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What Can Families (and Other Adults) Do to Maximize Youth Well-Being

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What Can Families (and Other Adults) Do to Maximize Youth Well-Being



Event Materials

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This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Military Family Readiness Policy, U.S. Department of Defense under Award Number 2019-48770-30366.

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Today's Presenters



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Description & Learning Objectives

This webinar will focus on what adults inside and outside adolescents' families can do to promote their well-being, especially during transitions.

After attending this webinar, attendees will be able to:

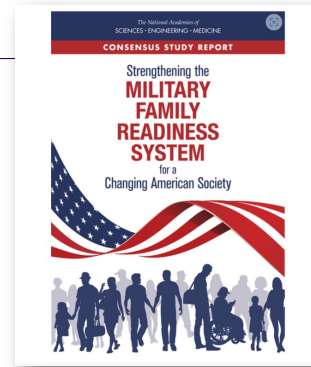
1. Describe aspects of family life that are most important for youth well-being.
2. Understand things that adults can do to support youth well-being.
3. Identify prevention and intervention strategies that promote youth well-being

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Sources

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAEM). (2019). *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25380>.



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Photo source: Adobe Stock | UCLA Focus

Families OverComing Under Stress (FOCUS)

<https://focusproject.org>

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FAMILIES TACKLING TOUGH TIMES TOGETHER

Welcome to Families Tackling Tough Times Together, an initiative of Purdue University's College of Health and Human Sciences (HHS). This program supports families as they deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Guided by scientific evidence about family resilience, the "pop-up" program is being developed by HHS along with contributing partners from Purdue and beyond, with the aim of helping families strengthen their resilience while they cope with the crisis. All materials are carefully vetted and include engaging and fun activities that fit easily into daily life. Families with children, youth, young adults and older adults will find materials tailored for them. Additional features include podcasts with experts, live events and community engagement activities. All are welcome; we especially welcome military families.

purdue.edu/hhs/families-together/

Photo source: Adobe Stock | UCLA Focus

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Family-Strengthening Goals to Promote Family Resilience and Well-Being

1. Maintain a physically safe and structured environment
2. Engage required resources
3. Develop and share knowledge within and outside of the family
4. Build a positive, emotionally safe, and warm family environment
5. Master and model important interpersonal skills
6. Maintain a vision of hope and future optimism for the family
7. Utilize competent and authoritative parenting
8. Incorporate trauma-informed approaches to care
9. Promote security among adults and children
10. Highlight the unique development needs of family members



Photo source: Canva | UCLA Focus

NASEM, 2019, page 223.

SOURCE: Compiled by the Committee on the Well-Being of Military Families. Source for Goal #5 is Dausch and Salzman (2009); Gewirtz et al. (2018b); Source for Goal #8 is Salzman et al. (2011)

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Key Processes in Family Resilience (Walsh, 2016)

Making Meaning of Adversity

- Relational view of resilience
- Normalize, contextualize distress
- Gain sense of coherence
- Facilitative Appraisal; active agency

2. Positive Outlook

- Hope, optimistic bias; confidence
- Encouragement; affirm strengths, potential
- Active initiative; perseverance (can-do spirit)
- Master the possible; accept what cannot be changed

3. Transcendence and Spirituality

- Larger values, purpose
- Spirituality: Faith, practices, congregation; nature
- Inspiration: Aspirations; creativity; social action
- Transformation: learning, change, positive growth

Walsh, 2015, pp. 39-97. 11

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Photo source: UCLA Adobe Stock

Highlight the unique developmental needs of family members, helping parents and other engaged adults in the family recognize and respond to their family members' needs effectively at each developmental stage.

NASEM, 2019. page 223.

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Highlight Unique Developmental Needs: Adolescent Development

PHYSICAL	COGNITIVE	SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outward physical changes • Growth and Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More self-conscious • Compares self to others • Explores values, beliefs and theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops emotional self-efficacy • Shifts away from family • Shoulders more responsibility

Context!

Common Event Highlights for Teens!

Striving to face and overcome potential obstacles!

NASEM, 2019, page 223.

Photo source: iStock | UCLA Focus 13

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Adolescent Development



Photo source: Adobe Stock | UCLA Focus

Review milestones of adolescence and into adulthood

- Physical Development
- Cognitive Development
- Social/Emotional Development

[Adolescent-Development.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Sabatelli WM, Lerner P, Peters R, et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual, 2nd ed. 2009 (unpublished manual).

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Common Teen Reactions to Change

P. Lester,
August 4, 2023

Photo source: Adobe Stock /istock | UCLA Focus

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In times of transition:

- What reactions have you seen in the military-connected youth that you work with?
- What strategies have you found effective in supporting military connected youth and their families who are navigating change?

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Develop and share knowledge within and outside of the family, building shared understanding about stressors, including parental injuries or illness, as well as modeling and teaching effective communication strategies among adults and children.

Photo source: Pixabay

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FAMILIES TACKLING TOUGH TIMES TOGETHER

We Share Our Feelings Constructively! Open Emotional Expression

During times of stress, families may go through changes to their daily life. When families communicate clearly about these changes through family discussions, all family members can work together to get through hard times and agree on how to address these changes. Clear, compassionate communication and deep listening helps families take action together while building trust and respect.

The Circle Process: Listening and Speaking with Purpose
Relationships are better when people are able to easily share their needs directly and clearly. Listening to the needs of others allows us to show empathy and validate how others may feel. The Circle Process is a method for solving problems and building community through communication. Listening is an important part of the process and requires us to make space for others to talk and to deeply listen.

The Circle Process Activity
Dialogue or peacemaking circles are gatherings where all participants sit in a circle facing each other to have open and direct communication. These circles can be used to encourage better communication between family members.

The Circle Process has three practices:

- **Speaking with intention:** Noting what is important to the conversation in the moment.
- **Listening with attention:** Respectful of the learning process for all members of the group.
- **Tending to the well-being of the circle:** Remaining aware of the impact of contributions.

Source: [WeShareOurFeelingsConstructively Family.pdf](https://www.shareourfeelingsconstructivelyfamily.pdf) (iuridus.edu)

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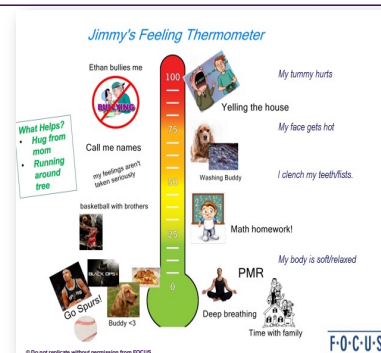
Supporting Teens



Photo source: Adobe Stock | UCLA Focus

Feeling Thermometer

- Identify emotions with a shared family tool
- Create a common language around emotions
- Measure emotional intensity from comfortable to uncomfortable
- Develop individual and family coping skills



[Feeling-Thermometer.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Saltzman WR, Lester P, Pynoos R, et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual. 2nd ed. 2009 [unpublished manual].

Image Credit: UCLA Focus

Feeling Thermometer Guide

A family guide to using the feeling thermometer

Emotional Awareness + Effective Action = Resilience



Photo source: Canva/ UCLA Focus

[GuideForThermometer.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Sattelmeh WH, Lavelle P, Pynoos R, et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual. 2nd ed. 2009 (unpublished manual).

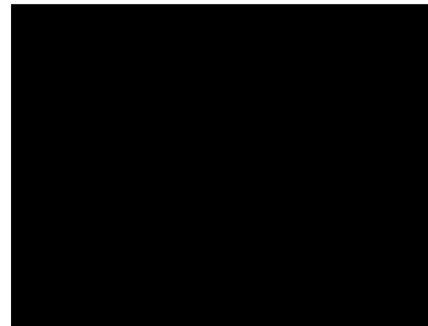
Core Element: Skill Building



Skills include emotional regulation, communication, problem-solving, goal setting and trauma/loss reminder management.

Emotional Regulation

Develop emotional awareness and set of tools that promote positive coping



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Getting to Green Plan

- Deep breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Meditation
- Practicing gratitude
- Taking a walk
- Exercising
- Do a kind gesture
- Unplug
- Watch a funny movie
- Listen to music
- Drink a cup of hot tea
- Get lost in a book
- Meet with a friend
- Volunteer
- Seek out support

[Getting-To-Green.pdf](#) & [Getting-To-Green-Teens.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Saldeman III, Loren P., Ph.D., et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual, 2nd ed. 2009 (unpublished manual).



Photo source: Pixabay

Incorporate trauma-informed approaches to care, recognizing that families faced with stress and adversity are likely to be affected by trauma and loss experiences that uniquely impact adults and children within families, their relationships, and their development.

Principals of Trauma-Informed Care

<p>Safety and Nurturing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational to health and wellbeing • Culturally Responsive 	<p>Cultural, Historical, Social Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural humility/understanding • Strive to be curious without judgment • Recognize historical trauma • Be aware of implicit bias and assumptions about others 	
<p>Empowerment and Choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having control is essential for healing • Provide choices whenever possible, even small choices matter • Include them in decision making 	<p>Trust and Stability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential in relationships • Consistent Boundaries • Clear Expectations • Maintaining curiosity without judgment 	
<p>Strength-Based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift deficit thinking to asset based • "What have you been through and what are your strengths" • Focuses on the future, skill building, resilience 	<p>Collaboration and Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual respect • Honors diverse experiences • Shared vision and outcomes 	

Photo source: Adobe Stock | UCLA Focus

https://www.cdc.gov/orri/inforgraphics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm

Core Element: Narrative Timeline



Construct narratives that focus on military life trajectory including separations, reunion and reintegration.

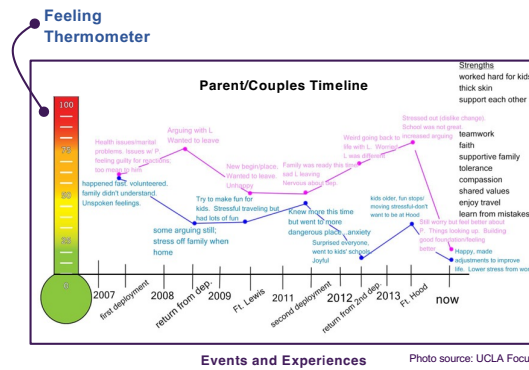


Photo source: UCLA Focus

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Core Element: Narrative Timeline



Construct narratives that focus on military life trajectory including separations, reunion and reintegration.

Feeling Thermometer

Child Time Map

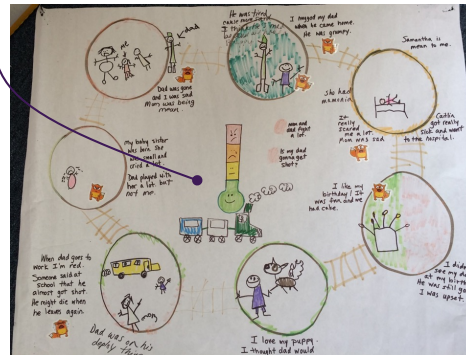
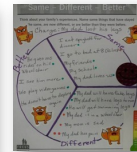
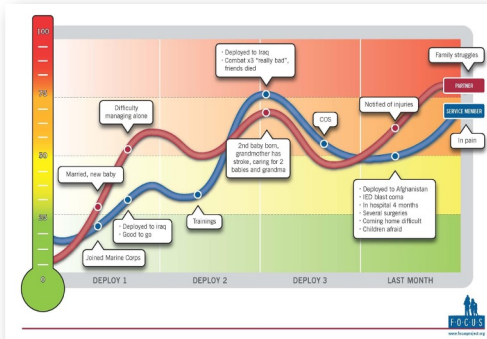


Photo source: UCLA Focus


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Perspective Taking and Meaning Making



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Photo source: UCLA Focus



Build a positive, emotionally safe, and warm family environment, including effective stress reduction and emotional regulation strategies for parents to engage in and model for children, as well as engaging in activities that are calming and enjoyable for all.

Photo source: Pixabay

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FAMILIES TACKLING TOUGH TIMES TOGETHER

We Tell Each Other the Truth! Clear, Consistent Messages

Many families are spending more time in their homes, working from home, learning remotely, and finding a balance between personal space and togetherness. While more time together can be great, it can also come with challenges. For example, conflict that existed before the pandemic might now seem worse. Families may also have new emotions related to their current situation and may not be feeling as unified the longer this pandemic continues. Families can work together to strengthen their bond and focus on what they do right and a simple way to accomplish that is to create a family mission statement.

Family Mission Statement
Each family has a set of values and beliefs that are important and meaningful to them. It is important that we identify questions with our family members that are important in helping us to craft our mission statement, and reflect on how our family lives, laughs, loves, learns, and relates.

SOURCE: WeTellEachOtherTheTruth - FamilyVed
Loripia.com

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Photo source: Pixabay

Master and model important interpersonal skills, including individual and relational problem solving and conflict resolution and incorporating evidence-based strategies.

Building a Positive, Warm Environment

- Family Feeling Thermometer
- Family Meetings
- Family **Green** Plan

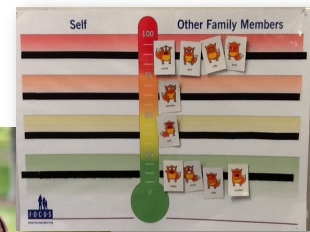


Photo source: UCLA Focus

[How-To-Hold-A-Family-Meeting.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Sabatman WR, Lester P, Pinesse R, et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual. 2nd ed. © 2009 (unpublished manual)

Developing Family Communication Skills

- Grounded in emotional regulation
- Use games and tools to have fun learning new skills
- Communication skills around stress reminders
- Use *Coming to Terms* for the 'tough stuff'



Photo Source: UCLA Focus

[Effective-Communication-Skills.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Saltzman WR, Lester P, Pynoos R, et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual. 2nd ed; 2009 [unpublished manual].

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Coming to TERMS



Photo source: UCLA Focus

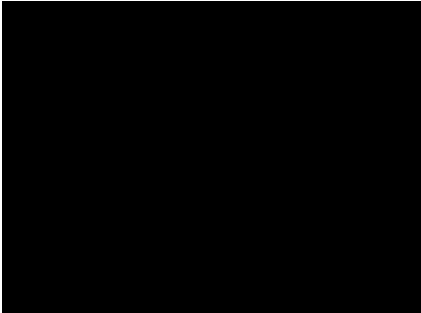
[Coming-To-TERMS.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Saltzman WR, Lester P, Pynoos R, et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual. 2nd ed; 2009 [unpublished manual].

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Managing Reminders



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What strategies have you found to be most effective in developing communication skills with teens during times of stress?

Areas to consider:

- With peers
- With siblings
- With parents

Photo source: Canva | UCLA Focus

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Engage required resources, accessing instrumental and social support within and outside the family to support adults and children, dyadic relationships and the family as a whole, and teaching family members how to effectively use their support opportunities (friends, extended family, teachers, coaches, faith-based communities, etc.).

Photo source: Pixabay

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FAMILIES
TACKLING TOUGH TIMES
TOGETHER


FAMILY

Our Family is Creative! Collaborative Problem Solving
Many of us are struggling every day. Sometimes the stress and anxiety of navigating the pandemic makes it seem hard to solve problems. It can be more difficult to feel safe and secure when our family routines may be different. The stressors may also increase when we don't know what to expect each day. More often our families are sharing space and resources and may be looking for better ways to discuss problems and conflicts before they get worse.

Family Meetings
Creative and successful problem solving is often done together as a group. Holding a family meeting is a great way to brainstorm family goals, expectations, and to solve problems. During times of change and adversity, family meetings are a great way to check in and see how everyone is doing. Family meetings can also help family members understand each other better, have better communication, work towards solutions, and can be fun!

Family Meeting Activity
When thinking about having a family meeting it is important to get buy-in from all family members. Family meetings can help bring your family together in many ways. Consider using your family meeting as a time to solve problems and come up with solutions together. You may wish to make regular family meetings a new routine. They can be something for family members to look forward to and rely on.

Our Family is Creative! Families of
Ours.org

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FAMILIES
TACKLING TOUGH TIMES
TOGETHER

We Take Action! Mobilizing Social & Economic Resources
During tough times, finding social and economic resources can help teens to build resilience. These resources can also provide teens with emotional support and ways to overcome barriers. Helping teens find and use what they need, can help guide them as they navigate life's next steps. For many teens, a key social resource is often a mentor. Teens can benefit from having a mentor, but can also provide valuable social support by becoming a mentor. It is also important for teens to understand finances. An understanding of how to make important money choices can help teens as they face roadblocks.

Mentoring
It is important to build a strong support network that includes family and those close to us. Parents can help their teens by suggesting they reach out to those around them. Research suggests that having one natural mentor helps improve a teen's attitude towards school, has long-term financial benefits, and lessens their chance of problem behaviors. Natural mentors can be neighbors, healthcare providers, members of religious institutions, or teachers.

Learning about Financial Literacy
Financial literacy skills can help teens to find economic resources that can help them in the future. Teens who have a job learn the value of a dollar and the importance of saving. Teens can also learn this by earning a small allowance or using a token system. This system can help them learn to earn the things they want.

FAMILY YOUTH

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FAMILIES
TACKLING TOUGH TIMES
TOGETHER

Our Family Can Do This! Sharing a Positive Outlook
Many people might experience pockets of gratitude even when things get tough. Feeling grateful for what we have (instead of worrying about what we don't) helps with many different areas of our lives. A positive outlook and feeling grateful can help relieve stress and boost our ability to try again even when things don't work out the way we want them to. Sometimes, stepping outside into the sunshine or walking around the neighborhood can become a simple pleasure with extra meaning. Preparing food and enjoying a slow meal with our family may bring a moment of joy and laughter. We may also learn to appreciate quiet time cuddling with a pet or streaming a movie with our family. Thinking about what we are grateful for can help us appreciate the comforts of our homes and families when everything else feels out of control.

Showing Our Gratitude
Brain research shows that positive emotions, like gratitude, can be good for our body and mind. Sharing gratitude can give us an instant mood boost and may increase a positive outlook which helps us to spread positivity to others. Positivity is an important part of being resilient. When we try to look at things in a positive way, we are better able to deal with life's stressors.


Gratitude Challenge Activity
Ask yourself: WHO or WHAT are you GRATEFUL for and WHY? You may feel grateful for something special or important, or you may feel grateful for something small — as long as it's a good thing or makes you feel good. It's good to be SPECIFIC about what you are grateful for so you can write down and remember meaningful events! Challenge yourself to find or see the good in your life every day, big or small. The more you find, the better! Below are some ways to keep track of WHO or WHAT you are GRATEFUL for and WHY.

[OurFamilyCanDoThis_Youth.pdf \(purdue.edu\)](#)

FAMILY YOUTH

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Maintain a vision of hope and future optimism for the family, engendering positive expectations among family members and creating a hope-filled family narrative.

Photo source: Pixabay

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FAMILIES TACKLING TOUGH TIMES TOGETHER

Our Family Will Get Through This! Making Meaning of Adversity

Changes to our daily lives may get in the way of personal goals and expectations. It's important to reflect and capture the meaning of these experiences so they can be shared with others.

When families pause to think about the events occurring around them, big or small, this can be used as a chance to see things differently. Resilience is strengthened when our family views a crisis as a shared challenge to be tackled together. Family experiences give us a collective history and can help us to feel connected. We are better able to handle adversity when family members have faith in each other and reflect on challenges together.

Creating a Time Capsule
This is a very important time for many families. The loss of so many experiences can cause a sense of grief. Help each other to make sense of the pandemic by saving important things in a time capsule. A time capsule can comfort each of us on our journey to emotional healing. It can also help us to connect to each other as meaning is made of losses and we reflect on our experiences together. A time capsule also serves as a way to document current hardships or difficulties for future generations. It can also capture good times.

[OurFamilyWillGetThroughThis_Family.pdf \(purdue.edu\)](#)

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Family Scrapbook

A collaborative project for the entire family unit

Creating a family scrapbook presents an opportunity to explore missed moments while families have been separated

Provides opportunities for developing shared understanding



[Family Scrapbook.pdf](#)

SOURCE: Soltzman WR, Lester P, Pynoos R, et al. FOCUS for Military Families: Individual Family Resiliency Training Manual. 2nd ed; 2009 [unpublished manual].

Photo source: Canva | UCLA Focus

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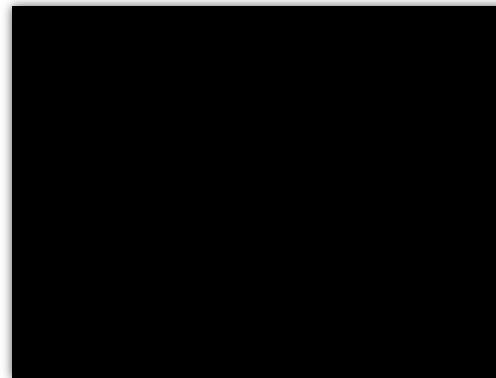
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Core Element: Skill Building



Skills include emotional regulation, communication, problem-solving, goal setting and trauma/loss reminder management.


Goal Setting



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Questions and Dialogue

Photo source: Adobe Stock | UCLA Focus

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Continuing Education

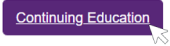


This webinar has been approved 1.5 continuing education (CE) credits for the following:

- Board Certified Patient Advocates (BCPA)
- Case Managers (CCMC)
- Certified Family Life Educators (CFLE)
- Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS)
- Certified Nutrition and Wellness Educator (CNWE)
- Social Work, LPC, LMT
- Certificate of attendance available

Evaluation Link

Go to the event page for the evaluation and post-test link.



Questions?

Email Anna Peterson, Program Coordinator:
OneOpFamilyTransitions@gmail.com

OneOp.org/event/150438

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