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 in 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
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