that people may have.
- Use the hashtags: #FamilyStrengthening and #WearBlueDay2023.
- Follow our social media sites and share posts during April:
 - Facebook: [facebook.com/preventionboard](https://www.facebook.com/preventionboard)
[facebook.com/ChildAbusePrevention](https://www.facebook.com/ChildAbusePrevention)
[facebook.com/OCMHWI/](https://www.facebook.com/OCMHWI/)
[facebook.com/SupportingFamiliesTogether](https://www.facebook.com/SupportingFamiliesTogether)
 - YouTube: [youtube.com/channel/UCtgbPFJU6idWuO4CcX_N4dA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtgbPFJU6idWuO4CcX_N4dA)
 - Twitter: [@WIKidsMH](https://twitter.com/WIKidsMH), [@WisDCF](https://twitter.com/WisDCF)
 - Instagram: [@youthmentalhealthwi](https://www.instagram.com/youthmentalhealthwi)
 - <https://children.wi.gov/Pages/TrainingsVideos/Parenting.aspx>



Note: For safety and security purposes, do not include any personal or private information in public social media posts.

Stay Connected



- Visit our websites:
 - Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin: [preventchildabusewi.org](https://www.preventchildabusewi.org)
 - Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board: [preventionboard.wi.gov](https://www.preventionboard.wi.gov)
 - DHS Resilient Wisconsin: [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](https://www.wisconsin.gov/HealthServices)
 - Supporting Families Together: [supportingfamilies.together.org](https://www.supportingfamilies.together.org)
 - Office of Children's Mental Health: children.wi.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
 - WI Department of Children and Families: [dcf.wisconsin.gov](https://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov)
- Connect to community partners, services, and local stakeholders via social media to promote, share, and collaborate on prevention efforts.
- Learn more about supporting families at:
 - www.fiveforfamilies.org
 - www.preventchildabuse.org
 - Upstream Prevention Brochure: Moving Prevention Upstream
 - <https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/#resources>

 Facebook - Sample Post



We can build healthy, safe, and thriving communities for children if we work together to support children and families. Leave a comment and let us know what you are doing to strengthen families in April. Share with your friends and get them involved too!



Simple actions can make a big difference. Volunteer at a preschool, spruce up a community playground, or provide a family with a ride or a meal. You can offer support to families in your community. Leave us a comment and tell us how you're making an impact during Family Strengthening Month.



This April, Celebrate Your Strengths



April is Family Strengthening Month! Now's the perfect time to celebrate your family's strengths! Research shows there are 5 Strengths that help families weather difficulties and better care for one another. Find tips and ideas for building on your family's strengths at [FiveforFamilies.org](https://www.fiveforfamilies.org).



This April, Talk about Feelings



Teaching children about their own and others' feelings helps them be more successful at school, have stronger friendships, and get along better at home. Why not focus on talking about feelings with your child during Family Strengthening Month? Find new ideas and resources at FiveforFamilies.org.



Get ready for #WearBlue4Kids Day Friday, March 31! Show your support by wearing blue and posting a pic.



Twitter – Sample Post

- We all have a role to play in supporting Wisconsin families. Learn more about what you can do at preventchildabusewi.org.
- Get ready for #WearBlue4Kids Day Friday, March 31! Show your support by wearing blue and posting a pic.
- Learn about family strengths at fiveforfamilies.org.



Instagram - Sample Post



During April we are sharing information and ideas on how to support and strengthen families. Learn more at www.preventchildabusewi.org and www.preventionboard.wi.gov.



April is Family Strengthening Month! Throughout the month, we'll be holding events and working to build healthy, safe, and thriving communities for children. Leave a comment and let us know what you are doing. Share with your friends and get them involved too!



Your child deserves a great childhood. Family Strengthening Month is the perfect time to celebrate strong Wisconsin families and grow your family strengths.

For additional outreach ideas and social media sample posts, please visit the [Children's Bureau's Prevention Month Webpage](#), [Prevent Child Abuse America](#), and [Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board](#).



Family Strengthening Resources

Below are links for resources to use in planning events and/or for families to use. There are specific activities, information on these sites.

- www.fiveforfamilies.org
- [Resilient Wisconsin | Wisconsin Department of Health Services](http://www.wisconsin.gov)
- [Moving Prevention Upstream \(8.5 x 11 Tri-Fold\) \(wisconsin.gov\)](http://www.wisconsin.gov)
- <https://childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/community-partners-professionals/child-abuse-prevention/prevent-child-abuse-wisconsin/resources>
- <https://preventionboard.wi.gov/Pages/OurWork/FFFPreventionMonth.aspx>
- <https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/#resources>
- www.preventchildabusewi.org
- www.preventchildabuse.org
- HOPE [positiveexperience.org](http://www.positiveexperience.org)
- Short video on upstream: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pn2akD5joXM&t=13s>

Note: The focus of Family Strengthening Month is not just to prevent child abuse and neglect but rather to promote optimal child development through strengthening families. However, reporting child abuse and neglect is mandatory and necessary in some situations. In Wisconsin, to report a case of child abuse or neglect, contact the county or tribe where the child or child's family lives. If the agency is not known, contact the closest county. See the Department of Children and Families website for more information: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/reportabuse>.

2023 Wear Blue Day Flyer

April is Family Strengthening Month



Wear BLUE on March 31, 2023 to show your support.

Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. Show your support by promoting and strengthening prevention efforts in Wisconsin.

Take a picture of yourself and your colleagues wearing blue and share it on your favorite social media platform using the **#familystrengthening** hashtag.

[Download the Wear Blue Day Poster](#)



Sample Letters and Press Releases

Print on your agency/organization letterhead

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Town/City/County Name) Residents Support Family Strengthening Efforts by Wearing Blue

(Your agency/organization name) encourages (town, city, county) residents to wear blue on Friday, March 31, 2023, to help promote Family Strengthening Month. We believe that we can build healthier, safer, and thriving communities for our children if we work together to support families and children. When we focus on strengthening families, the results are better childhoods, leading to healthier adults and stronger communities.

Please join us on March 31st by wearing blue to help promote positive childhood experiences in nurturing environments that will provide fertile ground for children’s physical and mental health, learning, and social skills.

To learn more about family strengthening visit:

- (Your agency website)
- Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin: preventchildabusewi.org
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board: preventionboard.wi.gov



Print on your agency/organization letterhead

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Family Strengthening Month

City/State April is Family Strengthening Month. This month and throughout the year, (your agency/organization name) encourages all individuals and organizations to support family strengthening efforts in Wisconsin. Children do well when their parents do well. Research shows that positive childhood experiences in nurturing environments provide fertile ground for children’s physical and mental health, learning, and social skills. We can build healthier, safer, and thriving communities for our children if we work together to collaboratively support children and families. Community members can support one another by:

- Taking time to talk to parents in your neighborhood – get to know them.
- Sharing local resources with families.
- Advocating for legislation and funding which support family programs within your community.
- Donating new or gently used clothing and toys to programs that support families with children.
- Bringing a meal or groceries to a family with young children.
- Organizing a family fun event such as a family story night, game, or movie night.

To learn more about family strengthening and for more ideas how to become involved, visit:

- (Your agency website)
- Five For Families: fiveforefamilies.org
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board: preventionboard.wi.gov

(SAMPLE RELEASE)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROCLAMATION:

Each April, our committee requests a Governor's proclamation to promote Family Strengthening Month. The proclamation builds awareness and highlights the protective factors. As soon as the proclamation is issued, it will be available on our websites. If your community is interested in the language to request a proclamation for your city, please contact preventionboard@wisconsin.gov



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES



CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT
Prevention Board



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

