





Parent Services Project engages and strengthens families to take leadership in assuring the well-being of all children, families, and communities.

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Leaders for Change:

PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN ACTION

Participant's Manual

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Leaders for Change Overview

We are pleased that you have chosen to participate in this fun, interactive training series. Leaders for Change is designed for parent leaders like you. It will help you identify your leadership strengths and then build on them, equiping you to take on new leadership roles in the systems that serve children and families.

Our approach starts with the belief that we are all leaders and can create even more change when connected with one another. This free program will give you the opportunity to participate and engage in relevant workshops focused on respecting who you are, developing your voice and leadership style, building positive relationships, and enhancing your own internal strengths to create change in your community.

Leaders for Change is a 20-hour training broken into three different modules focused on leadership of self, family, community and systems.

Training topics

- The Five Protective Factors
- Identifying and affirming individual leadership styles, strengths and skills
- Enhanced cultural competence by working with others
- Practicing advocacy skills to create change in systems
- Conflict-resolution skills and communication strategies

What you will learn

- Information about the Protective Factors and their role in strengthening families
- New leadership, communication and advocacy skills to create change in systems serving families

Supports for participants

- Free training, materials and supplies
- Incentives for participation
- High-quality child supervision
- Simultaneous interpretation
- Written materials available in English and Spanish
- Meals and snacks

Leaders for Change Protective Factors In Action

Agenda – Day 1: Leadership of Self and Family

8:30 a.m.	Registration		
9:00 a.m	n Welcome and introductions		
	Warm-up activity: Dancing cards		
	Logistics for Day 1		
	Overview of Leaders for Change and Module One		
	What fills you up?		
	Setting the stage		
	Informed consent and pre-evaluation survey		
	Creating community agreements		
	Our leaders, ourselves		
	The Five Protective Factors in pictures and plain language		
	Visioning		
11:30 a.m.	Lunch and listening partnerships		
1	Scavenger hunt		
	Our leadership stories: Family shield		
C	Environmental scan and setting goals		
	Storyboard of systems		
	Take-home assignments, daily feedback and closing thoughts		

4:00 p.m. Closing

Putting it into practice – Take-home assignments

Complete/share your family shield with your family Move forward with your first strategic goal Community analysis with Five Factors

Light up tomorrow with activities today

What Fills You Up?

As parents and caregivers, our focus is often on meeting the needs of our children and families. Our lives can get very busy, and in responding to daily demands, we can ignore our own need for self-care and a sense of well-being. Yet, making the time to reduce our stress levels is essential in order for us to continue supporting our children and families. Sometimes, we can find ways to relax that do not take much time and really help in the moment. Other times, we need additional support so that we can take time just for ourselves. As family leaders, let's reflect on our personal well-being and identify what we can do to ensure we are taking good care of ourselves.

What helps me relax or brings me joy?	When can I do this?	Who can support me (if needed)?
G		

Visioning

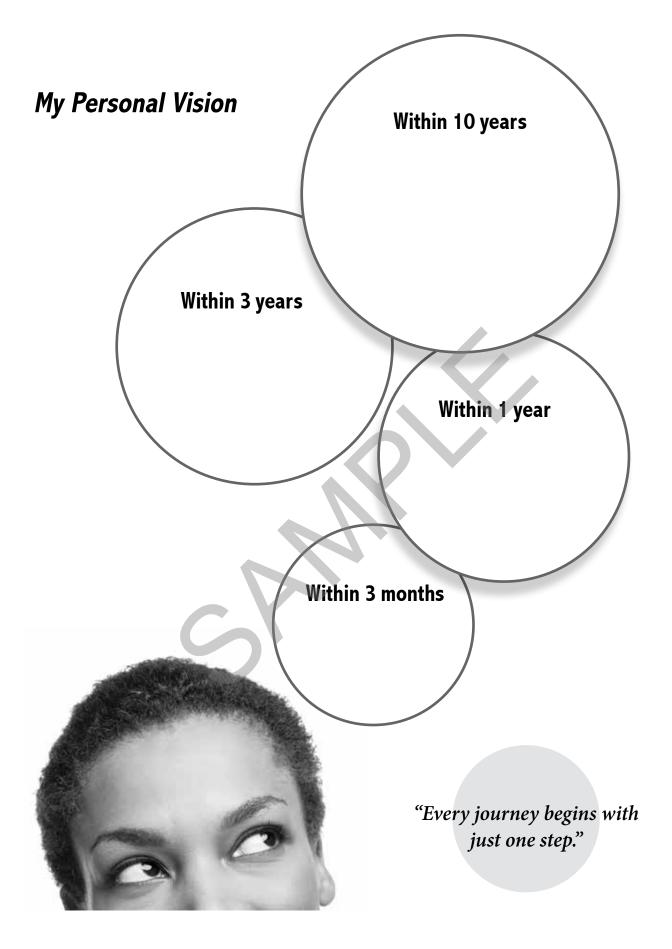
What does "vision" mean to you?

How do leaders use visions?

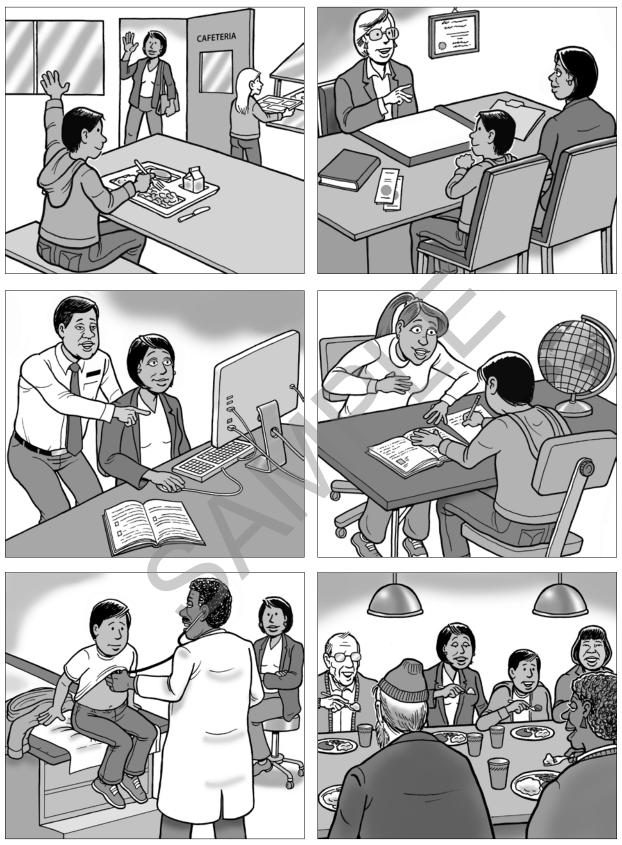
Visions can be a unifying tool, both inside of ourselves and with a collective group of people who share the same desire. Vision is encompassing, it is head and heart. Vision is magnetic, it pulls you towards it. My vision pulls me towards success.

Questions to ask when creating your personal vision:

- What does my future look like?
- Who am I with?
- What am I doing?
- How do I feel mentally, physically, spiritually?



An average day for a mom and her son



Illustrations by Steve Greenberg

Leaders for Change Putting it into practice

Name _____ Date _____

Take-home assignment

Choose a formal system, such as the school system or health care system, that your family interacts with regularly. Refer back to the Five Protective Factors, how you defined them in your own words and what they look like in daily life. Answer these questions as you assess where system support for the Five Protective Factors is strong or where it needs to be strengthened. Please bring your assessment based on your perspective as a family leader to our next session.

Which system are your assessing?

Parent resilience

How does the system create opportunities for families to advocate for themselves?

Social connections

How does the system create opportunities for families to build relationships with other families?

Concrete support

How does the system share information with families about resources such as housing, food and nutrition, health care, child care or other basic needs?

Knowledge of parenting/child development

How does the system help families build knowledge and skills related to parenting and their children's development?

Social/emotional competence of children

How does the system address the unique social and emotional needs of children?



Social and Emotional Competence of Children

As we grow and age, the skills and abilities that make up our social and emotional development build on each other. Family leaders are in a powerful position to enhance these skills in our own homes and to advocate in communities and systems so that our children receive the right supports for their success. These skills include:

- Understanding our own feelings and communicating them to others.
- Managing our feelings and responding constructively to emotional challenges.
- Regulating our own behavior.
- Being able to see and understand how others are feeling.
- Having empathy for others.
- Building healthy relationships.

A family leader's role

Parents and caregivers are children's first teachers and the ones they learn from as models. When our children see how we communicate with others, express our feelings, and respect the feelings and perspectives of others, those behaviors become the foundation for their own development.

The more a parent supports her or his child's healthy development, the better the parent-child relationship can be. They are likely to have fewer conflicts and more positive interactions. In our homes, we start by praising the children's behaviors we want to encourage and encouraging them to talk about their feelings. When they are emotionally competent, they are better prepared for school and their future.

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The Power of "I" Messages

One way to communicate in a way that takes responsibility for the thoughts and feelings we want to express is to use "I" messages. Instead of blaming others, "I" messages focus on the feelings or needs we want to express.

"I" messages have four parts

I feel..... (emotion)

When (action or behavior)

Because..... (effect)

I would like..... (specific new action or behavior)

"I" messages example

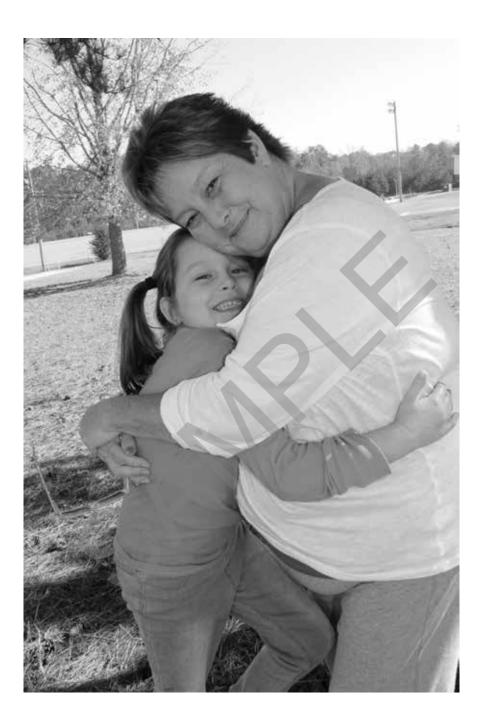
I feel upset when the dishes are left in the sink because there's no space to wash vegetables for our dinner. I'd like you to please wash your dishes before 6 every day.

Negative, blaming example

I'm so sick of how messy and inconsiderate you are of me. You better wash those dishes or else.

Notice that the "I" message example does not include name-calling, blaming or humiliating statements.

Practicing "I" messages can turn conflicts into learning opportunities that help us gain insight into each other. These messages help us to share how others are affecting us while still leaving space for constructive dialogue.



Protective Factors Bingo

Human bingo is a fun way to get to know others in the Leaders for Change training, and to reflect on how the Protective Factors are at work in our own lives. For each box, find someone for whom the statement is true. Have the person sign the box. Don't forget to call bingo when you fill up your sheet.

Has developed a close bond with her or his child	Knows where families can find help in their community	Has sought information about her or his child's developmental phase
Recognizes when she or he is stressed and has a coping strategy	Can name three people in her or his personal network of support	Spends regular, quality time with her or his child
Recognizes her or his child's accomplishments and encourages them	Can name a long-term goal for herself or himself	Can name three things she or he likes to do for fun or relaxation
Has reached out to a friend or family member in need	Regularly participates in a social group	Has successfully handled a problem or crisis

Community Action Cycle

