

# STANDARDS OF QUALITY FOR FAMILY STRENGTHENING & SUPPORT

*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 managers, direct service staff, and families work together to develop and sustain quality programs?*

## OVERVIEW

The nationally-adopted Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support integrate and operationalize the Principles of Family Support Practice and the Strengthening Families Framework and its research-based evidence-informed 5 Protective Factors.

The Standards have created a common language across different kinds of Family Strengthening and Family Support programs such as Family Resource Centers, home visiting programs, and child development programs. They were developed through an 18-month process which including being vetted by nearly 1,000 diverse organizations serving rural and urban populations.

The Standards are designed to be used by all stakeholders – public departments, foundations, networks, community based organizations, and families - as a tool for planning, providing, and assessing quality practice. The vision is that their implementation will help ensure that families are supported and strengthened through quality practice.

The Standards were issued by the California Network of Family Strengthening Networks (CNFSN) in 2012, and adopted by the National Family Support Network in 2013. They are built upon on the San Francisco Family Support Standards, which originated in 2007.

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## CONTENT

The Standards address 5 areas of practice important for any Program or individual working with families through 17 standards, each with minimum and high quality indicators and implementation examples:

### Family Centeredness

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

### Family Strengthening

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

### Embracing Diversity

Acknowledging and respecting families' diversity, supporting their participation in a diverse society, as well as engaging in ongoing learning and adaptation to diversity.

### Community Building

Contributing to building a strong and healthy community by facilitating families' social connections, developing their leadership skills, and by collaborating with other Programs.

### 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.

- **Certification Training:** Provided as an in-person full-day training or a virtual training with two half-day sessions. It is designed for all management and direct service staff, as well as for funders. Each individual who completes the training receives a certificate from the National Family Support Network (NFSN) that is valid for 2 years.

The cost is \$7,500 for NFSN Member Networks and \$8,000 for non-Members for up to 36 participants, which includes all materials. For the in-person option, the host will need to provide the training venue as well as continental breakfast and lunch for participants. There is no additional cost for trainer travel within the continental United States.

To explore bringing the Certification Training to your area, please contact Andrew Russo, NFSN Co-Founder and Director, at (415) 730-5310 or [andrew@nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org](mailto:andrew@nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org).

- **Training of Trainers:** NFSN Member Networks can develop their capacity provide the Standards Certification Training in their states through participating in an in-person or virtual Training of Trainers Institute.

## MORE INFORMATION

- Visit [www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards-of-quality](http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards-of-quality) to download the Standards for free and access additional information.
- The NFSN offers a free Standards Overview webinar on the second Wednesday of each month, 12:30-1:45pmET. To register, please visit [www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/virtual-events](http://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/virtual-events).

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The Standards are part of a suite of materials that are used for their implementation:

- **Program Self-Assessment Tool** - designed to be used as a critical thinking exercise by Program teams of managers, direct service staff, parent leaders, and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- **Staff Self-Reflection Checklist** - consists of 15 self-reflection questions for staff members to use as a daily reminder to implement the Standards.
- **Standards Participant Survey** - consists of 14 questions for Program participants to indicate how well a Program is meeting the Standards from the families' perspective. The survey is available in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

