

QUALITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Families are strong when they have positive connections to their community and social networks. Strong families contribute to a strong community, one that is safe, stable and productive.

1. Participate in neighbourhood groups that ensure children have a safe place to play.
2. Encourage and support other families; look for others who can support your family.
3. Find out how best to get involved in your child's school. Maximise school resources to support your child's learning.
4. Join your child in volunteering in the community.
5. Join with other parents to advocate that our community institutions are equitable and fair to people.
6. Encourage inclusive and culturally sensitive environments, respecting diversity.
7. Engage youth as leaders in the solution to youth challenges. Listen to their input and include them in decision making.
8. Learn the names of the people at the businesses you frequent – gas stations, grocery stores, banks, etc. Greet them by name when you visit.
9. Become familiar with programmes and helping agencies that provide support and resources to families.

We may not be able to prepare the future for our children, but we can at least prepare our children for the future. Franklin D. Roosevelt

RESOURCE SUPPORTS

The Department of Labour and Training
297-7714

www.gov.bm > Economy, Trade & Industry

Bermuda College

236-9000

www.bercol.bm

The National Training Board

292-3700

www.ntb.bm

Bus Schedules

www.gov.bm > Transport > bus

Ferry Schedules

www.seaexpress.bm

Energy Conservation Tips

www.gov.bm > Environment and Planning Department of Energy

Water Conservation Tips

www.gov.bm > Public Works > Water Conservation

The Family Centre

232-1116

www.tfc.bm

Bermuda Youth Counselling Services (BYCS)

294-9360

www.gov.bm

Department of Child and Family Services

296-7575

www.gov.bm

Child and Adolescent Services

236-3770 x1781

Mirrors

294-9291

www.gov.bm

Child Development

295-0746

www.child-development-programme.com

Legal Aid

297-7617

The Youth Centre

15 minutes of legal advice 292-1343

Many of the sources listed include a website address.

For access to a computer and internet service, visit

The Bermuda National Library

13 Queen St., Hamilton HM 11

Phone: 295-3104

www.bnl.bm

Remember, it is important to balance family time, exercise, work, etc., in our busy schedules. Allowing time for each component every week takes commitment and the rewards are worth the effort.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Family Strengthening Policy Center

www.nassembly.org/fspc

Annie E Casey Foundation

www.aecf.org

Search Institute – 40 Developmental Assets

www.search-institute.org

For more information on

Sustainable Development go to:

www.sdbermuda.bm

We invite suggestions, questions and additions.

Please email sdd@gov.bm



Sustain Bermuda



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Ministry of Environment and Planning

The Sustainable Development Department

STRONG FAMILIES MAKE STRONG COMMUNITIES

Compiled by

The Sustainable Development Roundtable



MAKING THE CONNECTION

**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES TOOLKIT

This Strengthening Families Toolkit has been developed by the Sustainable Development Roundtable (SDRT) to assist our community in understanding the importance of strong families and to provide some examples of ways to reinforce and support the family.

At a conference of Social Service Agencies three key underlying problems facing families were identified as unhealthy relationships due to unaddressed trauma over generations, lack of quality education, and lack of life skills i.e. social interaction, parenting, managing personal affairs, etc.

This brochure of tips is designed to

- Help individuals, families and communities build relationships and foster connections with each other.
- Reinforce and improve your relationship with your family, your friends and your communities.

STRONG FAMILIES REQUIRE THREE FUNDAMENTALS:

- A. Loving and Nurturing Relationships
- B. Quality Support Systems
- C. Financial Stability

Most children raised in families with these three fundamentals grow up to become caring, contributing, and successful adults.



LOVING AND NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS

Being a parent, guardian or adult mentor can be very hard work. An effective approach to raising healthy and competent children is to concentrate on building Developmental Assets. There are probably lots of asset-building things you already do for your children—even if you don't call them that. Here are some ways to be intentional about asset-building:

1. Children need to know you care. Give your children lots of positive support and approval. Recognize that children need more than just financial support. They also need emotional and educational support.
2. Model a positive, healthy lifestyle. Ensure your child is exposed to age-appropriate conversations or situations.
3. Talk about your values and priorities, and live in a way that is consistent with them.
4. Look for positive adult role models of both genders who can supervise and be mentors to your children.
5. Spend time with people who care about you and are supportive. You'll take better care of your children if you take care of yourself. Eat well and exercise regularly.
6. Learn as much as you can about what your children need at their current ages. Be involved in their school life. Be a good listener and encourage your children to share their ideas.
7. Compliment young people when you see them doing good things. Let them know what is expected from them and challenge them to take responsibility at an appropriate level for their age.
8. Find peaceful ways to resolve conflicts. Talk with someone if you need help.
9. Reflect on your childhood and the way that you were raised and how that affects the way that you parent your children.

10. Regularly spend time with your child doing some of the following:

- Tell jokes;
- Read to each other;
- Eat popsicles;
- Play a board game;
- Create a family play;
- Learn new things;
- Volunteer in your community.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Financial stability means making enough money to take care of your family. Different people have different amounts of money. Whatever you have, you want to make it work for you in the best way possible, especially to teach your children good choices and habits.

Improve Your Income

1. Consider enrolling in further education, e.g. Adult General Education Diploma (GED) programme, on-line courses, certification, etc.
2. Enhance your job preparedness (interviewing skills, work ethics, resumé, etc.). Consider training or re-training for another job.

Control your Expenses

3. Reduce your household budget by:
 - Removing excess cable and cell phone products/packages;
 - Doing your own household maintenance such as lawn care and painting;
 - Purchasing in bulk with friends and family;
 - Cooking at home inexpensively and growing your own vegetables;

- Reducing your energy usage. Turn off the air conditioner/heater; use a clothes line instead of a dryer; install a timer on your water heater; replace incandescent light bulbs with CFL or LED light bulbs.

4. When you want to buy something, ask yourself "Do I need it?" If you think you do, then wait. If, at the end of a week, you still think you need it, then consider purchasing it.

Reallocate your time

5. Find low cost ways to spend time with family and friends:
 - Rent a movie;
 - Host a pot luck lunch or dinner;
 - Go for coffee;
 - Attend free public events;
 - Spend a day at the beach, in the park, on the railway trails.

Planning and Budgeting

6. Model good spending habits to guide your child's spending habits.
7. Track your spending. Make a realistic budget and stick to it. Spend only within your limits.
8. Seek advice from your bank on managing your money. Talk to your bank immediately if your economic situation changes.
9. Put aside emergency funds, no matter how minimal.
10. Use one credit card and for emergencies only. Avoid credit card cash advances to cover everyday expenses.
11. Prepare your shopping list around specific meals and stick to it. Don't buy on impulse and don't shop when you are hungry.
12. Reduce your transportation costs by using public transportation. If you need to drive, plan your trips so you can make several stops with one trip.
13. Find positive ways other than money to reward or acknowledge your child.