



## Strategies to Strengthen School Success Profile Dimensions

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These strategies are a supplement for teachers and parents willing to integrate strategies between home, school, neighborhood and community. The School Success Profile is a measure of student strengths and needs that then can be used to develop outreach programs to engage students and their parents, teachers, and the schools in supporting a child's educational success. There are more strategies than this, but perhaps these will provide some ideas to get started.

### **Neighborhood**



### **Neighborhood support**

Get to know your neighbors. Start by smiling and waving when you see them. Introduce yourself and your family members when you have time and are not rushed.

Stop and chat at the mailboxes, in the Laundromat, or by the curb.

Invite neighbors over for dinner, dessert or to sit on the porch.

Personally invite neighbors to school functions and events (sports, plays and concerts, etc.).

When you know a neighbor is in need, offer to drive or help out.

Help elderly or disabled neighbors with household chores and yard work.

**Parents/caregivers** - give your neighbors "permission" to contact you if they have concerns about your child's behaviors. Tell your child that other adults in the neighborhood are looking out for them too.

Post flyers and posters about school and youth activities and events in public places in the neighborhood.

Identify adult neighbors that seem to like youth and enlist their help in creating youth-friendly feelings among neighbors.

Create community events where youth and adults work and play together (e.g., clean-up community day, neighborhood picnics, sporting events).

### **Neighborhood Safety**

Work to create a safer neighborhood. Contact local officials and the police to learn about (neighborhood watch) programs and practices that have worked to make other communities safer. Organize adults in your neighborhood to discuss the issue of neighborhood safety and decide which programs and practices to begin. Get your neighbors excited about the chosen programs and strategies.

If you ever feel unsafe, contact local police and request additional patrols in the neighborhood.

Notify authorities of illegal activities such as drug sales in your neighborhood. This can be done without giving your name.



**Youth** - notify a parent/caregiver or trusted adult when you see crime so they can contact the authorities.

Contact police to provide a training session on how to recognize and respond to violence and crime.

Identify sources that can teach neighborhood youth ways to say “No!” to risky behaviors such as substance use (alcohol, tobacco, and drugs), having sex too early, crime and violence. Contact counselors at school or in private practice, or agencies such as the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at <http://www.ncdjdp.org/index.html>

## **Neighborhood Youth Behavior**

Identify local and statewide resources that discourage negative youth behaviors.

Host a neighborhood function where resource representatives are invited to talk about negative youth behaviors, such as bullying, stealing, gang activity, drinking and substance use, etc.

Learn about the youth in your in your neighborhood by talking and listening to them. What do they do in their spare time? Where do they hang out? How do they spend their money? What are their goals? Do they value education? Do they attend school? What kind of grades do they get? What do they plan to do after high school? Do they get in trouble at school or with the law?

Encourage friendships with youth who value education, do well in school and have goals for the future. Support friendships with youth who don't engage in activities (crime, violence, drinking, substance use, etc.) that could have could be harmful or illegal and prevent them from reaching their goals.

Identify after-school programs that supervise youth during out of school time, provide educational enrichment and promote positive youth behavior (ex. YMCA, YWCA, church sponsored after-school programs, Communities in School after-school programs, SOS programs, 4-H programs, and community sponsored sports, arts (performing and visual) programs, etc.)

## **School**



### **Learning Climate**

Visit the school. Learn where the office is and how to sign in as a visitor.

If you have email, email your child's teachers to tell them you will do your part at home with supporting your child.

Leave a phone message. Follow-up if you want to talk with a particular teacher. Ask for an appointment.

Get to know school staff. Introduce yourself and greet staff when you see them at school and in the community.

Work within the school structure (Student Government Association (SGA), teachers, principal(s), guidance counselors, and advisory councils) to voice concerns and make suggestions for improvements at school. What is the procedure for voicing concerns and offering suggestions? Is it effective? Can you think of other ideas that might help to improve the school so that students can get the best education possible and find learning enjoyable? Find out who can help get your ideas to the right person.

Find out how your school is performing. Contact the school's principal, Local Educational Agency (LEA), or in NC visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/>

Write a letter or speak to school staff to offer praise or encouragement for things that are being done well.

Attend school sponsored programs and events when possible.

Volunteer at school or to do school related projects at home.

### **School Satisfaction**

Help students identify school staff that they feel are supportive and have their best interest at heart. What

teachers do they say they really like? What classes do they enjoy the most? Why?

Use resources; such as school guidance counselors and counselors in private practice who can help youth learn skills that will help them get along with students and staff.

Focus on and discuss what is RIGHT with school.



### **Teacher Support**

Recognize and thank teachers and other staff you know who go out of their way to support students and care about how they are doing. Write a thank you note to your child's favorite teacher.

Work within the school structure to be a part of supporting teachers who support students, especially those who are struggling.

Get to know your teachers. Be polite and respectful at all times.

Remember, home-school communication is two-way! Email teachers or call them regularly to check in. Don't wait for the school to call when there is a problem.


Request a face-to-face conference if needed. Be sure to show up for scheduled conferences and meetings.

### **School Safety**

Get a copy of the student handbook from school and read it so that you are familiar with the school rules and regulations.

Find out what to do if you witness or have information about acts of crime or violence that happens at school.

Work with staff to increase adult supervision of students

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|  | <p>during out of class time. If additional supervision is a need, offer to volunteer.</p> <p>Visit The Center for the Prevention of School Violence website at <a href="http://www.ncdjdp.org/cpsv/">www.ncdjdp.org/cpsv/</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Friends</b></p>  | <p><b>Friend Support</b></p> <p>Get to know your child’s friends. This is really important as children become more independent of their families.</p> <p>Invite your child’s friends into your home. Create an environment that is relaxing and inviting. Serve food or rent movies.</p> <p>Offer to take your child and their friends places. Meet your child’s friends’ parents and be sure they know when your child is visiting.</p> <p>Listen to what your child and their friends are talking about when they are around you.</p> <p>Encourage your child to spend time with and get to know lots of different people.</p> <p>Support youth’s participation in extra-curricular activities (school sponsored and community-based) and help them connect with other kids who are involved in extra-curricular activities, especially those who share common interests.</p> <p>Monitor screen time (time spent watching TV, on the computer, playing video games and texting).</p> <p>Set up your own MySpace or Facebook account and insist that your child add you to their friend list. Monitor the content on your child and their “friend’s” sites.</p> <p>Check your computer’s history and monitor the content of websites that your child visits. Install programs that filter or block sites that are not suited for children.</p> <p>Read your phone bills (home and cell phone) and note the numbers called, time of calls and the frequency of calls. Ask about unfamiliar numbers or out-of-</p> |

town/state numbers.



## **Peer Group Acceptance**

Discuss what a good friend is and is not.

Support your child when they confide that a friend is being unkind or heading in the wrong direction. Help them work through friendship troubles. And most importantly, listen. Offer to help them come up with ideas that might help. Together brainstorm possible solutions and help guide youth as they made a decision about what to do. Check in to see how things are going.

Know who your child's counselor is and encourage your child to make an appointment if friend trouble gets to be more than they can handle alone.

## **Friend Behavior**

Encourage friendships with youth who value education, do well in school and have goals for the future. Support friendships with youth who don't do things (crime, violence, drinking, substance use, etc.) that could harm them and prevent them from reaching their good goals.

Monitoring who youth are with and where they are is one of the most powerful protective factors.

## **Family**



## **Family Togetherness**

*THINGS TO DO AT HOME TOGETHER AS A FAMILY  
(Ideas for rainy days or days when the weather is bad.):*

Share a meal together whenever possible, but at least 3 times per week. Use this as a time to connect and check-in with each person.

Start a weekly "Family Fun Night." Get everyone's ideas for what to do on "Family Fun Nights." Mark it on the family calendar and be sure to do it!

Play cards/ board games.

Complete a jigsaw puzzle.

Share stories about old times, family, and friends. Talk about current events.

Find a family hobby (cook together, play a sport, ride bikes, etc.).

Watch a movie and then discuss what you saw.

Clip coupons/write a shopping list. Talk about foods/dishes that you like and dislike.

Wash the family car.

Plant a plant/small garden.

Play ball-basketball, softball, baseball, soccer, etc.

Star gaze and try to find different constellations.

### AWAY FROM HOME:

Take a walk.

Pack a picnic lunch and go to a park.

Ride bikes.

Visit a farm or farmers market.

Pick up litter.

Go to amusement center, ice skate or play putt-putt

golf.

Go hiking.

Visit a museum.

Go to the movies.

Attend a religious service or event.

Visit the local library, sign up for a library card and check out books, cds, and DVDs for FREE!

Attend a community-sponsored event/festival.

Visit a sick friend or relative.

Go camping.

### **Parent Support**

Ensure that basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, etc.) are met for youth. If you are not able to provide the basics, ask for help in getting needs met. Contact your local Department of Social Services, school counselor, parent facilitator, churches, food pantry, etc.

Be sure to let your child know where you are and how they can reach you.

Say, "I love you!"

Apologize and say, "I'm sorry" when you make a mistake.

Give hugs and show affection.

### **Parent Support Continued...**

Be aware of your child's moods. Keep an open door to discussing and listening.

Point out your child's talents in the presence of others.

Say, "Thank-you!" when your child helps out.

Acknowledge progress and effort-look for improvement.

Celebrate success!

Prepare your child's favorite dish or meal, or attend their favorite restaurant.

Make your child feel special by writing, "hug notes" and hiding them in their bookbag, lunchbox, under their pillow or other places.

Make sure you know where your child is and check to make they are where they say they are.

Talk to youth about things important to youth.

Ask youth how they like to be supported and try some of their suggested strategies (physical affection, verbal praise and encouragement, acts of kindness, time spent together.)

Celebrate your child's birthday in a special way with a birthday cookie or cake. **NOTE:** *If your family does not celebrate birthdays, pick another strategy.*



### **Home Academic Environment**

Help youth select courses at school-discuss course offerings. You may need the help of a guidance counselor at school.

Ask questions to spark discussion about school activities and events (school dances, sporting events, assemblies, concerts, etc.). Questions might include: Who did you see there? Was there a theme? What happened? Tell me about it.

Ask questions that require more than a yes or no answer-What are you studying in social studies?

### **Home Academic Environment Continued**

Clip current events related articles and discuss them while you are in the car, while waiting at the doctor's

office or at mealtimes.

Watch the nightly news together and discuss afterward.

Discuss your political affiliation and upcoming elections.  
Model civic engagement and VOTE.

Openly talk about expectations for going to college/ or work.

***Try the following conversation starters:***

Close your eyes and imagine yourself in 10 years, what do you see yourself doing?

What's your DREAM job?

What would you like to accomplish this year, within 5 years, within 10 years?



**Parent Education Support**

READ to your child, no matter what their age. Provide reading materials (books, magazines, comics, etc.). When children see you reading they are more likely to read themselves.

Encourage youth to read for pleasure.

Purchase needed school supplies or ask for help to obtain supplies.

Provide time and specify a quiet space for doing homework.

Provide a computer with internet access, if possible, for doing schoolwork. If this is not feasible, locate a computer with internet access for youth to do schoolwork. Ask your friends and neighbors or visit your local library. Be sure to note the days and hours that your local library is open and ask about any requirements for using library computers BEFORE you actually need at to use them.

Monitor computer time and limit the time spent for pleasure not for school.

Attend awards ceremonies, assemblies, talent shows, parent nights, school sponsored parent education programs, book fairs, and events that showcase students' work.



### **Parent Education Support**

Ask nightly about homework.

Offer to help with homework or special assignments.

Make sure your child gets up and is on time to school.

Make sure youth have a healthy breakfast before school.

Encourage your child to join school sponsored club (chess, debate team, technology, student government, spirit...) or sports team (swimming, track, football, soccer, volleyball...). Coordinate transportation for your child to attend meetings after-school.

Note attendance on progress and report cards-do they add up? If not, contact your child's teacher or the school counselor. Schools have ways to make up work and missed days.

Be sure to write a note if your child is absent due to illness. Provide the school with copies of doctor's notes as soon as your child is well enough to return to school. Consider having your doctor's office fax notes directly to school and follow-up with a phone call to make certain the fax was received.

Showcase school work/artwork/progress & report cards at home.

Sign paperwork (permission slips/consent forms, graded assignments, attendance letters, referral forms, progress and report cards, etc.) from school staff and remind youth to turn them in. Follow up to make sure they turned paperwork in and didn't forget.

Volunteer at school or with school related projects and at school sponsored events.

Serve on a school advisory board or the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).



### **School Behavior Expectations**

Communicate the importance of education. Talk about your expectations that your child does well.

Talk about what grades are and are not acceptable.

Discuss your expectations for appropriate behavior at school and in the classroom-following rules, being polite and respectful, kind, etc.

Stress the importance of the following: 1.-being on time, 2.-regular attendance, 3.-completing schoolwork and homework, and 4.-turning in assignments on time.

Talk about and discuss consequences for not following school rules and getting into trouble at school (being disruptive, disrespectful, bullying, fighting, carry weapons, having drugs, skipping class/school).

Use contracts that spell out expectations and consequences. Sign the contract and have your child sign. Enforce contract consequences if expectations are not met.

### ***Personal Beliefs and Well-Being***



### **Social Support Use**

*Youth:* Find good people who you feel comfortable talking to about important stuff. Go to them when you need someone to listen.

Choose a specific time to talk about important stuff (not on the run).

*Adults:* Listen attentively. Try to hold your advice until everyone has been heard. Avoid being judgmental.

When you see emotion in body language or behavior, verbalize how you think the person is feeling. "You

sound very angry.”

Encourage others by pointing out what they are doing right and what they do well.

Provide help with homework and special projects.

Offer to give youth “jobs” so they can earn money.  
Provide money or loans when appropriate.

Help youth connect with people who are similar and share some of their same interests.

Provide transportation to after-school meetings and programs and social events and gatherings.



### **Physical Health**

Get annual physicals, dental and eye check-ups. Stay up-to-date with immunizations by getting vaccinated.

If cost of healthcare is an issue identify low cost or free health care services available in the community. Contact your local health department or health clinic. Ask your school guidance counselor, social worker, or school nurse about help for getting children’s glasses.

Exercise as a family.

Model healthy habits by being smoke free, eating a balanced diet and refraining from heavy drinking.

Create a menu with healthy quick fix breakfasts, lunches, and dinners. Sign up for a cooking class in your area by contacting your county Cooperative Extension office or go online to [www.ces.ncsu.edu](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu).

Take the time to make your personal health a priority! Stay healthy for yourself and the ones you care for.

Seek treatment if health problems persist.

Join a support group.

Try to stick to a schedule. Work on keeping morning

and evening routines. Enough and regular sleep, an expected breakfast, consistent adult presence helps kids do better in school.



### **Self-Confidence**

Sign up to participate in a one-on-one mentoring program at school or by contacting agencies/organizations such as Communities in Schools and Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Be sure to check first with your guidance counselor about available programs.

Use positive self-talk. Give yourself a pat on the back when you accomplish a goal or do something well.

Point out people's talents in the presence of others.

Seek help with parenting, family bills, or other aspects of your family life before any area gets out of control.

Help youth connect with meaningful volunteer opportunities. Opportunities can be found at local churches, food pantries, thrift shops, animal shelters or senior centers.

### ***Self-Confidence continued***

*Youth:* Look for ways to help others in need.

Give youth your time and attention. Go on special outings together.

Praise them and show your appreciation for them and the things they do.

See section on Parent Support for more ideas.

### **Adjustment**

Have some rules about youth behavior, but also provide chances for them to be with their friends and do the things that they enjoy. Always know where youth are. Check to see if they are where they say they are.

Work with school staff to create a buddy system for new

students or students who are having a hard time adjusting.

Avoid overburdening youth with personal/relational and family financial issues.

Make safety a priority. Avoid relationships with others who are physically, verbally, emotionally, or otherwise abusive.

Maintain a positive outlook on life and the future. Talk in positive terms. The glass is half full, not half empty.

Seek medical/mental health treatment if your mood is mostly dark and sad and you don't think that things will ever get better or if you are having trouble doing daily activities. Definitely contact a medical/mental health professional if you or anyone in your family hurts themselves, talks about or has reoccurring thoughts of hurting themselves or others.

***School Attitudes and Behavior***



**School Engagement**

What makes school fun and enjoyable? What would make school more fun and more enjoyable? Tell SGA representatives, teachers and your school principal what you really like about school and give them your ideas for making school more enjoyable.


Thank teachers who go out of their way to make school fun and enjoyable.

**Trouble Avoidance**

Be on time to school each day. Ride the bus if you are a car rider who is often late arriving to school.

Attend school regularly unless you are too sick to come. If you have to miss school because you are sick, be sure to bring a note to school explaining why you were out. Give school staff a copy of doctor's notes so they can file them.

Complete assigned schoolwork and homework and turn

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|  | <p>them in on time.</p> <p>Know the school rules and follow them. Ex: dress appropriately, be kind and respectful to school staff and students, and avoid criminal behavior including violence.</p>   |
| <p><b>Academic Performance</b></p>  | <p><b>Grades</b></p> <p>Take advantage of the opportunities that are available to help youth, such as tutoring and after school study sessions.</p> <p>On school nights, limit the amount of time youth spend doing the following activities: watching T.V., playing on computer, playing electronic games, texting, talking on the phone, attending social events or just “hanging out.”</p> <p><b>Youth</b>-Think about the classes you are doing well in- What factors are helping you succeed? List them.</p> <p>Does youth have a diagnosed physical, emotional, behavioral or learning condition requiring special assistance? Do they currently have an Individualize Educational Program (IEP)? If your answer is yes, but your child doesn't have an IEP or similar plan in place to help them succeed, asks your child's guidance counselor, school social worker or another advocate about how you go about getting a plan in place.</p> <p>Identify classes youth are doing well in and what classes they may need improvement in.</p> <p>Are youth being challenged in the classroom?</p> <p>Are tutoring services needed with any subject? Ask the school counselor how to get a tutor.</p> |