

Social Connections & Parenting

By Bright Tomorrows Staff

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Research supports that families who possess certain factors are more resilient, healthy, and able to create an environment that optimizes child development. The social connections of parents with other adults are one of these factors. A parent's social network, which can include extended family members, friends, church connections, clubs, or others with similar interests, can serve multiple purposes, including increasing the health and abilities of parents.

Evidence links social isolation and perceived lack of support to child maltreatment. Trusted and caring family and friends provide emotional support to parents by offering encouragement and assistance in facing the daily challenges of raising a family. Supportive adults in the family and the community can model alternative parenting styles and can serve as resources for parents when they need help. Having someone that supports your parenting is one of the most valuable treasures a parent can have.

In our busy culture many parents find it difficult to build and maintain these social connections. In the age of Facebook, and "face-time" we are losing the most needed "face to face time" which is when deeper connections are made. It is important for parents to take time to get out with others, work on a project together, go out for the evening, enjoy a lunch together or find other ways to nurture connections.