



## *National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families*

### **The Director's Corner**

Greetings,

October 2013 will be remembered more for the Federal Government Shutdown than for its pumpkins and autumn leaves. For 15 days, the doors were shut and the majority of the

employees were on furlough. Although the federal employees will receive retroactive pay, they still had to pay bills and buy groceries in the meantime. Additionally, the 15 day shutdown had an economic ripple effect across the country. For example, the restaurants, hotels, and other businesses dependent on National Park visitors will not regain the lost revenue. Ironically, it's also **National Work and Family Month** -a designation intended to bring awareness to the issues impacting working families as they struggle to balance the demands of work with the complex needs of family life.

Financial stress is one issue that undermines relationships at home and productivity at work. It is often said that many Americans live paycheck-to-paycheck and as a result are only two paychecks from homelessness. Without a financial safety-net, missing one monthly rent payment and car payment could spark a financial disaster. Encourage colleagues and clients to use the communication tips below to have an honest conversation about family finances. Financial Analysts suggest an emergency savings equal to three months of expenses. Let's start with a conversation about an emergency fund to cover 15 days.

Best Regards,

Robyn Cenizal, Project Director



### **Tip of the Month**

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

Many of the principles and skills that make for healthy intimate relationships apply equally to workplace relationships. That means we can strengthen our work life, family life, and work-life balance all at once. Check out - and pass along - conflict management tips from the Resource Center's *Strong Relationships, Strong Families* curriculum series:

- **Tip #1: Use soft startups.** To use a soft startup, describe the concern in a neutral, factual manner. Next, describe how the concern makes you feel. Be as specific as possible. Finally, state a positive need (e.g., I'd like to come up with a system for sharing the computer).
- **Tip #2: Use calming techniques.** Unmanaged negative emotions can undermine healthy patterns of communication and can lead to poor relationship quality and individual health. Use self-soothing strategies such as humor, taking a time-out, and deep breathing.
- **Tip #3: Maintain a positive environment.** Couples and colleagues can help prevent and lessen conflict by creating a culture of positivity - one where each person takes time often to notice small tokens of appreciation (and, for couples, of affection toward one another). This helps us to recall the positives, even during conflicts.



### **Featured Resources**

The Resource Center's [Virtual Library](#) has collected more than 500 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 October resources:

- [\*\*\*Social Service Providers Have Families Too: Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education as Personal and Professional Development \(Fact Sheet\)\*\*\*](#)

This fact sheet discusses how safety-net service providers can use healthy marriage and relationship skills to improve their own relationships, work performance, and ability to serve their clients.

- **Coming soon! *Promoting Healthy Relationship Skills for Employees: A Guide for Workplace Professionals***

Keep an eye out for a new toolkit from the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families that makes the case for family-friendly workplace practices and policies that can strengthen working families and relationships. This toolkit highlights promising practices by leading American companies from various industries that recognize the importance of investing in the health and well-being of their employees. More information coming soon!



## 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:

- [\*\*National Indian Education Association \(NIEA\) 2013 Convention in Rapid City, SD, October 30-November 2, 2013\*\*](#): This event addresses the need to keep children on the path to becoming future leaders and preservers of cultures by developing the solutions and leveraging existing resources. The Resource Center will be exhibiting at the National Indian Education Association 2013 Convention in Rapid City, SD.
- [\*\*National Council on Family Relations \(NCFR\) 2013 Annual Conference in San Antonio, TX, November 6-9, 2013\*\*](#): The NCFR hosts researchers, practitioners and program evaluators, policy makers, community members, etc. to examine the well-being of child and adolescent family members. The multidimensional concept of well-being is associated with individual characteristics, family and social contexts, political and historical contexts, and their interactions. The conference should empower and inform participants to take the next steps to better understand and enhance the well-being of children and adolescents, and, in turn, their families and communities. The Resource Center will be exhibiting at this event.

## 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.healthy marriageandfamilies.org](http://www.healthy marriageandfamilies.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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