

Finding Community Support

What would you do if . . .

- Your child had trouble adjusting to your recent divorce?
- You needed someone to take care of your child when you went back to work?
- You thought your child had a speech problem?
- You just needed to talk to somebody?



Let's face it. Raising children is a tough job. Although it can be the most rewarding experience in the world, it also can be the most demanding. No one can do it alone.

From time to time all parents need help. They may have problems like the ones above. Or they may need information on childbirth methods, a clinic that provides free health care, or someone to take care of their children during an emergency.

Just as children need the support of families, so families need the support of society.

No family can stand alone

Today, more than ever, families are dependent on other persons and institutions. Society has become more complex. Families often are far away from relatives who can be counted on to help out in a crisis. More and more households are headed by single parents. And even in families with two parents, it's becoming increasingly common for both parents to be at work during the day.

The modern family needs a wide range of services to survive and flourish. Fortunately, public and private agencies already provide many of these supports: diagnosis and treatment of health problems, financial aid, child care, parent education, information and referral, hotlines, legal assistance, and recreation services.

Sometimes these resources are hard to find. You may have to make an effort to find out what's available in your community. Local governments, churches, schools, and hospitals usually are helpful in locating services.



And, of course, there's still a lot more to be done. Employers, for instance, could give parents support through more flexible work hours, part-time work, time off for pregnancy or illness, and long-term releases for child rearing.

Our federal and state governments, too, could do much more to respond to the needs of families. National and local leaders are beginning to realize how social policy in areas such as employment, health care, and housing affects families. We are beginning to see that in order to preserve itself, our society must support families in every way possible.

A sign of strength

Too often, however, even when services are available, parents don't use them. They think that asking for help is a sign of weakness, and feel that they should be able to solve their problems on their own. They don't want to be thought of as failures.

But asking for help is not a sign of failure. Rather, it is a sign of wanting to be effective parents. It shows that you care about your children. When you seek out and accept help, your children are more likely to reach their full potential.

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You, too, can benefit from these supports. By participating in the give and take of society, you may feel less isolated and more a part of your community. Working with others can enable you to grow personally and learn what you have to offer to others. And it's always helpful to know that other people have similar problems.

Within your local community are services that can strengthen your family and expand the opportunities available to you and your children. To take advantage of these resources, make an effort to:

- Find out what services are available in your area and make use of them.
- Do your part to urge society to meet its responsibility to families.

Support is there for the taking.

Who's on your list?



Almost every community has individuals and institutions that provide supports of many different kinds. Knowing about these services can improve the quality of life for both you and your children. Take

some time to fill out the directory on the reverse. Use the phone directory, library, or public agencies to help you find information. You may be surprised at how many people there are ready to help you and your family.

Babysitting services. Contact colleges, high schools, women's organizations, relatives, and friends.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Recreation. Contact local and county recreation departments, museums, sports clubs, community pools, YMCA, or YWCA.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Single parent groups. Contact Parents Without Partners, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, or singles clubs.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Clinics. Contact your local health department or hospital. Ask about dental exams; checkups for eyes, speech, and hearing; chest exams; mental health services; and clinics for well babies.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Counseling. Contact churches, hotlines, clinics, or family service agencies.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Child care services. Contact your state Department of Social Services, Health Department, day care centers, nursery schools, or Head Start centers.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Parent education. Contact your PTA, YMCA, YWCA, Parent Effectiveness Training group, county office of the OSU Extension Service, Red Cross, adult education center, community college, or university.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

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