

CONVERSATIONS for a better normal



The Alliance National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC) has created multiple need2know tools that are aligned with each of the five protective factors. These resources are shared in various formats on the Alliance website at ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/#resources

For some helpful tips on how to facilitate a conversation, check out the ANPPC's Conversation Guide at ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/#resources. You'll find step-by-step instructions on how to conduct an informal conversation about the way parents and caregivers build the Social and Emotional Competence of Children.

ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc



National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC)

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How Protective Factors Can Make Families Strong during COVID-19 Pandemic

With current events surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone is experiencing unprecedented stress and uncertainty. Research has found that when families are stressed, children are at an increased risk of being abused.¹

How can families stay strong and resilient during this time? We can call into action the protective factors we have been building to be resilient, stay socially connected (at a distance), access the concrete supports we need and support our children's physical and social and emotional development in this time of need.

The Alliance National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC) offers "Conversations for a Better Normal" as a way to generate important conversations with parents, community members, co-workers, staff and others. It is our hope that these conversations will help identify and acknowledge the protective factors that are operational in our lives and help us all learn to lean on each other in times of a crisis.

These conversations are organized around the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework. There are a number of Everyday Actions known to build each of the five protective factors. In this tool, you will find a question for each of the Everyday Actions for all five protective factors.

Ways to Use the Conversation Tool

The Group

- Consider the parent, staff or community group that might benefit from a conversation that focuses on strengths during this crisis.
- With your group in mind, use the facilitator worksheets to design your conversation for each protective factor.
- Brené Brown² shares that one of her key insights about remote learning is to deliver it in small chunks – not more than 30 minutes at a time.

The Questions

- Select the questions that seem to serve your group best at this time. Feel free to adjust or rewrite the questions to reflect your group's culture.
- You may choose to focus on a specific protective factor, or you may decide to combine questions from selected protective factors.
- You'll find a worksheet for each protective factor in the Participant Worksheets PDF. If you choose, you can distribute the worksheet to all of the participants before the scheduled meeting. Some virtual platforms, such as Zoom or GoToMeeting, will allow you to attach the worksheet as a handout for your meeting.

The Remote Platform

- Choose a remote platform for the conversation that serves you and your group's needs.³
- Organizing a virtual meeting requires some planning. There are many resources available to help you succeed in planning and promoting your conversation.⁴
- As we move forward from COVID-19, we may need to become more skilled in conversational leadership through multiple platforms and means.⁵

Facilitator Instructions

- Record and/or take comprehensive notes during the conversation. You may find that you need a volunteer to help with this if you are the facilitator. Capturing the wisdom and experiences shared during the conversation is key.
- Use the “Actionable Steps and Strategies” section of the tool to plan what actions you can take as a follow-up to what you learn from the conversation. You may learn of resources you would like to share more widely – or a specific need that needs to be met immediately. Sometimes a simple follow-up email or phone call to individual members of your group will help create lasting social connections and support during this stressful time.
- Complete the short Google Form at <https://forms.gle/fZGQQjHBHevme3EK9>. What we all learn collectively about how protective factors are supporting children and families during COVID-19 will help us be better prepared for future crises. Please take just a few minutes to share the wisdom of your peers and colleagues.

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Endnotes

- 1 American Academy of Pediatrics. “The American Academy of Pediatrics Advises Parents Experiencing Stress Over COVID-19” Web. 23 March 2020. [aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/The-American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Advises-Parents-Experiencing-Stress-over-COVID-19.aspx](https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/The-American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Advises-Parents-Experiencing-Stress-over-COVID-19.aspx)
- 2 Brown, Brené. “Collective Vulnerability, the FFTs of Online Learning, and the Sacredness of Bored Kids” Unlocking Us. Web. 21 March 2020. [brenebrown.com/blog/2020/03/21/collective-vulnerability](https://www.brenebrown.com/blog/2020/03/21/collective-vulnerability)
- 3 Smart Meetings. “12 Tech Tools For Virtual Meetings” Tips and Tools. Web. 4 March 2016. [smartmeetings.com/tips-tools/technology/85250/12-tech-tools-for-virtual-meetings](https://www.smartmeetings.com/tips-tools/technology/85250/12-tech-tools-for-virtual-meetings)
- 4 Sehl, Katie. “How To Host a Successful Virtual Event: Tips and Best Practices” Hootsuite. Web. 26 March 2020. blog.hootsuite.com/virtual-events
- 5 Gurteen, David. “Conversational Leadership: An Online Book” Retrieved online on 1 April 2020. [conversational-leadership.net](https://www.conversational-leadership.net) (This website is a book – a cross between a blog, a website and a book – that is updated daily. Anyone is free to browse the book, but you will have to register and login to access the full site.)

Defining the Five Protective Factors

Families are supported to build:

Parental Resilience

The ability to recover from difficult life experiences, and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.

Social Connections

The ability and opportunity to develop positive relationships that lessen stress and isolation and help to build a supportive network.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

The ability to exercise effective parenting strategies to guide and know what to expect as children develop in multiple domains (physical, cognitive, language and social and emotional).

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships.

Concrete Support in Times of Need

Access to supports and services that reduce stress and help to make families stronger.

ctfalliance.org/protective-factors

