### Strengthening Families™

**Strategies Year-in-Review SFY 2014-15**

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**The 5 Protective Factors**

1. **Parental Resilience**
2. **Social Connections**
3. **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**
4. **Concrete Support in Times of Need**
5. **Social and Emotional Competence of Children**

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**Introduction**

**Throughout** SFY 2014-15, Strategies continued work on embedding the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework into Strategies’ child abuse and neglect prevention projects and services. The overall goal remained provision of tools and guidance to community-based organizations, agencies, networks, and county-wide initiatives to enhance child abuse and neglect prevention efforts. During the year, Strategies provided training, technical assistance, capacity-building grants, coaching, and community outreach to achieve this goal.

**Training**

Strategies provided training opportunities to a wide variety of organizations and networks throughout California, advertising standard and customized training sessions via the Strategies website, catalog, flyers, listservs, and email notifications. In addition, organizations contacted Strategies for custom-built training and targeted training was embedded into technical assistance and capacity-building grant projects to enhance Strengthening Families implementation into practice. Strategies conducted forty-one (41) Strengthening Families training sessions for one thousand five hundred nineteen (1,519) participants from forty-nine (49) counties and three hundred forty-eight (348) unique organizations. Training sessions included Strategies’ *Strengthening Families: An Introduction to the Protective Factors* and *The Protective Factors: A Deeper Look* series, which considers each of the 5 Protective Factors in more depth. Two webinars, *YouthThrive* and *Building Partnerships*. 
for Family Economic Success highlighted ways to implement protective and promotive factors. Examples of Strategies’ SFY 2014-15 customized training sessions are as follows:

- Stanislaus County Child Abuse Prevention Council and Stanislaus County Community Services Agency participated in a Protective Factors Train-the-Trainer Project with the objective of increasing the County’s capacity for ongoing implementation of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework.

- The Partnership for Safe Families & Communities of Ventura County participated in four (4) custom-built training sessions in the areas of Social and Emotional Competence of Children, Concrete Support in Times of Need, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, and Social Connections.


- The South County office of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services partnered with Strategies to develop a ‘Faith-Based Family Strengthening Network.’ The network is a collaboration of the faith community, the City of Long Beach, and other community-based organizations in the South Bay area of Los Angeles County. Strategies provided training to create community programs and implement services to prevent child maltreatment. Five (5) participating churches will each develop and implement one program aligned with the Strengthening Families Framework.

- The Glenn County Health and Human Services Agency participated in a made-to-order version of Strengthening Families: An Introduction to the Protective Factors with the goal to embed protective and promotive factors in programs and services.
Crosswalk and Curriculum Development

Strategies developed ‘crosswalks,’ which are documents that map the elements in one framework or schema to show a relationship to activities in a different framework. Organizations may use crosswalk documents to define activities related to specific protective and promotive factors and assist implementation of Strengthening Families. Crosswalks can provide guidance regarding program implementation, assist with identifying professional development needs, and enhance service provision.

During SFY 2014-15, Strategies completed two original crosswalk documents. The first is a crosswalk between maternal mental health support best practices and protective and promotive factors that mitigate the effects of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. The other document, a crosswalk between the Strengthening Families Framework and substance abuse risk and protective factors by domain was completed and vetted by family resource center partners in Mendo docino County who are working on a county-wide approach to substance abuse prevention.

To improve training content and delivery, Strategies enhances current curricula and develops new curricula annually using research, customer feedback, evaluation, and collaborative curriculum development teams. During the year, Strategies accomplished the following training development:

- A statewide team of Strategies staff researched, developed, wrote, and piloted three (3) training sessions The Protective Factors: A Deeper Look training sessions including: Concrete Support in Times of Need, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, and Parental Resilience.
• A six-week *WeThrive* curriculum series, based on the Strengthening Families YouthThrive curriculum, was developed for La Habra Family Resource Center to enhance parents’ communication skills when talking with their teenagers about health and raising community awareness about protective and promotive factors.

• Family Support Network of Orange County and Orange County Social Services Agency Health Care Services partnered with Strategies to develop a parenting curriculum to include the effects of trauma on families.

### Technical Assistance

Strategies provides technical assistance to increase the effectiveness of services and practice for child abuse and neglect prevention. One method of achieving this goal is embedding the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework in the work of agencies and networks and fostering active implementation processes. Strategies supported fifteen (15) technical assistance projects in fourteen (14) California counties in SFY 2014-15, including the following project highlight:

• The Mono County Child Abuse Prevention Council implemented the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework in Mono County. Strategies facilitated a community convening to review the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework, created a plan for using the Framework in a collective impact approach, and introduced protective factors mapping.

• Strategies provided technical support and conference presentations for three hundred (300) participants attending the multi-partner *Strengthening Families Conference* held at Long Beach City College. The conference featured a range of topics including: identifying child abuse and neglect and its impact, building the social and emotional competence of children, enhancing father engagement, and preventing child maltreatment.

• The Northern San Joaquin Valley Family Resource Center Network, representing San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, and Mariposa counties, embarked on a multifaceted effort
encompassing three (3) projects. The first project supported a regional environmental scan to identify family, community, and regional issues for families and organizations in the northern San Joaquin Valley region. The second project formulated an operational definition of the network, including examination and definition of key activities and structures, such as shared leadership, shared frameworks, and evaluation of common data. The third project supported clarification of ‘lessons learned’ by identifying and reporting limitations of the evaluation, new opportunities, and recommendations for improvement for the Northern San Joaquin Valley Family Resource Center Network.

• The Stanislaus County Child Abuse Prevention Council and Stanislaus County Community Services Agency worked to embed the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework as a countywide prevention strategy. The project objective was to map implementing the protective factors, as well as provide train-the-trainer sessions to increase the county’s capacity for ongoing implementation.

• The Partnership for Safe Families & Communities of Ventura County (Ventura County’s designated Child Abuse Prevention Council) requested technical assistance to provide support by developing and facilitating curriculum around Social and Emotional Development of Children, Concrete Support in Times of Need, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, Social Connections, and trauma-informed care.
• CASA of Mendocino and Lake Counties participated in technical assistance to improve recognition of, response to, and prevention of chronic child neglect.

• Community Partnership for Families of San Joaquin participated in technical assistance to ensure integration of the Principles of Family Support Practice, the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework, and other best practices in service delivery by staff position.

• Tehama County First 5 and the Tehama County Early Intervention Partnership requested technical assistance to create a countywide initiative to integrate the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework, which has now become Strengthening Families Tehama.

• The Shasta County Child Abuse Prevention Council and Valley Oak Children’s Services Parent Café in Butte County participated in a protective and promotive factors-focused Peer Review Process to improve services. Using the Social Connections section of the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Tool for Community-Based Programs, each agency identified strengths and challenges, provided one another with ideas for making program improvements, and created action plans to continue doing at least three things well and to make improvements in at least three areas.

• The family resource centers of Imperial County participated in a project to build capacity for partner agencies to strengthen families by promoting and implementing a standard of quality for services. Strategies developed processes for providing integrated services through multi-disciplinary regional teams and family strengthening teams.

• The South County office of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and a network of faith-based organizations participated in technical assistance through a project entitled, The Faith-Based Family Strengthening and
Prevention Project. The objective was to increase awareness and knowledge of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework and to educate others in the community.

- Tree of Hope in Los Angeles County embarked on a project to research the development of a family resource center in an underserved neighborhood that will incorporate the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. A comprehensive action plan was developed with strategic steps to open a family resource center.

- The San Diego Family Strengthening Network, a county-wide network with members representing over sixty (60) family strengthening programs, worked with Strategies to strengthen and build network membership, enhance the capacity of the network’s leadership team, improve participation of current membership, and move the network toward more prominent status in the community.

**Capacity-Building Grants (CBG)**

Strategies offered grant funding up to $3,000 and technical assistance to promote implementation of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework.

SFY 2014-15 highlights are noted below:

- San Luis Obispo County Child Abuse Prevention Council received a CBG to develop a shared measurement system designed to share and standardize an evaluation measurement system across all individual agencies within the CAPC partnership.

- Santa Barbara Child Abuse Listening Mediation (CALM) received a CBG to provide training about the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework as it relates to trauma and early childhood mental health. The training supported mental health professionals in providing classroom observations and recommendations on implementation practice and strategies specific for early childhood educators.
• First 5 Santa Clara County received a CBG to map current programs and services to assist in **aligning program outcome measures** to the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. A ‘cross-walk’ was developed to integrate the protective factors with the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support.

• Nan Tolbert Nurturing Center in Ventura County received a CBG to provide support in enhancing services to **underserved teen parents through community collaboration**. The project provided technical assistance to develop, organize, and facilitate a community collaborative that mapped services currently offered to teen parents, plan for additional programming and services, and develop a plan to market and outreach to underserved teen parents.

• Plumas Rural Services’ Community Connections received a CBG to assist with developing a comprehensive evaluation plan for their time bank, specifically to see how time bank membership and access increases social connections in the rural community.

• Omni Youth Services, Inc. of Sacramento County received a CBG to **develop and disseminate prevention videos** for teens and parents related to violence and drug/alcohol use prevention using the Strengthening Families Protective Factors and YouthThrive Frameworks. Strategies assisted with beta-testing, script development, and social media approaches for the project.

• The Children’s Network of Solano County received a CBG focusing on improving the effectiveness of family resource center staff facing complex issues, including dealing with trauma and its effects. Strategies developed, customized, and conducted a self-care skills implementation process to apply to daily practice.

• The Sutter County Children and Families Commission received a CBG to build the capacity of its grantees to integrate the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework into programs and services. Strategies built a project that included professional development and elements of integration customized for Sutter County through a strategic plan to integrate Strengthening Families into various elements of policy and practice.
The Family Support Network of Orange County and Orange County Social Services Agency Health Care Services received a CBG to promote knowledge of parenting and child development, and provide support to mothers with open dependency cases. In collaboration with Health Care Services, a parenting curriculum was developed to include the effects of trauma on families and support parents, as they develop positive parenting skills.

Grandma’s House of Hope of Orange County received a CBG to create a developmentally appropriate play area for infants and toddlers living in their homeless shelter. Infants and toddlers now use a safe play area containing toys and games aiding in mental and physical development and the environment supports parents in developing parenting skills and positive parent/child interaction skills.

The Mom and Dad Project of San Bernardino County received a CBG to facilitate ‘Boot Camp for New Dads’ and ‘Hit the Ground Crawling’ classes to provide fathers with positive parenting practices protecting against abuse and neglect. Classes engaged new dads positively in the life of their children and created an organizational culture inclusive of all fathers.

SAY San Diego Network received a CBG that convened four (4) meetings with key community stakeholders to align its Healthy Start projects with the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support and implement them throughout all five of their family resource centers.

California Strengthening Families Roundtable Learning Community

The vision of the California Strengthening Families Roundtable Learning Community is ‘Strong, supported children, families, and communities.’ The mission of the Roundtable is, ‘Support the infusion of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework into practices and systems for children, families and communities in California.’

During SFY 2014-15, Roundtable activities were restructured with each of its affiliated work groups, Communication, Policy, and Data and Evaluation, tasked with planning the presentation and agenda for one (1) of three (3) Roundtable Learning Community events.

Highlights from three (3) SFY 2014-15 Strengthening Families Roundtable Learning Communities are as follows:

The November 6, 2014 Roundtable Learning Community provided updates and trends from the October 2014 Center for The Study of Social Policy’s Strengthening Families
Leadership Summit. Disseminated tools, topics, and documents included:

- New Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework Logic Model;
- New versions of Strengthening Families Program Self-Assessments;
- Using the new assessments to help organizations evaluate Strengthening Families implementation;
- Action planning approaches using the assessments; and,
- A follow-up presentation about Wenger’s theory of situated learning and how the theory takes learning beyond the individual. Participants examined the Wenger Communities of Practice Model in more detail, including insights from the June 2014 Roundtable and how the Wenger Model can be applied to participants’ Strengthening Families implementation work.

- The April 29, 2015 Roundtable presentation was, “A Deeper Look at Strengthening Families Implementation from a Policy Perspective.” Rebecca J. Gillam, PhD, LMSW, Assistant Director of the University of Kansas’ Center for Public Partnerships and Research took participants on a journey through the development of the Center for Public Partnership and Research and how they have effected policy implementation and used collaboration to implement the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework.

- The June 4, 2015 Roundtable provided topical information sharing about “How the Strengthening Families Framework has been Shared, Marketed, and Communicated to Various Groups in an Effort to Achieve Successful Implementation.” Shasta County presented about how agencies are collaborating to implement the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework including, challenges and insights on collaboration, integration, and implementation. Strategies presented a crosswalk developed to illustrate the connections among maternal mental health support and the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. Information was shared with participants about ways agencies are raising awareness of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework in their communities, throughout California, and nationally.
Map of Strengthening Families (SF) Technical Assistance (TA) and Training Fiscal Year 14-15

For additional information, please visit http://strengtheningfamiliescalifornia.org