

## SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR ARKANSAS FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS



# strengthening families™

A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

Adapted from the Center for the Study of Social Policy

### PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION BEFORE COMPLETING THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

When children grow and learn in loving and caring environments, they can do better in school and be more prepared for the future. Yet even the best parents need help to give their children the greatest chance at success. Family child care providers play an important role in protecting and caring for young children and in promoting children's social and emotional development. Family child care providers are in a unique position to help parents help their children grow and develop in a positive and healthy manner. Family child care providers who reach out to parents also help decrease the chances of child abuse and neglect in families.

### THE STRENGTHENING FAMILIES APPROACH

The Center for the Study of Social Policy conducted extensive research that resulted in shifting the focus about child abuse and neglect prevention to strengthening families as a way of reaching families before child abuse or neglect occurs.

The resulting Strengthening Families™ approach is based on the identification of five protective factors. When these factors are present and robust in a family, they strengthen families, promote optimal child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

### THE FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS

#### **Parental Resilience**

Resilience is the ability to manage and bounce back from the challenges that emerge in every family's life. Resilience means finding ways to solve problems, building and sustaining trusting relationships (including relationships with your own child) and knowing how to seek help when necessary.

#### **Social Connections**

Parents who have social connections have people in their lives who care about them and their children; who can be good listeners; who they can turn to for well-informed advice, hope and encouragement; and who they can call on for help in solving problems.

#### **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**

Knowledge of parenting and child development helps parents understand what to expect at different stages of child development. This knowledge also helps parents develop effective parenting skills and methods for finding help with specific developmental or behavioral problems.

#### **Concrete Support in Times of Need**

Concrete support in times of need means that parents have access to formal and informal services and resources in times of family crisis.

#### **Social and Emotional Competence of Children**

In order to strengthen the social and emotional competence of children, parents should work with children to help them learn to interact positively with others, communicate their emotions and feel good about themselves.

### THE STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

The Strengthening Families Self-Assessment for Family Child Care Providers is written for family child care providers who want to work better with and support the parents of the children they serve. The Self-Assessment is organized around the five protective factors listed above. Two additional sections address Strengthening Families in Special Circumstances: [Responding to Possible Child Abuse or Neglect](#) and [Supporting a Child's Transitions to School or Other Programs](#).

This version of the Self-Assessment for family child care providers has been tiered to facilitate its use with states' Quality Ratings and Improvement Systems. Items are divided into three tiers that represent different levels of depth of implementation: Baseline (i.e., items that any family child care provider should be able to implement in their day-to-day interactions), Mid-level (i.e., items that reflect a more intentional focus on supporting and engaging parents) and High (i.e., items that reflect a high level of focus on parent engagement and support—note these may be most appropriate or easiest to achieve for family child care settings that are themselves receiving systemic support).



**COMPLETING THE SELF-ASSESSMENT**

The Self-Assessment takes 20-30 minutes to complete.

All of the statements in the Self-Assessment describe different ways that providers can work to build the protective factors through everyday actions. Respond to each statement by checking one of the following responses:

“I Do This”

“I Do Not Do This”

“Not Relevant for Me”

After you complete the Self-Assessment you may choose (or your state’s Quality Rating and Improvement System may require you) to complete an Action Plan based on what you found. Your action plan should include areas where you are already doing well and want to keep your practice strong, as well as areas where you would like to improve. Go through and review the items you do not currently do, and pick some that you would like to work on as part of your action plan.



## Arkansas Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Tool for Family Child Care

### PARENTAL RESILIENCE

Being a parent can be a very rewarding and joyful experience, but being a parent can also have its share of stress. Parental resilience is the process of calling forth one’s inner strength to proactively manage stress, meet personal challenges and function effectively as a parent—for example, providing nurturing and supportive care to one’s child—when faced with challenges, adversity or trauma. Programs can provide a variety of experiences and resources for families that help build and support parental resilience, all with low or no cost to the program. Programs should:

- Demonstrate in multiple ways that parents are valued
- Honor each family’s language, culture, history and approach to parenting
- Encourage parents to manage stress effectively
- Support parents as decision-makers and help build parents’ decision-making and leadership skills
- Help parents understand how to buffer their child during stressful times

These everyday actions, supported by program policies and integrated into the normal patterns of work, work together to help families reduce personal stress as well as parental stress and to gain confidence in their capabilities to meet the challenges they face.

### PARENTAL RESILIENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS

How do family child care providers demonstrate that parents are valued?

						Comments
1.1 Be kind and friendly with each parent and with other members of the child’s family.	Tier 1	No Sub-Items.				
1.2 Make all family members feel welcome.	Tier 2	1.2.1 Include images, artwork, books and/or materials throughout the physical space that reflect the diversity of parents and families in the program community.				
		1.2.2 Have a place in your home where parents can sit comfortably and talk with you.				
	Tier 3	1.2.3 Welcome parents to visit at any time.				
1.3 Show appreciation to families for participating in the program.	Tier 1 only	No Sub-Items.				

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*



**PARENTAL RESILIENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers demonstrate that parents are valued?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
<b>1.4</b> Support non-custodial parents' participation in their children's lives, as appropriate and allowed under custody agreements, by:	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	<b>1.4.1</b> Including them in mailings and updates about their child's progress.				
		<b>1.4.2</b> Inviting them to activities and responding to requests for information, when possible and within the bounds of custody agreements.				
		<b>1.4.3</b> Being aware of barriers that limit involvement, such as a difficult relationship with the custodial parent, or lack of information.				
<b>1.5</b> Participate in educational/training opportunities about ways to engage parents in the program:	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>1.6</b> Show that all parents are valued and their unique needs are understood by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>1.6.1</b> Encouraging all family members who are in parenting roles to feel comfortable and get involved.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>1.6.2</b> Taking part in periodic training on the needs of fathers, mothers, and other adults and family members who are in parenting roles.				
		<b>1.6.3</b> Establishing ongoing partnerships with community resources that provide services specifically to fathers, mothers, and/or other parenting adults.				
		<b>1.6.4</b> Taking time to understand when individual parents have complex needs, such as having children with different partners, joint custody arrangements, etc.				
<b>1.7</b> Interact daily with each child's parent; for example, tell parents about the child's day, email photos and/or share a daily activity log.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>1.8</b> Get to know all of the parents in the program individually by: listening to them; showing respect for their points of view; and providing encouragement and support in a non-judgmental way.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>1.9</b> Keep information about children and families confidential.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**PARENTAL RESILIENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers honor each family's unique background and approach to parenting?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
1.10 Make an effort to honor parents' special requests for their children, such as providing vegetarian meals.	Tier 1 only	No Sub-Items.				
1.11 Encourage parents to share skills, talents and cultural traditions with children and other parents in the program.	Tier 1 only	No Sub-Items.				
1.12 Talk with parents to learn about their family expectations, parenting practices and approaches to family decision-making.	Tier 2 only	No Sub-Items.				
1.13 Ensure that all families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic status, cultural background, abilities, or preferred language are included in all aspects of the program.	Tier 2 only	1.13.1 Ask about family interests, beliefs and expectations, including those relating to the child's culture and language development, and partner with families in incorporating those features into program activities and structure.				
		1.13.2 When appropriate, engage grandparents, elders and extended family members in discussions on parenting and the transmission of cultural beliefs.				
		1.13.3 Display diverse families and family structures in books, posters and program materials.				
1.14 Support participating migrant worker families by:	Tier 3 only	1.14.1 Understanding their unique challenges and offering to help them in a respectful manner.				
		1.14.2 Maintaining up-to-date information on supports and services most relevant to migrant worker families.				



**PARENTAL RESILIENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers encourage parents to manage stress effectively?**

						Comments		
1.15 Encourage parents to participate in stress-relieving activities such as:	Tier 1 only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free community events and trips to the library or neighborhood parks</li> <li>Adult activities such as date nights (parents' night out), Moms' or Dads' night out, exercise classes, etc.</li> <li>Healthy everyday choices, such as getting enough exercise or sleep</li> </ul>						
			1.16 Provide regular opportunities for parents to relieve stress through:	Tier 3 only	1.16.1 Linking parents to support groups.			
					1.16.2 Creating space for parents to gather, talk and participate in informal activities.			
		1.16.3 Providing occasional child care outside of regular hours so parents can take a "night out."						

**PARENTAL RESILIENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers support parents as decision-makers and help build decision-making and leadership skills?**

						Comments
1.17 Encourage parents to give their input into decisions about the program.	Tier 1	No Sub-Items.				
1.18 Talk with parents about:	Tier 1	1.18.1 Their interests, skills, needs and goals for themselves and their children.				
		1.18.2 Opportunities in the family child care program that may help them achieve their goals and/or use their skills and talents.				
1.19 Encourage parents to attend child development, parenting and self-improvement conferences, workshops and trainings, and to share the knowledge they gain there with others.	Tier 1	No Sub-Items.				



**PARENTAL RESILIENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers support parents as decision-makers and help build decision-making and leadership skills?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

					Comments
<b>1.20</b> Reinforce parental authority by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>1.20.1</b> Supporting parents' directions and/or decisions about their children.			
		<b>1.20.2</b> Talking respectfully and positively with parents about differences in expectations regarding children's behavior and development.			
		<b>1.20.3</b> Being careful not to contradict parents in front of their children.			
		<b>1.20.4</b> Using constructive, respectful and non-shaming language when discussing child-related issues with parents.			
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>1.20.5</b> Learning about parents' expectations and limits for their children.			
		<b>1.20.6</b> Understanding the parenting and child behavior norms of parents' cultures.			
		<b>1.20.7</b> Working cooperatively with families on shared child caregiving issues, including routine separations, activities, developmental milestones, special needs, meals/snacks and daily care issues.			
<b>1.21</b> Develop plans with each family that:	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>1.21.1</b> Identify the family's assets, interests, skills, needs and goals for themselves and their children.			
		<b>1.21.2</b> Identify resources, websites, other parents and community opportunities that may be helpful.			



**PARENTAL RESILIENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers help parents understand how to buffer their child during stressful times?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
1.22 Participate in training on how to talk with parents about helping children in times of family crisis.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
1.23 Provide parents with information on dealing with stress and trauma including:	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning how stress impacts the child's brain, behavior and development</li> <li>• Recognizing signs of stress in children</li> <li>• Knowing how stress may impact the child's behavior and how to shape adult responses to the child's behavior accordingly</li> <li>• Understanding the important role that parents and caring adults play in buffering children during stressful times</li> </ul>				
1.24 Talk with parents about observations or concerns about a child who is experiencing stress. Discuss how to respond appropriately and follow up to evaluate how the child is doing.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				





**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS**

People need people. Parents need people who care about them and their children; who can be good listeners; who they can turn to for well-informed advice, hope and encouragement; and who they can call on for help in solving problems. Parents’ constructive and supportive social connections—that is, high quality relationships with family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, community members and service providers—help buffer parents from stressors and support nurturing parenting behaviors that promote secure attachments in young children. Programs can provide opportunities and experiences for parents to create and strengthen positive social connections. Programs should:

- Help families value, build, sustain and use social connections
- Create an inclusive environment
- Facilitate mutual support
- Promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities

**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers help families value, build, sustain and use social connections?



						Comments
2.1 Introduce parents to each other.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.2 Provide a welcoming space for parents to talk informally with each other.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.3 Allow time for parents to interact with each other and the provider at pick-up and drop-off times.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.4 Offer treats like coffee or muffins at drop-off or pick-up time.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.5 Help parents find ways to communicate with each other, such as having a family directory.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers help families value, build, sustain and use social connections?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
<b>2.6</b> Plan ways for parents to come together, meet new people and enjoy a sense of community, such as:	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	<b>2.6.1</b> Periodic events like special breakfasts, potlucks and family fun nights.				
		<b>2.6.2</b> Celebrations, graduations and other child-centered programs.				
		<b>2.6.3</b> Field trips and other outings with parents as chaperones.				
		<b>2.6.4</b> Events for parents to share and learn about each other's home life and cultural backgrounds.				
		<b>2.6.5</b> Fun and affordable family activities, such as going bowling or to a museum.				
		<b>2.6.6</b> Special programs for fathers, mothers and other adults in parenting roles.				
		<b>2.6.7</b> Meet and greet gatherings for new and old families.				
<b>2.7</b> Reach out to isolated parents by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	No Sub-Items.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>2.7.1</b> Making special efforts to connect them with other parents.				
		<b>2.7.2</b> Calling, visiting their home or sending notes.				
		<b>2.7.3</b> Personally inviting them to social activities.				
<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>2.7.4</b> Helping arrange transportation or child care so they can participate in social activities.					
<b>2.8</b> Make special efforts to include or connect parents whose language, culture, appearance, ability and other differences might set them apart from other parents in the group.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers create an inclusive environment?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

				Comments		
<b>2.9</b> Model friendly behavior for parents and children by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>2.9.1</b> Warmly greeting parents and children at drop-off or pick-up.				
		<b>2.9.2</b> Having children greet families upon arrival (saying "good morning") & departure (saying "bye-bye").				
		<b>2.9.3</b> Including all children and families in program events.				
		<b>2.9.4</b> Encouraging parents to invite all children in the family child care home to their child's celebrations.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>2.9.5</b> Helping to resolve issues among parents that affect the program.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>2.9.6</b> Promoting understanding of different cultures and backgrounds among families.				
<b>2.10</b> Encourage parents to reach out and engage other families (including newcomers and more isolated parents) in the family child care home.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>2.11</b> Create opportunities for parents to get to know all the children in the group.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>2.12</b> Participate in training on how to help families and children resolve conflicts effectively.	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers facilitate mutual support?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
2.13 Connect parents who have same-age children, similar interests and similar circumstances (e.g., parents who speak the same language).	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.14 Encourage parents to share parenting information with each other.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.15 Encourage parents to set up mutual support mechanisms (e.g., phone trees, car pools, babysitting co-ops, play groups).	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.16 Make information available on outside activities for parents to attend together—for example, playgrounds, gatherings, fun fairs or library reading hours.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
2.17 Encourage and support parent-organized social/educational events and activities, such as potlucks and parties.	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
<b>2.18</b> Maintain a bulletin board with information on events and resources in the community.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>2.19</b> Participate in community improvement or advocacy projects with families who are in the program.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>2.20</b> Reach out to neighbors, local community members and organizations to build good relations and access resources for program enrichment.	<b>Tier 2 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>2.21</b> Share information with parents about local opportunities that promote family enrichment (e.g., reading hours at the library, parent-child book groups, cultural heritage events).	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

No parent knows everything about children. Mounting scientific evidence points to the critical importance of early childhood as the period in which the foundation for cognitive, language, social, emotional and moral development is established. All parents can benefit from increasing their knowledge of parenting best practices and child development—including early brain development—in order to understand what to expect and how to provide what children need during each developmental phase. Programs can help parents increase their knowledge of parenting and child development. Programs should:

- Model developmentally appropriate interactions with children
- Provide information and resources on parenting and child development
- Encourage parents to observe, ask questions, explore parenting issues and try out new strategies
- Address parenting issues from a strength-based perspective

Family Child Care providers offer parents a high level of expertise about child development and parenting. The trick is providing the information and experience in multiple ways, at the time that parents really need it and will put it into practice.

**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers model developmentally appropriate interactions with children?



						Comments
3.1 Have a strong understanding of child development.	Tier 1	No Sub-Items.				
	Tier 2	3.1.1 Respond in a developmentally appropriate way to children's behaviors, interests, temperaments and need for exploration and learning.				
		3.1.2 Explain to parents how family child care activities support their child's development and how parents can use similar activities at home.				
		3.1.3 Participate in regular trainings to stay up-to-date on advances in the understanding child development.				
	Tier 3	3.1.4 Participate in training on the role and influence of culture on child development.				



**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers model developmentally appropriate interactions with children?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

							Comments
3.2 Discuss parenting and child development issues in a non-judgmental way.	Tier 1	3.2.1 Emphasize the importance of positive messaging to support children's healthy development.					
	Tier 2	3.2.2 Encourage parents to discuss behavior challenges they may have at home.					
	Tier 3	3.2.3 Recognize different parental and cultural approaches to discipline.					
3.3 Talk with parents about your child guidance practices:	Tier 1	3.3.1 Explain why physical punishment (i.e., spanking or hitting) is not allowed by anyone in the family child care home, including parents and family members.					
		3.3.2 Explain why verbal punishment (i.e., yelling and name calling) is not allowed by anyone in the family child care home, including parents and family members.					
	Tier 2	3.3.3 Explain the child guidance techniques you model.					
		3.3.4 Encourage parents to discuss guidance challenges they may have at home.					
	Tier 3	No Sub-Items.					
3.4 Model warm and responsive interactions with children.	Tier 1 Only	No Sub-Items.					



**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers provide information and resources on parenting and child development?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
<b>3.5</b> Share information on parenting, child health, learning and safety by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>3.5.1</b> Discussing parenting and child development issues whenever a parent asks for information or it appears that a parent needs support.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>3.5.2</b> Encouraging parents with similar concerns to come together and share ideas and information.				
		<b>3.5.3</b> Providing information through bulletin boards, newsletters or take home materials.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>3.5.4</b> Making books/brochures/ handouts/websites available in a parent resource library.				
<b>3.6</b> Help parents identify and respond to developmental concerns by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>3.6.1</b> Talking with parents as soon as child health, behavior or developmental issues are suspected or identified.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>3.6.2</b> Giving parents information about the purpose and value of developmental screening and how the results can be used.				
		<b>3.6.3</b> Encouraging parents to seek developmental screening for their children from pediatricians or other trained professional.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>3.6.4</b> Using appropriate assessment tools together with parents to regularly monitor children's development.				
<b>3.7</b> Provide information about child development, including:	<b>Tier 1</b>	No Sub-Items.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>3.7.1</b> Age-appropriate expectations for the child's behavior.				
		<b>3.7.2</b> Recognizing and reinforcing desired/appropriate behavior.				
		<b>3.7.3</b> Alternate ways to respond to undesirable/inappropriate behavior.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>3.7.4</b> Ways parents can encourage children to express their feelings appropriately and practice positive social skills at home.				





**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers provide information and resources on parenting and child development?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
<b>3.8</b> Use parenting information and materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, and:	<b>Tier 1</b>	No Sub-Items.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>3.8.1</b> Reflect diverse backgrounds and family structures.				
		<b>3.8.2</b> Encourage parents to share and discuss their own parenting history and culture.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>3.8.3</b> Are available in the language spoken by program families.				
<b>3.9</b> Interact with parents in a way that is responsive to the needs of parents in different circumstances. For example:	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different parenting styles of mothers and fathers and the strengths of each</li> <li>• Needs and concerns of first-time parents</li> <li>• Needs of parents who are parenting a child with a disability</li> <li>• Noncustodial parents</li> <li>• Nontraditional caregivers (e.g., grandparents, foster parents)</li> </ul>				

**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers encourage parents to observe, ask questions, explore parenting issues and try out new strategies?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
<b>3.10</b> Provide opportunities for parents to learn about each other's cultural approaches to parenting practices.	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>3.11</b> Encourage parents to observe their children as they interact with you and other children in the program.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do programs provide information and resources on parenting and child development?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

					Comments
<b>3.12</b> Host parent-led discussions to explore:	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	<b>3.12.1</b> Expectations and practices about parenting.			
		<b>3.12.2</b> Different parenting practices.			
		<b>3.12.3</b> Parent/child relationships.			
		<b>3.12.4</b> How to interact effectively with their children (e.g., listening; appreciating ideas, efforts and feelings; creating a non-threatening environment).			
<b>3.13</b> Recognize and support the parenting challenges of parents of children with special needs by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	No Sub-Items.			
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>3.13.1</b> Checking in regularly with parents about parenting issues.			
		<b>3.13.2</b> Being sensitive to parents' frustration, protectiveness, guilt, loss and other related feelings, and acknowledging the challenges families may be experiencing.			
		<b>3.13.3</b> Being especially supportive at the time that special needs are initially identified.			
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>3.13.4</b> Supporting parents in understanding appropriate developmental expectations for their children with special-needs.			
		<b>3.13.5</b> Checking in with parents about the impact their children's special needs may have on family dynamics and parental stress.			
<b>3.13.6</b> Connecting parents with materials, websites, support groups, play groups and community resources specific to their children's special needs.					



**KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers address parenting issues from a strengths-based perspective?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

				Comments		
3.14 If concerned about a parent's parenting skills:	Tier 1	3.14.1 Reach out to the parent in a respectful way and share concerns.				
		3.14.2 Acknowledge that children's behavior can be frustrating and acknowledge the parent's efforts to manage their child's behavior.				
		3.14.3 Acknowledge the positive things the parent does.				
	Tier 2	3.14.4 Offer to connect the parent to other parents who can share or model positive parenting approaches.				
	Tier 3	3.14.5 Connect the parent to resources and supports that may help to address the parenting issues.				
3.15 Take regular opportunities to talk with parents and share your experience of:	Tier 1	3.15.1 Their children's unique assets, temperaments, personalities, communication styles and behavioral cues.				
		3.15.2 Their children's independence and abilities.				
	Tier 2	3.15.3 Their children's growth and development patterns.				
		3.15.4 Positive social skills and developmentally appropriate emotional behavior in their children.				
	Tier 3	3.15.5 Potential differences between home cultures and the expectations of the program and how to manage these differences.				
		3.15.6 Activities families can use at home to foster development.				
		3.15.7 Signals that development may not be on track.				
3.16 Use regular interactions with parents (e.g., pick-up, drop-off) to:	Tier 1	3.16.1 Share something positive with parents about what their children have done each day, written or verbally.				
	Tier 2	3.16.2 Notice and acknowledge when parents are attuned to their children's needs or communicating effectively with their children.				
		3.16.3 Model positive discipline.				
	Tier 3	No Sub-Items.				



**CONCRETE SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED**

All parents need help sometimes. When parents are faced with very challenging situations, such as losing a job or not being able to feed their family, they need access to resources and services that address their needs and help to minimize the stress caused by adversity. This type of support helps to ensure that parents and their family receive the basic necessities everyone deserves in order to grow, as well as specialized medical, mental health, social, educational or legal services. Programs can help parents to identify, find and receive concrete support in times of need. Programs should:

- Respond immediately when families are in crisis
- Provide information and connections to services in the community
- Help families to develop the skills and tools to identify their needs and connect to supports

Even though Family Child Care programs are not often equipped to provide all the services and support families may need, they can play a vital role in helping families get what they need in times of crisis—and in helping families develop their own strategies for meeting needs in the future.

**CONCRETE SUPPORTS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers respond immediately when families are in crisis?

						Comments
4.1 Let parents know that they can turn to you in times of crisis by:	Tier 1 only	4.1.1 Listening, showing concern and/or sharing some of your own personal challenges or desires, if appropriate.				
		4.1.2 Making it clear to families that if they are ever going through a difficult time, they can come to you for support.				
4.2 Reach out to families proactively and supportively when common signs of stress occur. Some common signs of stress include:	Tier 1 only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents' discussing stress or problems</li> <li>• Unusual parental behavior</li> <li>• Repeated unexplained absences</li> <li>• Repeated tardiness or late pick-ups</li> <li>• Missed payments</li> <li>• Divorce, separation, military deployment, family dissolution, job loss or other family crises</li> <li>• Changes in a child's behavior: acting out, distress, challenging behavior, fearful behavior, inappropriate language/behavior (such as sexual acting out), signs of abuse or neglect (such as bruises)</li> </ul>				





**CONCRETE SUPPORTS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers respond immediately when families are in crisis?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
4.3 Respond proactively to signs of parent or family distress by:	Tier 1	4.3.1 Expressing your concern and offering help.				
		4.3.2 Making yourself available to the parent if they need to talk.				
	Tier 2	4.3.3 When appropriate, and in respect of families' privacy, mobilizing other parents in the program to help a family when a crisis occurs.				
	Tier 3	4.3.4 Helping families make immediate and long-term plans.				
		4.3.5 Offering to connect the family to needed resources, including parent help lines or other parents who have experienced a similar crisis.				
4.4 Participate in training opportunities about ways to respond to families in crisis that cover topics such as:	Tier 1	4.4.1 Maintaining confidentiality.				
	Tier 3	4.4.2 Talking to families about difficult issues.				
		4.4.3 Recognizing problems such as domestic violence, depression, developmental delays, mental illness, chronic health problems, substance abuse and other signs of imminent crisis.				
		4.4.4 Helping families access help.				
4.5 Seek support when working with families under stress through:	Tier 3 only	4.5.1 Processing own emotional reactions with appropriate support from friends, family or others.				
		4.5.2 Taking time to engage in activities that help relieve stress.				
		4.5.3 Seeking a mental health support if needed.				



## Arkansas Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Tool for Family Child Care

### CONCRETE SUPPORTS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS

How do family child care providers provide information and connections to services in the community?

						Comments	
<p><b>4.6</b> Encourage parents to share information about community resources, such as toy exchanges, resale shops, play lots, family activities and more formal services.</p>	Tier 2	No Sub-Items.					
		Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food pantries</li> <li>• Domestic violence services</li> <li>• Shelters</li> <li>• Respite care for children</li> <li>• Alcohol and substance abuse services</li> <li>• Mental health services</li> <li>• Economic supports</li> <li>• Legal assistance</li> </ul>				
<p><b>4.7</b> Share up-to-date information about resources and services that are available in the community.</p>	Tier 2	No Sub-Items.					

### CONCRETE SUPPORTS: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS

How do family child care providers help families to develop skills they need to identify their needs and connect to supports?

						Comments
<p><b>4.9</b> Support a culture of help seeking by:</p>	Tier 1	<p><b>4.9.1</b> Communicating that seeking help is not a weakness or failure as a parent, but is a step toward building resilience.</p>				
		<p><b>4.9.2</b> Encouraging parents to advocate for themselves and their child.</p>				
	Tier 2	<p><b>4.9.3</b> Helping families gain knowledge about their rights in accessing services, relevant services available to them and how to navigate through service systems.</p>				
<p><b>4.10</b> If there is a need to make referrals to outside services:</p>	Tier 1	<p><b>4.10.1</b> Brainstorm with parents about what resources would be helpful.</p>				
	Tier 3	<p><b>4.10.2</b> Troubleshoot with parents when families have trouble accessing services.</p>				
		<p><b>4.10.3</b> Coach parents as they fill out initial paperwork required to access these services (e.g., insurance and eligibility forms).</p>				



**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN**

Early childhood experiences set the stage for later health, well-being and learning. A growing body of research has shown the relationship between young children’s social and emotional competence and their cognitive development, language skills, mental health and school success. The development of social and emotional competence—that is, characteristics such as self-regulation, self-confidence and social skills—depends on the quality of nurturing care, communication and stimulation that a child experiences. Programs can help to promote the social and emotional competence of children.

Programs should:

- Help parents foster their child’s social emotional development
- Model nurturing care to children
- Include children’s social and emotional development activities in programming
- Help children develop a positive cultural identity and interact in a diverse society
- Respond proactively when social or emotional development needs extra support

Family Child Care providers are often trained on the importance of social and emotional development for young children and how to provide the right experiences for children in the classroom. They can also play a significant role in helping parents facilitate and enjoy their children’s growing competence in this area.

**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers help parents foster their child’s social emotional development?**



						Comments
<b>5.1</b> Help parents understand their child’s social and emotional development by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>5.1.1</b> Inviting families to observe their children interacting with others and talking with them about what they saw.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>5.1.2</b> Talking with parents about the meaning and importance of social and emotional development.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>5.1.3</b> Giving parents opportunities to discuss social and emotional issues in a cultural context.				
		<b>5.1.4</b> Giving parents ideas about how to promote their children’s social and emotional learning at home.				
<b>5.2</b> Provide opportunities to strengthen bonds between parents and their children (e.g., playing together in cooperative games or make believe, cooking, doing an art project together).	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers model nurturing care to children?

*I do this*

*I do not do this*

*Not relevant for me*

					Comments
<b>5.3</b> Nurture children and model nurturing for parents by:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>5.3.1</b> Responding consistently to children in a warm, supportive manner.			
		<b>5.3.2</b> Showing warmth through appropriate physical contact.			
		<b>5.3.3</b> Encouraging children to express their feelings through words, artwork and expressive play.			
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>5.3.4</b> Modeling mutual respect between children and adults (e.g., listening attentively, treating children fairly).			
		<b>5.3.5</b> Responding sympathetically to help children who are upset, hurt or angry.			
		<b>5.3.6</b> Modeling empathy and appropriate emotional responsiveness.			
<b>Tier 3</b>	No Sub-Items.				





**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers model nurturing care to children?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

					Comments	
<b>5.4</b> Build your capacity to nurture social emotional development. Get training on how to:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>5.4.1</b> Support children's social and emotional development in the context of their culture and language.				
		<b>5.4.2</b> Recognize behavioral/emotional problems or developmental delays.				
		<b>5.4.3</b> Recognize the role of sensory awareness and integration in social emotional development and how to promote it.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>5.4.4</b> Understand the impact of loss or trauma on children and how to respond appropriately.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>5.4.5</b> Understand gender differences in child rearing and the impact on social and emotional development.				
		<b>5.4.6</b> Promote positive relationships among children living in the same household.				
		<b>5.4.7</b> Understand how mental health and wellness affect family relationships and young children's developmental processes.				
		<b>5.4.8</b> Recognize and respond to the impact of child or parental trauma on parent-child relationships.				



**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers include children’s social and emotional development activities in programming?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

				Comments		
<b>5.5</b> Help children to name their feelings and problem solve using words.	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>5.5.1</b> Model how to express emotions appropriately, problem solve with words and treat others with respect and kindness.				
		<b>5.5.2</b> Encourage and reinforce social skills such as sharing, taking turns and cooperative play.				
		<b>5.5.3</b> Set clear expectations and limits for behavior.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>5.5.4</b> Actively involve children in solving their conflicts and problems (e.g., help children talk out problems and think of solutions; sensitize children to the feelings of others).				
		<b>5.5.5</b> Help children separate emotions from actions (e.g., not reacting by hitting even when angry).				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>5.5.6</b> Recognize children's feelings, name them and use teaching aids like books and puppets to help children understand feelings.				
<b>5.6</b> Encourage children to observe and listen to the feelings of others.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers help children develop a positive cultural identity and learn to interact in a diverse society?

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
5.7 Encourage children to respect differences in others.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	5.7.1 Expose children to role models from their own and other backgrounds through books, toys and other materials.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	5.7.2 Help children to notice and celebrate differences in each other.				
		5.7.3 Deal with conflict, bullying and teasing around differences immediately and proactively.				
5.8 Participate in training on:	<b>Tier 1</b>	No Sub-Items.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	No Sub-Items.				
	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	5.8.2 How the sense of identity is fostered as an individual and/or as part of a family or clan.				
		5.8.3 The extent to which nonverbal communication is predominant across cultures.				
		5.8.4 Diverse views of indicators of success and appropriate child development.				
5.9 Use children's home language for multiple learning purposes.	<b>Tier 3 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers respond proactively when social or emotional development needs extra support?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

				Comments		
<b>5.10</b> If concerned about a child's social and emotional development:	Tier 1	<b>5.10.1</b> Reach out to the parent in a respectful way and share concerns about the child's social and emotional development.				
		<b>5.10.2</b> Share tools with the parent (e.g., the Ages and Stages Questionnaire) to guide the parent in his/her own observations and understandings of the child's development.				
	Tier 2	<b>5.10.3</b> Help the parent problem solve about how to address the issue at home.				
		<b>5.10.4</b> Offer to connect the parent to other parents who can share and model positive parenting approaches.				
	Tier 3	<b>5.10.5</b> Arrange for appropriate screening and assessment.				
		<b>5.10.6</b> Connect the parent to resources that can support the child's social and emotional development, such as play therapy and mental health services.				

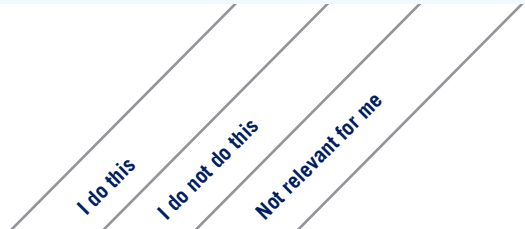


**RESPONDING TO POSSIBLE CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

One responsibility of Family Child Care providers is to respond to possible child abuse and neglect when it is observed. Family Child Care providers are mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect and should attend training on the state requirements for reporting. However, long before a report needs to be made, providers can also respond to early signs that have the potential to lead to maltreatment. The following items reflect best practices for providers in working effectively with child welfare officials.

**RESPONDING TO POSSIBLE CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT: SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers respond to possible child abuse or neglect?



						Comments
6.1 Be alert to possible signs of abuse or neglect such as:	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative patterns or changes in how parents treat and talk with their children</li> <li>Negative patterns or changes in a child's behavior around their parents or other adults</li> <li>Unexplained or repeated bruises, cuts or physical injuries</li> <li>Sudden fearfulness or emotional changes in children</li> <li>Signs that a child's needs are not being met (hunger, fatigue, physical or emotional health)</li> <li>Sexual or sexualized knowledge or behavior not appropriate for the child's age</li> </ul>				
6.2 When concerned about the possibility of abuse or neglect, collect as much information as possible:	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	6.2.1 Ask questions of the child to try to learn about their life.				
		6.2.2 Ask questions of the parent to try to learn about their parenting and other factors that may affect the child.				
		6.2.3 Be especially observant when parent and child are together.				
6.3 Understand your status and responsibilities as mandated reporter.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
6.4 Write out a plan regarding how you will report child abuse and neglect when necessary.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
6.5 Know how cases are generally handled by Child Protective Services once a report is made.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				



**RESPONDING TO POSSIBLE CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**How do family child care providers respond to possible child abuse or neglect?**

*I do this*  
*I do not do this*  
*Not relevant for me*

						Comments
<b>6.6</b> Inform all parents—verbally and in writing—about your mandated reporter status and your procedure for handling suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.	<b>Tier 1 only</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>6.7</b> If a Child Protective Services report needs to be made:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>6.7.1</b> Notify parents that a report is being made, if possible.				
		<b>6.7.2</b> Explain your status as a mandated reporter.				
		<b>6.7.3</b> Try to be caring and supportive to parents during the reporting process.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>6.7.4</b> Explain the reporting process to the family and tell them what they can expect in terms of a response from the agency.				
	<b>Tier 3</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>6.8</b> If a report does not need to be made or if the report ends up unsubstantiated, respond to the family's stress by helping them find suitable respite care, emergency crisis services, home visiting or educational supports.	<b>Tier 3</b>	No Sub-Items.				
<b>6.9</b> Participate in training opportunities about:	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>6.9.1</b> Mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect.				
	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>6.9.2</b> Child abuse and neglect prevention.				

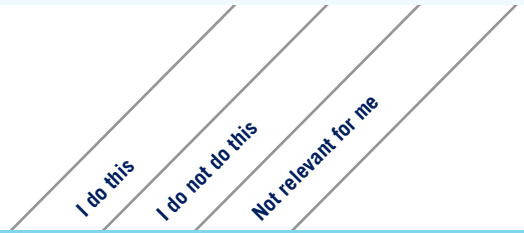


**SUPPORTING A CHILD’S TRANSITIONS TO SCHOOL OR OTHER PROGRAMS**

Increasing evidence points to the need for Family Child Care providers to address children’s transitions more effectively. Transitions are part of every child’s life, and effectively navigating them can be a growth experience that sets the stage for success in the next phase of the child’s development. Children and their parents can be assisted significantly by excellent transition practices in the early childhood program.

**SUPPORTING A CHILD’S TRANSITIONS TO SCHOOL OR OTHER PROGRAMS:  
SELF-ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

How do family child care providers support children’s transitions?



						Comments
7.1 Support families during a child’s transition to new programs or to kindergarten by:	Tier 1	7.1.1 Helping families understand parents’ and children’s educational rights and responsibilities.				
	Tier 2	7.1.2 Helping families recognize how to choose high quality early childhood settings and services, including special education services.				
	Tier 3	7.1.3 Helping families understand what to expect from the new program or the kindergarten experience.				
		7.1.4 Providing basic general information on enrollment procedures and practices, visiting opportunities and program options.				
7.2 Help children prepare for transitions through activities such as: reading books that deal with transition; introducing them to children who just made the transition; celebrating the transition; creating space for children to talk about fears.	Tier 1 only	No Sub-Items.				
7.3 Encourage parents to be involved and take leadership roles to support their children’s education and development over the long term.	Tier 2 only	No Sub-Items.				
7.4 Encourage parents to be involved and take leadership roles to support their children’s education and development over the long term.	Tier 3 only	No Sub-Items.				