



NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER *for*  
HEALTHY MARRIAGE *and* FAMILIES



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## Supporting Parents and Strengthening Families of Children with Disabilities

### A Note from the Director

Greetings,

Parenting is often challenging. Parenting a child with disabilities can be overwhelming. In addition to meeting the day-to-day needs of a child, parents also have to learn to be advocates for their child; navigating complicated health and educational systems to ensure their child receives the necessary services and supports.

Unfortunately, many parents do not know what services and supports are available or how to access them. This lack of knowledge can compound family and parental stress. Healthy relationship skills like communication and conflict management can be critical skills for parents navigating these additional stressors.

December 3rd was the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and in observance of this day, people around the world aim to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development.

As service providers, we can be helpful to these families by identifying and sharing information regarding resources available to support them and their family. It's also important for us to provide emotional support and encouragement. I hope the tips and resources below will be helpful to you and the families you serve as we work together to strengthen families.

Best Regards,

*Robyn Cenizal*

Robyn Cenizal, CFLE  
Project Director

## Tip of the Month

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

One of the best ways that we can serve persons with disabilities is to help strengthen and support their families! The following organizations offer tips and ideas on how to support families of children with disabilities:

- [The Arc](#) - the largest national community-based organization advocating for and serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The Arc encompasses all ages and more than 100 different diagnoses including autism, Down syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, and various other developmental disabilities.
- [Support for Families of Children with Disabilities \(SFCD\)](#) - is a parent-run San Francisco-based nonprofit organization founded in 1982. SFCD supports families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need as they face challenges.

• [The Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund \(DREDF\)](#) - is a leading national civil rights law and policy center directed by individuals with disabilities and parents who have children with disabilities.

Becoming familiar with these resources can allow you to better serve families of children with disabilities and provide them with additional resources that can help them strengthen their families!

## Featured Resources

The Resource Center's **Virtual Library** has collected more than 3,000 materials in a variety of formats including fact sheets, research-to-practice briefs, brochures, pamphlets, training resources, program reports or evaluations, and research materials.

- **Making the Move to High School**

This tip sheet is meant to increase awareness of the complex challenges faced by homeless individuals, couples, and families, as well as to offer tips for safety-net service providers who are working to help them achieve self-sufficiency.

- **Core Healthy Marriage and Relationship Skills: Parenting.**

Parenting is one of four courses in the Core Healthy Marriage and Relationship Skills series in our Virtual Training Center. This series uses an "inside-out" approach: First, the course will help you better understand healthy parenting at a personal level; then it will equip you to educate the families you serve.

- **Integrating Healthy Relationship Education: A Course for Stakeholders**

[The National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families](#) is excited to announce the launch of its revised online course Integrating Healthy Relationship Education: A Course for Stakeholders. Designed to complement the in-person Integration Institute offered by the Resource Center, the online course educates attendees on the benefits of healthy relationships and costs of unhealthy relationships; shares research about how healthy marriage and relationship education (HMRE) can improve family outcomes; and guides users in developing specific strategies for integrating HMRE into their service delivery. For more information about the course or how to share with your clients, contact us at [info@healthymarriageandfamilies.org](mailto:info@healthymarriageandfamilies.org).

## 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:

- **Black Maternal Health Conference and Training Institute, December 7- 9, 2018 Atlanta, GA.**

The Conference and Training Institute meets a national need for a forum dedicated to Black Maternal Health and Black people working to improve our outcomes. To date, discussions about Black Maternal Health have been carved into existing reproductive, maternal, and public health conferences where there is little space for meaningful dialogue and limited framing on health equity and reproductive justice.

- **Executive function and Self-Regulation through a Family Lens, January 24, 2019 9:30 am-11:00 am, New York, NY**

Executive Function and self-regulation are important skills for success in school and in life. Join the Ackerman Institute for the Family as they discuss strategies to identify child and parent executive function strengths and weaknesses and how they impact parenting practices, child development and family life. In this interactive workshop, we will share strategies to develop working memory, goal setting, planning skills, stress tolerance and self-control.

## Feedback and Technical Assistance

To learn more about the Resource Center, visit us at [www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org](http://www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org).

The National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families supports human 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.

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. To learn more about free training and technical assistance available to human service agencies, visit our [Training and Technical Assistance page](#).

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