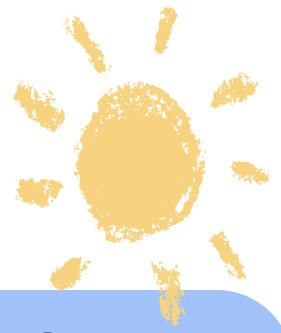


A Way of Being with Children

Practical Tools for Connection, Safety, and HOPE in Early Childhood



BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

Strong Communities Build Childhood Resilience

Children do not grow in isolation - they grow within families, schools, and communities. Every interaction a child has with caring adults helps shape how safe, supported, and connected they feel in the world. When families, teachers, neighbors, and community members work together, children experience a wider circle of care. This shared support helps to reduce stress, increase opportunities for connection, and build resilience over time. It truly takes a community to raise resilient children. When adults show up with consistency, kindness, and collaboration, children learn that they are not alone - they are part of something bigger.

How Community Support Impacts Children

When children are supported by a caring community, they are more likely to:

- **Feel a strong sense of belonging** because they are surrounded by familiar, supportive people
- **Develop trust in others** because they experience consistent care across different relationships
- **Build social and communication skills** through interactions with a variety of people
- **Feel safe asking for help** because they learn that support is available beyond just one adult
- **Develop resilience and confidence** because multiple caring relationships provide stability during challenges

These experiences create a strong foundation for emotional well-being, healthy relationships, and success later in life.

Key Skills for Parents

1. Build Connections - take small steps to connect with other families, teachers, and community members. Relationships grow over time through simple, consistent, positive interactions.

2. Be Open and Inclusive - welcome different cultures, perspectives, and experiences. A strong community values diversity and creates a sense of belonging for all.

3. Offer and Accept Support - community is about both giving and receiving. Asking for help and offering help strengthens connections and reduces stress.

4. Model Kindness and Respect - children learn from watching adults. Everyday acts of kindness and cooperation teach children how to build healthy relationships.

5. Stay Engaged - be present in your child's school and community when possible. Even small acts of involvement show children that they are supported by many.



A Way of Being Reminder

Building community is not about doing more - it is about being connected. When adults create a network of care, children feel safe, valued, and supported from many directions. These strong, connected relationships become a powerful foundation for resilience, belonging, and lifelong well-being.

What a Supportive Community Looks Like

- Families connecting and supporting one another
- Teachers and caregivers working in partnership
- Neighbors showing care and looking out for everyone's children
- Shared spaces that feel safe, welcoming, and inclusive
- Adults modeling kindness, respect, and cooperation

Everyday Practices

- Greet and connect with other families at drop-off or in your neighborhood
- Encourage your child to build friendships and practice kindness
- Get to know your child's teachers and other caregivers
- Participate in simple community or school activities when possible
- Share resources, ideas, or support with other families
- Talk with your child about helping others and being part of a community
- Create opportunities for your child to interact with different people (extended family, neighbors, peers)

Try This!

- **Families:** Introduce yourself to another parent or caregiver this week
- **Teachers:** Create simple opportunities for families to connect
- **Together:** Plan one small shared activity (e.g., reading, playtime, or a group chat for updates)

Scan the QR Code for More Resources:



Key Skills for Parents

- **Start Small and Stay Connected** - take small steps to connect with other families, teachers, and community members. A smile, greeting, or short conversation can begin building relationships that grow over time through consistent, positive everyday interactions.
- **Be Open, Inclusive, and Respectful** - welcome different cultures, perspectives, and experiences. Modeling kindness, respect, and inclusion teaches children how to build healthy, supportive relationships and creates a sense of belonging for all.
- **Offer and Accept Support** - community is about both giving and receiving. Asking for help and offering support strengthens connections, reduces stress, and shows children that no one has to do or go through things alone.
- **Stay Engaged, Every Adult Matters** - be present in your child's school and community when possible. Children benefit from having multiple caring adults in their lives, and even small acts of involvement show them they are supported from many directions.
- **Connection Builds Safety Over Time** - when children see adults working together consistently, they feel more secure and confident. Strong communities are built through ongoing, everyday moments — not one-time events.

Reflection for Parents

- Who are the supportive people in my child's life?
- How can I help my child feel connected to others?
- What is one small way I can build community this week?
- How do I model kindness, inclusion, and cooperation for my child?