

Social Connections

Correlates with Caring Adults Outside the Family who Serve as Role Models or Mentors

Social connections are the friends, relatives and neighbors that provide social and emotional support to the parent and/or child. A person's experiences with social supports help to define oneself and also may address one's needs.

Signs of Social Connections:

- The parent has people with whom he/she interacts frequently.
- The family is involved church activities
- The child is active in school.
- The parent is able to identify a person or persons to whom the parent could ask for help.
- The extended family participates in activities together such as meals, recreation, holiday get together, etc.
- The child interacts appropriately with other children and adults.
- The family participates in formal and informal social activities.

Questions to ask:

- Who can you call for advice or just to talk? How often do you see them?
- Do you belong to a church, temple, mosque, women's group, men's group?
- Do you have family members or friends nearby who help you out once in a while?
- Do you have a child in the local school or Head Start program?
- What kinds of things do you like to do for fun or to relax? What do you and your partner do for a break?
- Would it help you to have more friends or acquaintances to call about _____?
- Would it help you to know other moms and dads who are dealing with _____?
- How much time do you spend with family? Friends? Alone?
- What positive things do you get from your relationship with your partner?
- Do you drive a car? Do you have your driver's license?
- How are you able to meet your personal and interpersonal needs (intimacy)?
- Where do you and your friends go to hang out?
- In the past, what has your (sister, neighbor, mother, grandparent, in-law) done that you found helpful?
- Is there an adult outside your family that you have a connection with or who could be a support to your family?
- Who is the person (are the people) in your life who you feel you can always call/turn to/count on?

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfHV4-N2LxQ> Take a Seat and Make a Friend

Energy Ball: <http://www.xump.com/Science/EnergyBall.cfm>

Energy Stick: <http://www.stevespanglerscience.com/product/energy-stick>

www.strengtheningfamiliesillinois.org - resources about Parent Cafe's

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZvUppaDfNs> The Science of Social Connections

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNhk3owF7RQ> The Social Brain and its Superpowers