

The Protective Factors Framework: Social Connections Checklist

We know that families thrive when the five **Protective Factors** have a strong presence in their lives and communities. As early childhood professionals, it is important that we do our part to promote the Protective Factors and encourage families to create safe and emotionally stable homes.

The **Social Connections** supports the idea that having strong and social connections is associated with more responsive parenting, increased well-being, and lower levels of depression, anxiety, and anger. When parents feel connected to their family, peers, or community, they feel a sense of security and comfort, which benefits their family, career, physical health, and overall mental well-being.



Social Connections

You can help parents think about their social circles and how they might utilize their social connections for emotional, informational, spiritual, and instrumental support. You can also help parents acquire the skills and tools they need to expand their social circles. Use this checklist to help guide you as you support parents making social connections.

If you do these, you are doing the work:



1

Help families value, build, sustain, and use social connections



2

Create an inclusive environment



3

Facilitate mutual support around parenting and other issues



4

Promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities

What this may look like in practice:



Families

- Engaging in activities that promote supporting play.
- Participating in classes or workshops.
- Attending fun family events.



ECE Providers

- Creating opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's day in your care.
- Recognizing signs of child abuse and neglect and taking appropriate actions to get the child and family help or support.



Community Members

- Creating opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's day in your care.
- Recognizing signs of child abuse and neglect and take appropriate actions to get the child and family help or support.