

2022

FAMILY STRENGTHENING

MONTH

TOOLKIT



April is National Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month

Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. Please join us in promoting the safety and well-being of Wisconsin children. In April 2022, we plan to begin transforming Prevention Month into **Family Strengthening Month**. This toolkit aims to support programs in Wisconsin that will introduce activities to help strengthen families during the month of April and throughout the year.



Children are the foundation of our society, our community and our future. Children raised in loving and supportive environments are more likely to prosper academically and financially, becoming successful contributing members of society. Wisconsin must be a leader and champion for all of our children. We need to enhance the success of our communities by promoting programs and policies that seek to support the lives of children and families. Research has shown the most effective way to prevent child abuse & neglect is to provide support to families so children can grow up in an environment that supports their wellbeing. Preventing child abuse and neglect results in better childhoods, ultimately saving millions of dollars currently needed for the services that address the short and long-term effects of abuse on children, their families, and our communities.

The savings generated through prevention can be used to serve our communities in other ways, making them safer, economically successful, and great places to live and grow.

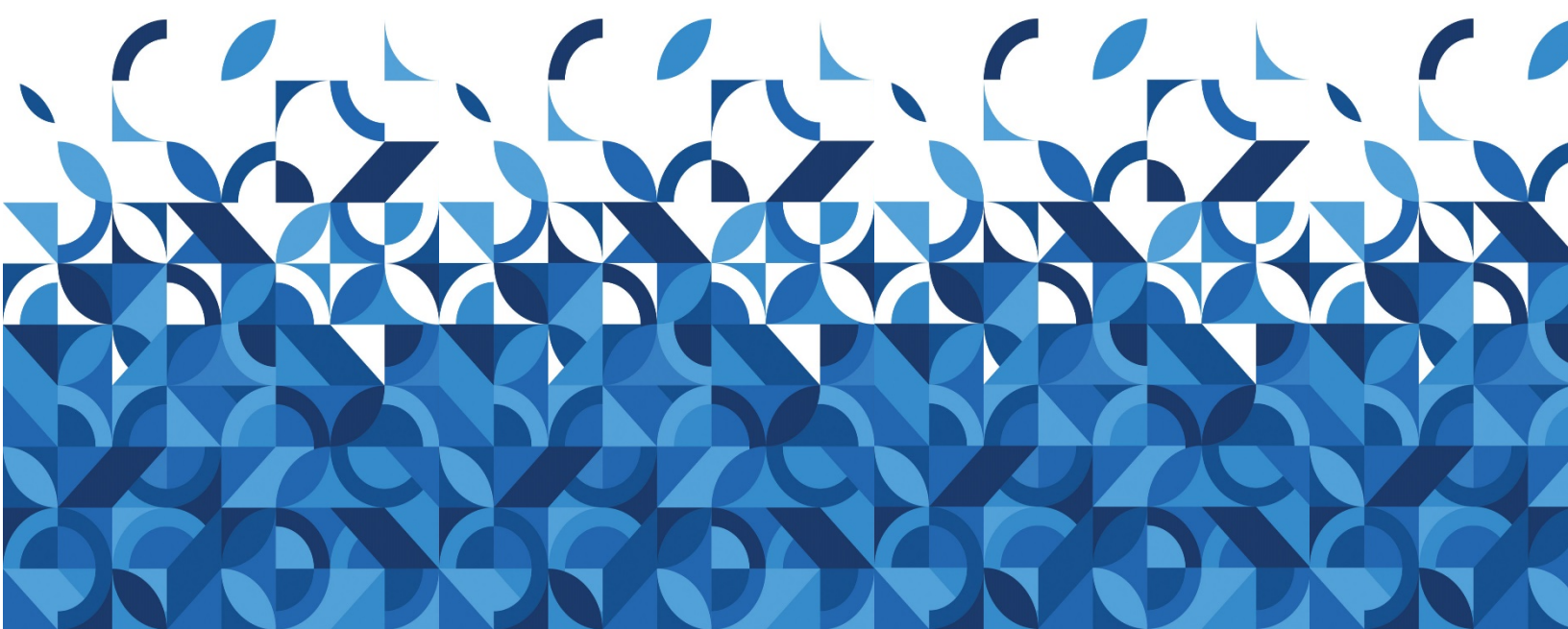
This toolkit provides information to communities, organizations, and individuals on how to promote Family Strengthening efforts in April and throughout the year. Please feel free to use the ideas presented or use the information to develop your own ideas. It doesn't matter how big or small your effort. Prevention is not only about preventing a negative from occurring, but also about promoting the positive.

Join the Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board, Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin (PCAW), a program of Children's Wisconsin, and the Department of Children and Families in our Family Strengthening Month activities.



Table of Contents

April is National Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month	1
Create a Plan for Action!	3
Ways to Promote Family Strengthening	4
Media Tips.....	7
Social Media Tips.....	8
Family Strengthening Resources	12
2022 Wear Blue Day Flyer.....	13
2021 Governor's Proclamation.....	14
<i>*notification will be sent when the 2022 Governor's Proclamation is available</i>	
Sample Letters and Press Releases.....	15



Create a Plan for Action!

This toolkit provides ideas for planning a Family Strengthening campaign for April and throughout the year. Developing a strategy early will ensure the best outcomes for your organization. Use these steps to create your action plan:

- Develop a timeline
- Identify the audience(s) you are trying to reach
- Tailor message to each identified audience
- Choose activities to implement in your community
- Involve the media (traditional and social media).

Check back for more

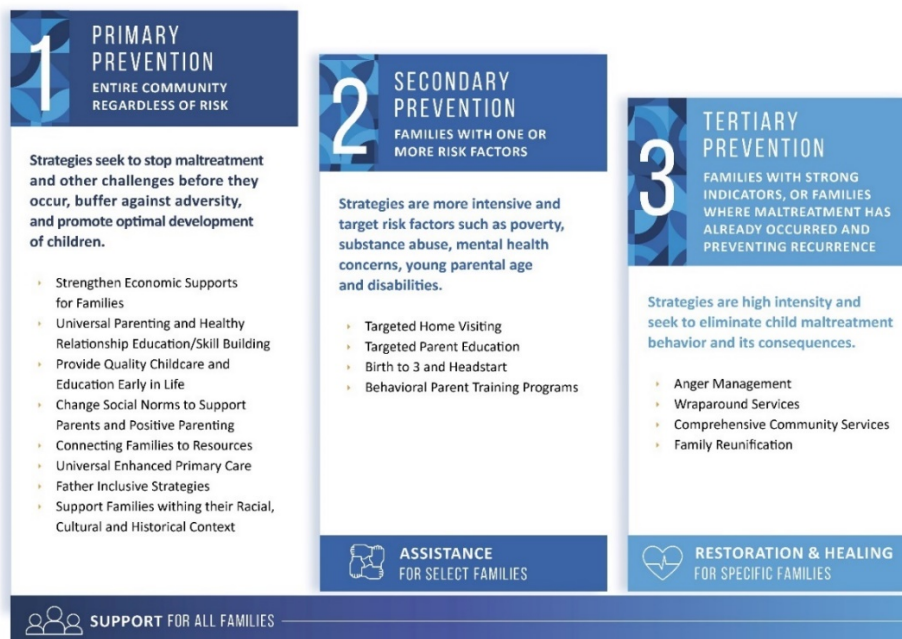
Family strengthening occurs all year-long so check back for new ideas and activities to use throughout the year.

Build a community partnership

The power of building community awareness comes from the idea of strengths in numbers. Join resources by partnering with other organizations, business leaders, faith-based groups, families, teachers, law enforcement, students, or other adults to implement effective family strengthening strategies that promote safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children and families.

Definitions

Primary Prevention focuses on the general public, addressing root causes and underlying factors to stop child maltreatment **prior to occurrence**. Primary prevention activities with a universal focus are broadly accessible and seek to benefit all members of a population regardless of risk.



Ways to Promote Family Strengthening

Public Awareness

- Five for Families is a statewide public awareness campaign developed as a universal prevention strategy by the Prevention Board. The primary goal of the campaign is to increase knowledge of the Protective Factors Framework, an evidence-informed, strengths-based approach to child maltreatment prevention and family well-being promotion created by the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Visit FiveforFamilies.org for more information.
- Get involved with the statewide *CLICK for Babies* Campaign, clickforbabies.org.



- Set up a display, here are some examples:
 - Number of children/families who participated in your programs (playgroups, parenting classes, etc.) this past year.
 - Number of children born in your town, county during 2021.
- Have children color pinwheel or garden-themed coloring sheets (available at www.preventchildabusewi.org) and display them at your site or in public places such as bank, library, etc.
- Decorate “Donation Jars” and put them in stores to collect money for a family strengthening program in your area (family resource center, home visitation program, after-school care, day care), or for Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin.
- Decorate your site with flowers or pinwheels. You can purchase pinwheels from Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin at preventchildabusewi.org.
- At work, employees give a donation to wear *blue* jeans on one day. Monies raised would be given to a family strengthening agency.
- Join Children’s Advocacy Network to stay up-to-date on Children’s Wisconsin’s policy work and what they are doing to help children and families. Learn more at <https://childrenswi.org/ways-to-help/advocacy/childrens-advocacy-network/>



Community Involvement

- Ask local businesses to display informational or promotional materials that promote Family Strengthening Month.
- Host a parent support group in a local church, school, library or social service agency. Host a family fun event, such as a family story time, craft event, family game or movie night.
- Work with a local Family Resource Center, Community Center, Family Respite Center or Crisis Nursery to collect needed items.
- Involve Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops, church groups, youth groups, school groups or classes, and other volunteers to distribute pinwheel pictures or pinwheels throughout your community.
- Ask schools, faith organizations, businesses, and others to share messages about strengthening families in their newsletter and bulletins.
- Advocate in local healthcare systems to promote the *Period of PURPLE Crying* or other Abusive Head Trauma Prevention initiatives.
- Connect with your local home visiting services, advocate to start one if none are available in your community.
- Contact local area politicians to advocate for city/county recognition of April Family Strengthening Month.
- Connect with other organizations that have awareness events that align with April Family Strengthening Month messaging.
- Distribute seed packets with information on growing strong families and children.

Trainings

- Host a Stewards of Children™ training to educate adults to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. It is the job of adults to protect our children. Find out more at a2awisconsin.org
- Arrange to host a *Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work* training to educate professionals who work with children and families on effective strategies to strengthen families and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. To request more information or to schedule a training, please complete the [Training Request Form](#) found on the Prevention Board's website. Arrange a *Triple P* session for parents and caregivers. Triple P is an approach to parenting that helps families gain the skills and confidence to handle life's ups and downs. Contact PreventionBoard@wisconsin.gov to discuss options and to schedule a training.
- Work with area organizations, youth sports leagues, schools, faith communities and anyone interested in assuring safe environments for kids while participating in programs by arranging for a training on Policies and Procedures to protect children from child sexual abuse. Find out more at a2awisconsin.org.



Stay Connected

- Visit our websites:
 - Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin: preventchildabusewi.org
 - Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board: preventionboard.wi.gov
- Connect to community partners, services and local stakeholders via social media to promote, share and collaborate on prevention efforts.
- Learn more about supporting families at:
 - www.fiveforfamilies.org
 - www.preventchildabuse.org
 - <https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/#resources>



Media Tips

One of the best ways to reach a broad audience is to make the most of the available media platforms. Planning is an important step in building your message on the importance of family strengthening. These media tips will help you plan and prepare to promote your family strengthening efforts and activities through both traditional and social media outlets.

Consider the message

We encourage organizations to share the vision that all Wisconsin (your community) children and families have opportunities and support to be safe, stable and connected in their communities. People respond better when we share stories of the benefits and impact of programs. Some ways to promote the importance of building productive and prosperous futures for our children include:

- Educating and engaging community members to focus on family strengthening programs
- Reminding the community that being a parent is challenging.
- Highlighting approaches and resources that provide families with support.
- Encouraging community members to help lead, plan, and participate in events so that they have the opportunity to contribute and become invested.

Establish your message for strengthening families.

Build your message to motivate people to action.

- Create a call to action through your social media platforms indicating how individuals, groups, and organizations can participate in family strengthening efforts.
- Share success stories from family strengthening and support efforts both within and outside the community.
- Be clear and consistent in your commitments to support family strengthening programs and efforts.
- State the importance of family strengthening and support in combating child maltreatment.
- Use images to portray a positive and engaged community.

Social Media Tips

Social media is a perfect way to get people excited about your campaign. Use social media to engage communities and organizations. Start a dialogue and follow the conversations that take place. By monitoring and being actively involved in the discussion about family strengthening you are able to:

- Frame your message appropriately.
- Develop successful campaigns.
- Respond quickly to negative feedback.
- Positively influence how the public perceives family strengthening efforts.
- Share positive responses through retweets, shares, and likes.
- Control the flow of incorrect information by answering questions or responding to misconceptions that people may have.

Below are tips for using social media. We encourage you to use these samples and variations on these same themes during April Family Strengthening Month and throughout the year during your family strengthening initiatives.

General Social Media Tips

- Post when your audience is active to increase engagement. Recommended times to post are: between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- Include a call to action asking people to share, like, retweet or comment on your post.
- Use visual or interactive content like photos, videos, and links in your postings.
- Respond to comments and posts to foster dialogue.
- Live stream family strengthening events and activities. Remember to make Family Strengthening posts **public**.
- Use the hashtags: #familystrengthening and #WearBlueDay2022
- *For safety and security purposes, **do not** include any personal or private information in public social media posts.*
- Follow our social media sites and share posts during April
 - <https://www.facebook.com/preventionboard>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/ChildAbusePrevention>
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/wi-child-abuse-and-neglect-prevention-board-b365b0203/>



Facebook - Sample Post



IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
	<p>We can build healthier, safer, and thriving communities for children if we work together to support children and families. Leave a comment and let us know what you are doing to strengthen families in April. Share with your friends and get them involved too!</p>

IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
	<p>Simple actions can make a big difference. Volunteer at a pre-school, spruce up a community playground, or provide a family with a ride or a meal. You can offer support to families in your community. Leave us a comment and tell us how you're making an impact during Family Strengthening Month.</p>

IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
 <p data-bbox="199 1598 686 1627">This April, Celebrate Your Strengths </p>	<p>HEAD: This April, Celebrate Your Strengths</p> <p>April is Family Strengthening Month! Now's the perfect time to celebrate your family's strengths! Research shows there are 5 Strengths that help families weather difficulties and better care for one another. Find tips and ideas for building on your family's strengths at FiveforFamilies.org.</p>



IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
 <p data-bbox="188 632 529 655">This April, Build Inner Strength</p> 	<p data-bbox="732 289 1214 321">HEAD: This April, Build Inner Strength</p> <p data-bbox="732 359 1308 594">Take time to recharge and manage stress in healthy ways. It is an important part of caring for your whole family. This April, celebrate Family Strengthening Month by learning ways to build your inner strength. Find useful ideas and learn about the 5 Strengths that help families thrive at FiveforFamilies.org.</p>

IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
	<p data-bbox="732 814 1276 911">Get ready for #WearBlue4Kids Day Friday, April 1! Show your support by wearing blue and posting a pic.</p>

Twitter – Sample Post

- We all have a role to play in supporting Wisconsin families. Learn more about what you can do at preventchildabusewi.org
- Get ready for #WearBlue4Kids Day Friday, April 1! Show your support by wearing blue and posting a pic.
- [Learn about family strengths at fiveforfamilies.org.](https://fiveforfamilies.org)

Instagram - Sample Post

IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
	<p>During April we are sharing information and ideas on how to support and strengthen families. Learn more at www.preventchildabusewi.org and www.preventionboard.wi.gov.</p>



IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
	<p>April is Family Strengthening Month! Throughout the month, we'll be holding events and working to build healthier, safer, and thriving communities for children. Leave a comment and let us know what you are doing. Share with your friends and get them involved too!</p>

IMAGE PREVIEW	CONTENT
	<p>Your child deserves a great childhood. Family Strengthening Month is the perfect time to celebrate strong Wisconsin families and grow your family strengths.</p>

For additional outreach ideas and social media sample posts, please visit the [Children's Bureau's Prevention Month Web page](#); [Prevent Child Abuse America](#) and <https://preventionboard.wi.gov/Pages/OurWork/FFFPreventionMonth.aspx>



Family Strengthening Resources

Below are links for resources to use in planning events and/or for families to use. There are specific activities, family strengthening information on these sites.

- www.fiveforfamilies.org
- <https://childrenswi.org/childrens-and-the-community/community-partners-professionals/child-abuse-prevention/prevent-child-abuse-wisconsin/resources>
- <https://preventionboard.wi.gov/Pages/OurWork/FFFPreventionMonth.aspx>
- <https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/#resources>
- www.preventchildabusewi.org
- www.preventchildabuse.org
- HOPE www.positiveexperience.org
- Short video on upstream: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pn2akD5joXM&t=13s>

Note: The focus of Family Strengthening Month is not just to prevent child abuse and neglect but rather to promote optimal child development through strengthening families. However, reporting child abuse and neglect is mandatory and necessary in some situations. In Wisconsin, to report a case of child abuse or neglect, contact the county or tribe where the child or child's family lives. If the agency is not known, contact the closest county. See the Department of Children and Families website for more information:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/reportabuse>

2022 Wear Blue Day Flyer

April is Family Strengthening Month



Wear **BLUE** on April 1, 2022 to show your support.

Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. Show your support by promoting and strengthening prevention efforts in Wisconsin.

Take a picture of yourself and your colleagues wearing blue and share it on your favorite social media platform using the **#pinwheelsforpreventionwi** hashtag.



[Download the Wear Blue Day Poster](#)

2021 Governor's Proclamation

STATE of WISCONSIN



OFFICE of the GOVERNOR

Proclamation

WHEREAS; child abuse and neglect are pervasive—yet preventable—issues affecting communities across Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS; what is best for our kids is what is best for our state, which is why caregivers, families, communities, and government agencies must work together to create safe, stable, and nurturing environments for all children; and

WHEREAS; research demonstrates that building family protective factors—including social and emotional competence of children, knowledge of parenting and child development, social connections, parental resilience, and concrete supports in times of need—can promote the optimal development of children and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS; child maltreatment can be prevented by ensuring our state's families are supported in building these protective factors through strengths-based policies, programming, and public awareness; and

WHEREAS; the pinwheel has come to serve as the physical embodiment, or reminder, of the great childhoods we want for all children and, throughout the month of April, we embrace Prevent Child Abuse America's Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign; and

WHEREAS; this month, the state of Wisconsin joins the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families in reaffirming our commitment to making a difference in the lives of kids across our state by working to strengthen families and the communities in which they live;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim April 2021 as

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION MONTH

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state's residents.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 10th day of March 2021.


TONY EVERS
GOVERNOR

By the Governor:


DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE
Secretary of State



Sample Letters and Press Releases

The Honorable (full name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative/Senator (last name),

Please join our local and national efforts to draw attention to the importance of family strengthening during April 2022, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month.

We need your support for Wisconsin by helping citizens become actively involved in family strengthening initiatives (home visitation, maternal health). Please lend your leadership by publicly promoting the message that together we can be instrumental in supporting children and families.

Ways to promote prevention efforts:

- Advocate for family strengthening programs and the importance of strong families.
- Spread the word that we can save lives and money by supporting family strengthening programs and initiatives instead of treating the lifelong harm caused by childhood adversity and trauma after the fact.
- **Allocate** funds to organizations and other resources designed to support and strengthen families.
- Promote and support legislation that grows healthy children and families.
- Make family strengthening a priority every day rather than one month per year.

As a public leader, your involvement will draw much needed attention to this important issue while motivating caring citizens to act. Please help spread the word that we can and will make a difference **in the lives of Wisconsin children.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Print on your agency/organization letterhead

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Town/City/County Name) Residents Support Family Strengthening Efforts by Wearing Blue

(Your agency/organization name) encourages (town, city, county) residents to wear blue on Friday, April 1, 2022, to help promote Family Strengthening Month. We believe that we can build healthier, safer and thriving communities for our children if we work together for support families and children. When we focus on strengthening families, the results are better childhoods, leading to healthier adults and stronger communities.

Please join us on April 1st by wearing blue to help promote positive childhood experiences in nurturing environments that will provide fertile ground for children's physical and mental health, learning and social skills.

To learn more about family strengthening visit:

- (your agency website)
- Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin: preventchildabusewi.org
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board: preventionboard.wi.gov



Print on your agency/organization letterhead

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Family Strengthening Month

City/State April is Family Strengthening Month. This month and throughout the year, (your agency/organization name) encourages all individuals and organizations to support family strengthening efforts in Wisconsin. Children do well when their parents do well. Research shows that positive childhood experiences in nurturing environments provide fertile ground for children's physical and mental health, learning and social skills. We can build healthier, safer and thriving communities for our children if we work together to collaboratively support children and families. Community members can support one another by:

- Taking time to talk to parents in your neighborhood – get to know them.
- Sharing local resources with families.
- Advocating for legislation and funding which support family programs within your community.
- Donating new or gently used clothing, toys to programs that support families with children.
- Bringing a meal or groceries to a family with young children.
- Organizing a family fun event – such as a family story night, game or movie night.

To learn more about family strengthening and for more ideas how to become involved, visit:

- (your agency website)
- Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin: preventchildabusewi.org
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board: preventionboard.wi.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE