

STANDARDS OF QUALITY FOR FAMILY STRENGTHENING & SUPPORT

- *What does it mean to be a quality Family Strengthening and Support program?*



- *What common language can we use for working effectively with families?*

- *How can managers, direct service staff, and families work together to develop and sustain quality programs?*

OVERVIEW

The Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support were issued by the California Network of Family Strengthening Networks (CNFSN) in 2012, and adopted by the National Family Support Network in 2013. They are the first and only standards in the country to integrate and operationalize the Principles of Family Support Practice with the Strengthening Families Framework and its research-based evidence-informed 5 Protective Factors. The vision is that their implementation will help ensure that families are supported and strengthened through quality practice.

The Standards are designed to be used by all stakeholders – public departments, foundations, community based organizations, and parents - across different kinds of Family Strengthening and Family Support programs as a tool for planning, providing, and assessing quality practice. The Standards create common language and expectations in the Family Support and Strengthening field across different kinds of programs, such as Family Resource Centers, home visiting programs, and child development programs.

The Standards are based on the earlier San Francisco Family Support Standards, which were successfully implemented by key stakeholders in that city/county since 2007. As part of an 18-month development process, the Standards were vetted with nearly 1,000 diverse organizations serving rural and urban populations across California.

The Standards have been adopted across the country as state, county, and citywide networks seek to utilize them.

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CONTENT

The Standards are organized into 5 sections with 17 standards, each with minimum and high quality indicators and implementation examples:

Family Centeredness

Working with a family-centered approach that values and recognizes families as integral to the Program.

Family Strengthening

Utilizing a family strengthening approach to support families to be strong, healthy, and safe, thereby promoting their optimal development.

Embracing Diversity

Acknowledging and respecting families' diversity, supporting their participation in a diverse society, as well as engaging in ongoing learning and adaptation to diversity.

Community Building

Contributing to building a strong and healthy community by facilitating families' social connections, developing their leadership skills, and by collaborating with other Programs.

Evaluation

Looking at areas of Program strength, as well as areas for further development, in order to guide continuous quality improvement and achieve positive results for families.

TRAINING

Training is a fundamental strategy for implementing the Standards effectively.

- **Certification Training:** This full-day training is designed for all management and direct service staff, as well as for funders. Each individual who completes the training receives a certificate from the National Network that is valid for 2 years.
- **Training of Trainers:** The National Family Support Network trains representatives of networks to be able to conduct the certification training through a 4-day training for trainers.

STANDARDS FREE DOWNLOAD & MORE INFORMATION

- Visit the website of the California Network of Family Strengthening Networks at www.cnfsn.org to download the Standards free of charge and access additional information.
- Contact Samantha Florey, Director of Training at (858) 354-4462 or samantha@nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The Standards are part of a suite of materials that are used for their implementation:

- **Program Self-Assessment Tool** - designed to be used as a critical thinking exercise by Program teams of managers, direct service staff, parent leaders, and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- **Staff Self-Reflection Checklist** - consists of 15 self-reflection questions for staff members to use as a daily reminder to implement the Standards.
- **Standards Participant Survey** - consists of 14 questions for Program participants to indicate how well a Program is meeting the Standards from the families' perspective. The survey is available in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

