

Key Components of Strong Family Functioning



Strong families:

- Celebrate successes and learn from failures
- Maintain clearly defined roles
- Are responsive to the changing needs, challenges, and issues that arise across a family's life cycle

The tenth component is specific to strong military families and involves high levels of *military readiness* that sustains families through deployment, relocation, and other unique challenges.

Implications of Strong Family Functioning



Understand the uniqueness of each family

- ❖ Develop an understanding of the heterogeneity of families related to factors such as culture and geographic location.
- ❖ Design programs and policies that allow for family differences and allow professionals to leverage families' unique strengths and address potential obstacles that may impede change.



Utilize formal and informal networks

- ❖ Ensure families have a support network available. Informal network support is valuable to the behavior change process, because they help families engage in and maintain change.
- ❖ Professionals are encouraged to provide clear pathways for accessing formal network supports by minimizing organizational or agency obstacles.

Recommendations

- Engage in a planning process about the current state of the families you work with and the relevant programs, practices, and policies that impact them.
- Implement a planning process that identifies strengths and opportunities for development within the family's particular environment.
- Use a variety of assessments, protocols, and resource allocations to help families accomplish their goals and objectives.

For additional information, please contact:

Lynne M. Borden, Ph.D.
Department of Family Social Science
The University of Minnesota
lborden@umn.edu
(612) 625-4227



Developed in collaboration with the Department of Defense's Office of Family Policy, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture under Award No. 2009-48667-05833

