

# CREATING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS: MAXIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT AND ENGAGE

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# What do you believe partnerships need?

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## What we are learning about Partnering with Parents



need2know  
Resource from the ANPPC

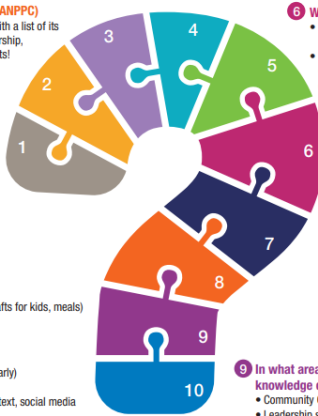
CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND  
**Alliance**  
 National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC)  
[cfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc](http://cfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc)  
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- P Provide:** Provide options that will accommodate work and family schedules. What are the most convenient times and places to meet? Whatever your role, prepare a plan. A, E, and C! Partners are patient with the process because the results are worth it. Remember, parents are busy doing exactly what they should be doing – parenting!
- A Ask:** When you know what parents need, it is easier to know how you can help them. You never know until you ask if parents want to work with you as a team. Don't assume. Always ask.
- R Relationships:** To be a true partner, you must build authentic relationships and have great rapport. Be a friend. Be sincere. These relationships pave the way to beneficial outcomes that are only possible through partnership.
- E Encourage:** Encourage parents by recognizing individual strengths! Be flexible so parents can explore and exercise their strengths in ways that work best for them and strengthen their families.
- N Nurture:** Nurture parents and nourish their strengths. Listen to their thoughts. Acknowledge and validate their ideas. Implement parents' recommendations and ideas whenever possible.
- T Trust:** Parents and practitioners need to find a trust between each other. Take the time to get to know each other. As trust becomes possible, the strengths of each partner can shine.
- S Succeed:** A partnership will succeed when both partners are committed to learning from each other and listening to each others' ideas. Be prepared to change your mind and find the best solutions to strengthen families and communities!

<https://cfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/>

✓ **The Alliance National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC)** wanted to know how organizations partner with parents. With a list of its top 10 questions, the ANPPC surveyed the Alliance membership, grantees and others in its network – and here are the results!

- 1 **How do you invite parents to partner with you?**
  - Word of mouth
  - Referrals from other parents
  - Sign-up sheets at conferences
  - Local PTA
  - Social media
  - Through other community efforts that involve parents
- 2 **What keeps parents plugged in?**
  - Formal parent leader agreement
  - Value their contributions in a visible way
  - Spend one-on-one time with parents
  - Listen to parents
  - Implement their ideas
  - Be flexible because life happens
  - Create opportunities for growth
  - Support families' involvement (child care, crafts for kids, meals)
  - Relationship building
- 3 **How often do you meet?**
  - Meet by phone monthly
  - Meet in person periodically (monthly, quarterly, yearly)
  - Committees or small groups meet more often
  - Support between formal meetings through email, text, social media
- 4 **How are parents compensated for their participation?**
  - Provide stipend (gift cards for various amounts)
  - Reimburse for mileage
  - Provide childcare, transportation
  - Provide meals, snacks
  - Provide training
  - When there are no funds for stipends, try to be sensitive to needs
- 5 **What are common motives for parents to volunteer despite busy lives?**
  - Being part of decision-making that affects their families
  - An opportunity to strengthen their family and community
  - Being connected to the children's caregivers
  - Gain training/information to help professionally or in parenting
  - Building self-leadership skills
  - Social connections
  - Personal passion about their own family and their community



**Top 10 QUESTIONS We need 2 know**

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National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC)

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- 6 **What types of activities are parent led?**
    - In specific parent groups, the goal is for everything to be parent led, but sometimes support is needed for various reasons
    - In collaborations, there can be specific grant priorities, expectations or policies that work best when partnering is the optimal goal
  - 7 **Who organizes/facilitates meetings?**
    - Parents and agencies/administration together
    - Agency organizes meetings and parents lead
    - Parents lead/agencies support as needed
  - 8 **What is the purpose of your council/team?**
    - Develop parent leadership skills
    - Develop parent advocacy skills
    - Develop and provide parent leadership in local school through the PTA
    - Implement cafés – strengthening families and communities
    - Provide needed resources and support for children and families
    - To advocate for policy changes that will improve the lives of children and families
  - 9 **In what areas do you provide training or knowledge development?**
    - Community Cafés
    - Leadership skills
    - Protective factors
    - Family topics, such as financial matters, parenting skills, family goals, leadership skills and community organizing
    - Subjects as requested, viewing each subject through the lens of the protective factors
  - 10 **What types of resources do you offer to parents?**
    - Information on local school district
    - Parenting education
    - Access to programs
    - Linking families to services (baby pantry, food pantry and others specific to community)
    - Opportunities to build social connections and network
- ✓ **Learn more about parent partnerships**  
[ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents](http://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents)

✓ **Building and Sustaining Effective Parent Partnerships** refers to four elements or "puzzle pieces." To help parents and organizational partners put these pieces together, the Alliance National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC) developed the following questions as a conversation tool. Use the work space to record your thoughts. To learn more, see *Building and Sustaining Effective Parent Partnerships* at: [ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents](http://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents)

- 1 **Getting to Know You**
  - What do you want to learn or know to feel a part of our team?
  - What new skills or knowledge are you excited to learn about from our group?
  - What is the story that brings you here today?
  - How might you benefit from participating?
- 2 **Working Together**
  - What do you value about being together?
  - What strengths and/or gifts do you bring to our team?
  - How can we each individually and together as a group nurture a culture of equity and inclusiveness?



**4 Elements of Partnerships We need 2 know**

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- 3 **Building Community**
  - What more can we achieve if we work together?
  - In your wildest dreams, what changes would you notice if we were successful?
  - When looking at our individual dreams, what themes or ideas do we hold in common?
  - What has worked well before and how can we do more of that?
  - What can you contribute as an individual and what must we do together as a group?
- 4 **Mentoring Others**
  - Because of what we plan to do, what resources do we already have to do this work?
  - Who else would be interested in learning what we are learning?
  - Who else could you share this experience with and invite to join in the fun?
  - Looking at each bold step we are taking, how can we break it into smaller pieces and ask others to help?

✓ **The Goal We Can Set after our conversation today is:**

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<https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/>

HOW ARE YOU STAYING  
CONNECTED TO OTHERS AND  
BUILDING YOUR  
RELATIONSHIPS?



Focus on what is  
**STRONG**  
Not what is  
**WRONG**

## DEFINING THE FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Families are supported to build:

### Parental Resilience

The ability to recover from difficult life experiences, and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.

### Social Connections

The ability and opportunity to develop positive relationships that lessen stress and isolation and help to build a supportive network.

### Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

The ability to exercise effective parenting strategies to guide and know what to expect as children develop in multiple domains (physical, cognitive, language and social and emotional).

### Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships.

### Concrete Support in Times of Need

Access to supports and services that reduce stress and help to make families stronger.



### EVERYDAY ACTIONS THAT HELP BUILD SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE/DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

#### Healthy

- ✓ Model nurturing support to children

#### Empowering

- ✓ Help children develop a positive cultural identity and interact in a diverse society

#### Response to

- ✓ Respond proactively when social or emotional development seems to need support

#### Opportunity

- ✓ Help parents foster their child's social emotional development



National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC)  
ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc

<https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/parent-voice/>



## LETS CHAT

Staying positive during times of crisis can be challenging. Our children and peers look to us for leadership. How do you find the courage to lead by example in your family and community?

- ▶ What do you need to know so that you can feel strong in being a parent during these times? How are you staying strong to face each day?

## How to remember the 5 PROTECTIVE FACTORS that make your family strong.

**Use your Thumb to remember Social & Emotional Competence of Children** because a "thumbs up" is one of the first ways we learn to communicate our emotions.

**Your Index Finger represents Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development** because you are your child's 1st teacher!

**Your Middle Finger can help you remember Social Connections** because it should never stand alone! We all need a positive social network.

**Your Pinky Finger signifies Concrete Support in Times of Need** because it is the smallest finger and reminds us that we all need help sometimes.

**Your Ring Finger stands for Parental Resilience** because your first commitment must be to yourself in order to be strong for others.

## Social Connections

The Value of Social Connections

Facilitate friendships and mutual support – Help parents connect with each other and develop social networks.

Social connections help families stay strong, get through the hard times and enjoy family life. Families can have many different types of social connections that provide different types of support. No matter the type of connection – it should be positive – someone that is there for you, treats you well and helps you be the best person you can be!

**Everyday Actions that Help Build Social Connections**

- ✓ Help families value, build, sustain and use social connections
- ✓ Create an inclusive environment
- ✓ Facilitate mutual support around parenting and other issues
- ✓ Promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities

Concrete Examples of Everyday Actions

**Value, build and use social connections**

- How do your friends know that you appreciate them?
  - I offer help before my friends have to ask.
  - By listening to a friend who just needs an ear.
  - I like to play attention to the things my friends like, and pick them up from time to time when I see them on sale or special – just to let them know they are heard and cared for.
  - Many of my friends are more like family than having as much value of our relationships very much.
  - I specifically turned down an invite to an event with my friend so that I could watch the kids and she and her husband could go. I had a great time helping with the kids and they had a relaxing date night!
  - Taking the time to tell or show someone how much they mean to me.
  - Celebrating their successes – and inviting them to celebrate any success I may have.

**Create an inclusive environment**

- What do you look for when thinking about joining a group?
  - I feel welcome and I see a friendly face.
  - It is clear what is required of me.
  - I am interested in a topic, and it is helpful to my family.
  - I'm more likely to participate in a group when:
    - It's safe to share my thoughts and I will not be judged.
    - I am asked for my opinion and it's valued.
    - There are family activities.
    - It is flexible and supportive of me and other parents.
    - It's fun.
- What is the most critical thing you need as a parent when unexpected things happen?
  - Having someone available who I can ask for what I need with no judgement and whom they are truly willing to help.
  - The need has changed as my children have grown. Now that they are teenagers I would say positive affirmations from others and someone to talk to.
  - Having the opportunity to take a break.
  - Help with meals, babysitting or housework – whatever I need – to lift me up and help make my burden feel lighter.
  - Resources to turn to such as school, church, books, support groups, etc.

**Facilitate mutual support**

- What are some positive ways your community is supportive?
  - The librarians we have gotten to know since the boys were small have been great people to talk to for advice and other affirmations.
  - My community is one I have built with other parents who have special needs children. We check in with each other, support and pray for each other.
  - "Bring your family to the zoo day" was great. They had free health screenings for the whole family that day, plus it was fun.
  - It was a "bring your parent to school" day. It was good to spend time with my child and learn what he does throughout the day.
  - Free event for the kiddos put on by a local church. Everyone was pleased and happy to see us. It was close to our home and the kids had a great time.
  - I know how I'm connected, but I'm constantly looking for ways to connect friends.
  - Parent-led groups – places for parents to meet and talk. Other parents offer wisdom.

**Promote community engagement**

For more parent-to-parent tools visit [eafalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/ampcc/resources](http://eafalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/ampcc/resources)

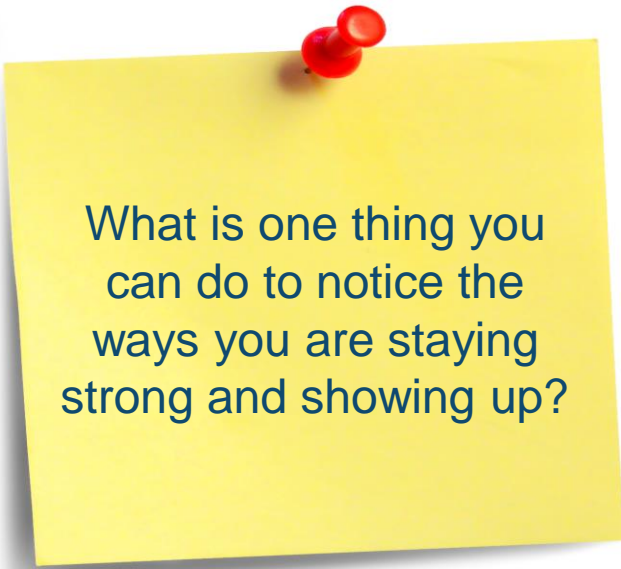
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What is the most critical thing you need as a parent when unexpected things happen?

## QUESTIONS TO THINK ON

- ▶ What has been going well for you, your family, those you care about?
- ▶ What is the gift you are bringing to each day?
- ▶ How has your child shown resilience?
- ▶ How have you shown resilience?
- ▶ What is something you have learned during this time that you take into the future?



What is one thing you can do to notice the ways you are staying strong and showing up?



# We need you!

Apply online

[ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/bpnn](http://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/bpnn)

Become part of the **Birth Parent National Network (BPNN)**, a national network of hundreds of birth parents and organizations working together to strengthen families, communities and systems by engaging the voices of parents.

## Achieve your true potential

### KNOWLEDGE

- Online library of prevention strategies and child welfare systems reform efforts
- Free virtual trainings on multiple relevant topics
- Publications developed from a parent perspective
- Compendium of parent partnership organizations
- The protective factors framework
- Using data to strengthen your community

### RESOURCES

- Local, state and national organizations
- National leaders who promote parents as partners in policy and practices that affect children and families

### CONNECTIONS

- Parents from across the nation
- Local, state and national organizations
- National leaders who promote parents as partners in policy and practices that affect children and families

### LEADERSHIP

- Serve on BPNN Parent Council
- Co-facilitate BPNN webinars
- Represent BPNN at conferences and trainings
- Develop policies, practices and recommendations that help strengthen and support families and communities
- Create publications and tools
- Testify at Congressional hearings
- Serve as a resource to policymakers to share your perspective

### SUCCESS

- Working as a unified parent voice to lead change
- Holding leadership roles at the local, state and national levels
- Working in partnership with staff to improve policies and practices
- Supporting strong and resilient families and communities through implementation of prevention strategies
- Universal acceptance of the importance of protective factors for all families

*"The BPNN is a springboard to leadership roles and networking opportunities with other parents and systems leaders."*  
Cory B. Best, birth parent and BPNN member from Florida



*"The BPNN is our unified voice to help keep our families together and strong by strengthening programs, communities and systems that support them."*  
Toni Kinner, birth parent and BPNN member from Colorado



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Children's Trust Fund Alliance is partnering with Casey Family Programs to support the BPNN.  
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## STAY CONNECTED

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