



FAMILIES

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

TOGETHER

ORIENTATION FOR ENGAGEMENT AND DISSEMINATION PARTNERS

We Care About Each Other! Connectedness

Theme 3: “*We Care About Each Other! Connectedness*” is the *Families Tackling Tough Times Together* resilience theme for this week. According to Froma Walsh, one of the world’s leading scientific experts on family resilience, even though many families are spending much more time together than usual, it still can take effort to nurture strong positive connections with each other. As Froma explains, families with strong connections encourage each other, support each other, and help each other to build on their strengths.

Encouragement is an essential part of family **connectedness**. Families that work together through adversity provide mutual support, commitment, and a strong dedication to teamwork. This collection includes ideas to help parents/caregivers, children, youth, young adults, and older adults build skills related to the theme of providing encouragement through **connectedness**. All of these activities were chosen to easily fit into everyday routines – sometimes even to make them easier – and all are backed by good science. We hope you find the ideas to be useful, and maybe make life a little easier.

In order to practice skills of **connectedness** this week’s activities encourage family members to:

1. Count on each other for mutual support
2. Encourage each other and build on current strengths

For example, in this week’s collection there is an activity for children titled, “**Making Connections**.” You can engage in discussion about the activity with families and ask them to share how they engaged with this activity at home. Another approach is to “seed” the conversation of the families you work with by sharing your own attempts at using this activity, or by encouraging specific family members to post stories (especially if you know they engaged in the activities). For example, an extension educator shared a picture of her own children engaging in the “**Making Connections**” activity by preparing snail mail letters to send to loved ones in the FTTT Facebook page.

There are also activities in the kit this week that promote growing connections across Generations. For example, one group member posted a picture of her children tracing their bodies on a large piece of paper to send their grandma a “mail hug” with the caption, “We’re working on sending hugs to grandmas. Hopefully our hugs make it in time for Mother’s Day!” Another idea from Older Adults section of the kit is to encourage older adults and younger family members to discuss their favorite kinds of music. You might ask families to compare music genres together by listening to a concert online or attend a virtual art tour. Many museums offer online tours. Then ask families to share about their experiences.

For Additional Information on this Week’s Theme

[Watch the interview with Froma Walsh on ways families can engage in connectedness](#)