

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES Quality Standard



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES documents the implementation of *Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education*. Strengthening Families is a framework for child abuse and neglect prevention and for increasing family involvement.

Worksheets needed to complete this section—all found in the Worksheet Section:

1. **QRIS Professional Development**
Summary
2. QRIS Strengthening Families Worksheet: **Family Involvement Activities**
3. QRIS Strengthening Families Worksheet: **Self-Assessment Summary**
4. QRIS Strengthening Families Worksheet: **Strengthening Families Action Plan**

Terms:

- **Strengthening Families trainings:** Series of 8 IdahoSTARS approved trainings. Module 1 is a three-hour Overview of the framework, and modules 2 through 8 are two-hour trainings based on the strategies that child care providers can use for child abuse and neglect prevention and for increasing family involvement. Intermediate and advanced level component 10 trainings are also available. Intermediate trainings are 5 hours and advanced level trainings are web-based and 15 hours. See the IdahoSTARS website training calendar for trainings in your area.
- **Component 10: Strengthening Families Protective Factors:** One of the IdahoSTARS Early Care and Education Core Knowledge Components, focusing on the knowledge and understanding of the five protective factors and seven strategies as defined by *Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education*
- **Written or posted communication:** Any written communication giving parents information about upcoming events, parenting information, etc: Flyers, handouts, newsletters, emails, website, bulletin boards
- **Educational meeting:** Opportunities for parents to learn more about parenting or other topics; seminars, support groups, adult classes (such as literacy, job training, book clubs, computer classes, tax preparation, etc.)
- **Social event:** Social functions for families and staff, such as holiday parties, family play dates, etc.
- **Volunteer activity:** Opportunities for parents to donate their time and/or talents, such as helping in the classroom with meals or parties, helping with child care during parent meetings or conferences, helping with construction or maintenance work, serving on the Board of Directors or being a part of the Parent Work Group
- **Family Orientation procedures:** Written description (preferably in a parent handbook) of the system in place for orienting new families to the policies and procedures in your facility
- **Emergency support:** Community resource lists, offering or helping to arrange services for parents who need them (such as meals, transportation, medical referrals, etc.), creating an emergency fund available to parent in crisis, maintaining an emergency “food pantry” etc.
- **Parent Work Group (Strengthening Families):** Group of parents, administration, and staff of the facility that meets to complete the *Strengthening Families Self-Assessment* and to work on the *Action Plan* that is created as a result. There is a short instructional video on the website that describes the why and how of creating Parent Work Groups.
- **Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Summary:** Compilation of the information gathered at the Parent Work Group formed to complete the *Strengthening Families Self-Assessment*. The *Self-Assessment* can be downloaded from the Center for the Study of Social Policy website www.cssp.org. Click on *Strengthening Families* in the menu on the left, then On-line Resources, then Self-assessment. The *Self-Assessment* is also distributed in sections as handouts at *Strengthening Families* training

- **Strengthening Families Action Plan:** Documents the short term, intermediate, and long range plans generated from the self-assessment used in the Parent Work Group

Directions:

1. Refer to your IdahoSTARS IdahoSTARS Provider Training Log or the **Professional Development Summary** for the total training hours taken in Component 10: *Protective Factors*.
2. Use the *Strengthening Families Worksheet: Family Involvement Activities* on page 37 to document activities for Tiers 1-5. This includes examples of written or posted communications, social events, educational meetings, and volunteer activities. Briefly describe or name each event or communication and indicate how you are documenting it (flyer, newsletter, sign-in sheet, etc). Indicate the number submitted.
3. Three other quality indicators reflect the process of implementing *Strengthening Families* in the facility. The details of how to create a Parent Work Group and *Strengthening Families* Action Plan are learned during *Strengthening Families* trainings, by watching the training video on the IdahoSTARS and Idaho AEYC websites (www.idahoaeyc.org) or by working with a Mentor/Coach. To document work in these indicators, refer to the following chart:

Quality Indicator	Documentation required
<p>Establish Parent Work Group (Tier 3)</p>	<p>Parent Work Group Contact list—List names, role (must include parents, staff, and administrators) and phone numbers of team members on the Work Group. <i>There is no special worksheet for this list in this workbook – just label and submit the list</i></p>
<p>Submit <i>Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Summary</i> (Tier 4)</p>	<p><i>Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Summary</i> is a compilation of the information gathered at the Parent Work Group meetings by working as a group to complete the <i>Strengthening Families Self-Assessment</i> forms. <i>Worksheet in the Worksheet Section</i></p> <p>These forms can be downloaded from the Center for the Study of Social Policy website www.cssp.org Click on <i>Strengthening Families</i> in the menu on the left, then <i>On-line Resources</i>, then <i>Self-Assessment</i> to find the forms. They are also distributed as handouts at <i>Strengthening Families</i> trainings.</p>
<p>Submit <i>Strengthening Families Action Plan</i> (Tier 4)</p>	<p><i>Strengthening Families Action Plan</i> documents the short term, intermediate, and long range plans generated from the self-assessment forms created by the Parent Work Group. <i>Worksheet in the Worksheet Section</i></p>

4. Check off each indicator which accurately describes a practice currently in place in the facility. Only check the indicator if the facility *already* has a written policy and procedure in place. Label and/or attach the policy as documentation.
 - Begin by looking at each indicator in Tier 1. Ask yourself if each statement is true for the facility.
 - If the answer is 'yes', it is true at this time, check the box and gather the supporting materials to submit with the completed application. The materials you need are listed in **red** beneath the indicator.
 - If the answer is 'no', it is not true at this time, leave the box empty.
 - If all indicators in Tier 1 are NOT in place, check the **Not yet at Tier 1** box.
 - If all indicators are all checked in Tier 1, check the Tier 1 box; if all indicators in Tiers 1 & 2 are in place, check off the Tier 2 box, and so on.

5. Transfer the information to the *Strengthening Families* Quality Standard section on the *Application for a Facility Profile*

6. Attach documentation.



WHAT TO SEND IN

- The *Strengthening Families Standard* section of the *Application for a Facility Profile*
- **Professional Development Summary** which records trainings in Component 10
- **Strengthening Families Worksheets:**
 - **Family Involvement Activities** (to document written/posted communication, social events, educational meetings and volunteer activities)
 - **Parent Work Group contact list:** include name and role (admin, staff or parent) and meeting dates
 - **Self Assessment Summary** (to document the completion of the *Self-assessment* by the Work Group)
 - **Action Plan** (to document the Action Plan created by the Parent Work Group)
- Copies of any written policies currently in place.
 - Label each policy with post-it note
 - OR highlight each policy in yellow if submitting a copy of a policy in a parent or policy handbook

Strengthening Families Quality Indicators

Not yet at Tier 1 ☐				
☐ Tier 1	☐ Tier 2	☐ Tier 3	☐ Tier 4	☐ Tier 5
<p>☐ Owner has taken 3 hours training in Component 10, Strengthening Families Protective Factors</p> <p>☐ Written policy and procedures to recognize and respond to signs of child abuse and neglect <i>Label and attach policy as noted in Helpful Hints</i></p> <p>☐ Document 5 examples of written or posted communication <i>QRIS Worksheet: Family Involvement Activities</i></p> <p>☐ Documented Family Orientation procedures <i>Label and attach policy as noted in Helpful Hints</i></p>	<p>☐ Owner has taken 5 hours training in Component 10</p> <p>☐ Document 2 social events, 1 educational meeting, and 1 volunteer activity <i>QRIS Worksheet: Family Involvement Activities</i></p> <p>☐ Posted Community Resource list <i>Attach copy</i></p>	<p>☐ Owner has taken 7 hours training in Component 10</p> <p>☐ Document 3 social events, 2 educational meetings, and 2 volunteer activities <i>QRIS Worksheet: Family Involvement Activities</i></p> <p>☐ Intake form that includes family goals <i>Attach example</i></p> <p>☐ Establish Parent Work Group <i>Contact list</i></p>	<p>☐ Owner has taken 11 hours training in Component 10</p> <p>☐ Document 4 social events, 3 educational meetings, and 3 volunteer activities <i>QRIS Worksheet: Family Involvement Activities</i></p> <p>☐ Record of assistance connecting families with services <i>Referral form with date, type of referral and results</i></p> <p>☐ Submit <i>Strengthening Families self-assessment Summary</i> <i>QRIS Worksheet: Self-Assessment Summary</i></p> <p>☐ Submit <i>Strengthening Families Action Plan</i> <i>QRIS Worksheet: SF Action Plan</i></p>	<p>☐ Owner has taken 15 hours training in Component 10</p> <p>☐ Document 5 social events, 4 educational meetings, and 4 volunteer activities <i>QRIS Worksheet: Family Involvement Activities</i></p> <p>☐ Documented system of emergency support <i>Referral form for emergencies, with date, type of referral and results</i></p>



Helpful Hints for STRENGTHENING FAMILIES Quality Standard

Helpful Q and A:

Q : How do I document “written communication, social events, educational meetings, & volunteer activities?”

A: Use the *Strengthening Families Family Involvement Activities Worksheet* to document this quality indicator. Record each event, and send in copies of flyers, announcements, newsletters, sign-in sheets, meeting notes and pictures of bulletin board displays as documentation.

Q: Why do I need a Parent Work Group? What do they do? How do I establish one?

A: **A video about creating a Parent Work Group is posted with the QRIS information on the IdahoSTARS website.**

The *Strengthening Families* Parent Work Group is responsible for completing a *Strengthening Families* self-assessment of the facility. Parents, administration and staff should be represented on the Work Group. The results of the self-assessment are summarized and a *Strengthening Families Action Plan* is created. The plan outlines your short, intermediate and long-term goals for implementing *Strengthening Families* in the facility.

You can recruit parents through a variety of means—newsletters, emails, information flyers, and especially by personal invitation. Parent Work Groups meet on a regular basis in a comfortable setting to discuss the *Strengthening Families* assessment and make plans for continuous improvement. They are a valuable and effective means of encouraging parents’ participation in their children’s child care setting and set the tone for ongoing parent involvement in their children’s education. Parent involvement is the most important factor leading to school success!

Q: What is the difference between “record of assistance connecting families with services” on Tier 4 and “documented system of emergency support” on Tier 5?

A: *Strengthening Families* is about helping families connect with all kinds of services, such as book clubs, classes, social events, play groups, etc. Although many of these connections can occur in casual conversation, to earn credit for this you must keep a record—a list of referrals you have made either on a list or in each family’s file. A documented system of emergency support is a written record of community resource referrals you have made to help families in emergency situations. Many facilities will have an emergency fund, extra clothing, or a food pantry right on site to help with immediate needs. It is important to have a system in place—to know where to turn for help—even if your families have not yet made any requests for help.

Q: How do I find trainings in *Strengthening Families*?

A: *Strengthening Families* trainings are listed on the IdahoSTARS Training Calendar at www.idahostars.org. *Strengthening Families* trainers are often willing to make arrangements to provide a series of trainings for you and your colleagues at a convenient time and place. (These trainings must also be open the public). Call the IdahoSTARS Training Office via the Idaho Care Line by dialing 2-1-1 or 1-800-926-2588 for more information.