

# Standards of Quality

**What does it mean  
to be a quality Family  
Strengthening and Support  
program?**

**What common  
language can we use  
for working effectively  
with families?**

**How can programs  
use the Standards  
to advance diversity,  
equity, and inclusion?**

## for Family Strengthening & Support

### OVERVIEW

The nationally-adopted Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support are designed to be used by all Family Strengthening and Support stakeholders - public departments, foundations, community-based organizations, and families - as a tool for planning, providing, and assessing quality services. The vision is that their implementation will help ensure that families are supported and strengthened through quality practice.

The Standards create common language and expectations in the Family Support and Strengthening field across different kinds of programs, such as Family Resource Centers, home visiting programs, and child development programs.

The Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support establish how two key frameworks in the Family Strengthening and Support field, the Principles of Family Support Practice developed by Family Support America and the Strengthening Families Framework and Approach developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, can be applied together programmatically. The Standards demonstrate and measure how to work with families with a family-centered, strengths-based, multigenerational approach to support them to build research-based, evidence-informed protective factors that increase family stability, enhance child development, and reduce child abuse and neglect.

The Standards, which originated in 2012, were thoroughly revised and revised in 2020 by the National Family Support Network Member Networks across the United States, parent leaders, representatives of the Family Strengthening and Support organizations in Canada. They reflect an enhanced focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion and addressing community conditions that impact families' healthy development.

# STANDARDS OF QUALITY FOR FAMILY STRENGTHENING & SUPPORT

## CONTENT

The Standards address 5 areas of practice important for any Program or individual working with families through 17 standards, each with Foundational and High Quality Indicators and implementation examples:

### FAMILY CENTEREDNESS

Working with a family-centered approach that values families and recognizes them as integral to the Program.

### FAMILY STRENGTHENING

Utilizing a family strengthening approach to support families to be strong, healthy, and safe, thereby promoting their success and optimal development.

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Valuing, respecting, and embracing families' diversity, and advancing equity and inclusion.

### COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING

Developing a strong and healthy community by working collaboratively with various stakeholders and supporting families' civic engagement, leadership development, and ability to affect systems change.

### EVALUATION

Looking at areas of Program strength, as well as areas for further development, in order to guide continuous quality improvement and achieve positive results for families.

## TRAINING

Training is a fundamental strategy for implementing the Standards effectively. The Standards Certification Training, developed by the National Family Support Network (NFSN), is provided by Member Networks in their geographic areas. The Certification Training is designed for all management and direct service staff, as well as for funders. Each participant who successfully completes the training receives a certificate from the NFSN that is valid for two years. To see if the Certification Training is offered in your area, please visit: [www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/certification-trainings](http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/certification-trainings).

The cost for a virtual Certification Training is \$7,500 for NFSN Member Networks and \$8,000 for non-Members for up to 36 participants, which includes all materials. For two Certification Trainings with up to 72 participants, the cost is \$14,000 for NFSN Member Networks and \$15,000 for non-Members. The cost for an in-person Certification Training within the continental United States is \$8,500 for NFSN Member Networks and \$9,000 for non-Members. The host also needs to provide the training venue as well as continental breakfast and lunch for participants.

To explore bringing the Certification Training to your area, please contact Julie Matusick, NFSN Senior Manager - Standards Training & Implementation, at [julie@nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org](mailto:julie@nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org).

## MORE INFORMATION

Visit [www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards-of-quality](http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards-of-quality) to download the Standards and implementation tools for free and to access additional information and resources.

The NFSN offers a free Standards Overview webinar on the second Wednesday of each month, 2:30-3:45pmET. To register, or to access a previously recorded webinar, please visit [www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/virtual-events](http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/virtual-events).

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

These tools have been designed to support effective implementation of the Standards:

- [Program Self-Assessment Tool](#) - designed to be used for Program reflection by teams of managers, direct service staff, parent leaders, and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- [Staff Self-Reflection Checklist](#) - a set of self-reflection questions for staff members to use as a daily reminder to implement the Standards.
- [Standards Participant Survey](#) - a set of questions for Program participants to indicate how well the Program is meeting the Standards from their perspective. The tool is available in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

