



National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families

The Director's Corner

Greetings,

Spring has sprung! Even if Old Man Winter has been a little slow to leave us! Spring is a wonderful time of year when flowers and new relationships often blossom. New relationships can be exciting, but care should be taken not to move too quickly, especially when children are involved. To support you and the families you serve in navigating new relationships, the Resource Center offers free research-based curriculum:

[Strong Relationships, Strong Families: Module II – Integrating Healthy Relationship Education Skills Into Social Services](#), which introduces seven key aspects of healthy marriages and committed relationships:

1. ***Care for Self: Being Physically and Mentally Healthy.*** Discusses the importance of caring for one's own mental and physical well-being, including the interconnection between self-care and healthy relationships.
2. ***Getting to Know Partners Well.*** Emphasizes that an awareness and understanding of one's partner must be maintained and grown through sustained effort over time.
3. ***Nurturing the Relationship.*** Focuses on devoting time and energy in order to strengthen and grow a relationship.
4. ***Showing Affection and Respect.*** Describes strengths-based processes that can help partners demonstrate care towards each other.
5. ***Developing and Maintaining Friendship.*** Highlights the need for friendship between partners and the importance of continually working to build that friendship.
6. ***Dealing with Differences in Healthy Ways.*** Identifies healthy skills for managing the conflict that is inevitable in a relationship.
7. ***Engaging in a Positive Social Network.*** Stresses the benefits of having a strong support network outside of the relationship.

The curriculum discusses each aspect in relation to underlying skills—such as communication, conflict resolution, parenting, and financial literacy—and their connection with families' self-sufficiency and well-being.

As always, we hope this resource and the others mentioned below will be helpful to you and the families you serve as we all work together to create safe, healthy environments for children.

Best Regards,

Robyn Cenizal, CFLE
Project Director



Tip of the Month

Your monthly tip to strengthen the relationships of those you serve. *Share it - Post it - Pass it on!*

Healthy couples strengthen their relationship over time through an ongoing, balanced process of mutual sharing and responsiveness. Sharing core beliefs, expectations, habits, and goals, as well as applying conflict

resolutions skills to mutually resolve differences in key areas, helps build the intimacy that fosters continuous relationship growth. This principle also applies to parent-child relationships.

In our comprehensive online course, *Integrating Healthy Relationship Education Skills Into Social Services*, "Getting to Know Partners Well" is one of seven chapters. Each chapter includes conversation starters, activities, and informational handouts to help you integrate relationship tips and talking points into your work with families. Here's a sneak peek—two activities from Chapter 2, "Getting to Know Partners Well:"

- [Qualities That Matter In Our Relationship](#)
- [Love Maps – 20 Questions](#)



Featured Resources

The Resource Center's [Virtual Library](#) has collected more than 700 materials in a variety of formats including fact sheets, research-to-practice briefs, brochures, pamphlets, training resources, program reports or evaluations, and research materials.

Select the links below to view our featured April resources:

- [Getting to Know You, Your Co-Spender, and Money](#)
This fact sheet provides an instrument to evaluate communication about money in family. This instrument consists of 25 pairs of statements evaluating couples' personal values of money and a test on knowledge about his/her basic expenses. Couples are required to complete the instrument individually and compare their answers. Couples with large inconsistency in their answers need to make communication about money a priority.
- [Closeness in a Couple Relationship](#)
It is normal for couple relationships to shift back and forth between togetherness and separateness depending on what is happening in the relationship. This fact sheet discusses the challenges that can occur in merging individuals from two families into a cohesive couple relationship and makes suggestions for balancing separateness and togetherness.
- [Eight Needs of Every Partner, Parent, and Child](#)
When individuals, couples, and parents learn how to meet their personal needs consistently, they can better help others and their children learn how to meet their own needs. This tip sheet identifies eight needs that are important to address in order to feel happy, satisfied, and fulfilled, as well as a way to track progress in meeting those needs.
- [9 Important Communication Skills for Every Relationship](#)
Effective communication is critical to successful relationships. This tip sheet describes basic information which focuses on the 4 Don'ts and the 5 Dos of Communication (9 Skills) from John Gottman, one of the nation's leading researchers and practitioners on marriage. It also includes a tracking sheet for implementing the 9 communication skills.



Events

The Resource Center's [Events Calendar](#) offers a listing of Resource Center events and other national, regional, and community-wide events that might be of interest. Upcoming events include:

- **41st Annual Head Start Conference in Long Beach, CA, April 28 - May 2, 2014:** NHSA's annual conference is an opportunity for Head Start and Early Head Start leaders to gather and discuss Early Childhood Education against the backdrop of important national developments. At this important juncture it's more important than ever that we cut through the clutter of misinformation and work through the facts about what is happening, what could happen, and what the NHSA as a community needs to do to ensure the successful and sustainable future of Head Start.
- The Resource Center will be hosting a free webinar, **Making It Work: How Relationship Skills Support Economic Self-Sufficiency** on Tuesday, May 13, 2014, at 2:00 PM EST. This webinar will connect how integrating healthy marriage and relationship education skills can lead to more stable employment for individuals and more productive workplaces for employers. The webinar will highlight the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families' *Promoting Healthy Relationship Skills for Employees: A Guide for Workforce Professionals* toolkit and feature the experience of a well-established direct service provider. Details on how to register coming soon!

Feedback and Technical Assistance:

If you have suggestions or wish to speak with a Resource Center staff member, please [contact us](#) and we will be happy to assist you. If you would like to request Technical Assistance, please submit a [Training and Technical Assistance Request Form](#) and our Technical Assistance Coordinator will contact you.

To learn more about the Resource Center visit us at www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org

The National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families supports safety-net service providers as they integrate healthy marriage and relationship education skills into service delivery systems as part of a comprehensive, culturally appropriate, family-centered approach designed to promote self-sufficiency.

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