

## Partnering with Families to Build Economic Security During Emergencies



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Families' financial, education, employment, and career goals may change during emergencies and natural disasters. Head Start and Early Head Start **family services staff and home visitors** can help families access important information, benefits, and tools during crises.

You can partner with families to:

- Identify their immediate needs caused by the emergency and revisit their long-term financial goals
- Plan concrete actions
- Track their progress and celebrate their successes

### Identify Families' Immediate Needs and Revisit Their Financial Goals

- As you check in with families about how they are doing, let them know that Head Start and Early Head Start staff can assist them with their immediate financial needs and long-term financial goals.
- Ask families what method of communication works best for them. Set up a time to talk.
  - You can connect with families remotely by phone, email, video conference, text, or social media. If families prefer printed information, you can send it to them by regular mail. Or families can pick up printed materials if your program offers drive-up services.

- Follow seven steps you can take to help families set financial, employment, and education goals. You can learn about these steps in The Family Partnership Process: Engaging and Goal-Setting with Families on the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website
- Use the Seven Steps Worksheet Template in The Family Partnership Process guide to ask questions focused on the family’s current situation, strengths, and goals.
- Remind families that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is issuing stimulus payments—also called Economic Impact Payments—to eligible families in response to the current national emergency. You can provide families with information about the stimulus payments, help them determine their eligibility to receive a stimulus payment, and work with them to plan how to use it. Visit the IRS website for information about the Economic Impact Payments.

### Seven Steps for Setting and Reaching Goals with Families:

- Step 1** Set a Goal
- Step 2** Identify Skills
- Step 3** Assess Strengths
- Step 4** Examine Stressors
- Step 5** Explore Strategies
- Step 6** Determine Support
- Step 7** Track Progress and Celebrate Successes



*See Staff Tip Sheet 2 for information on partnering with families to access their stimulus payments.*

- If families you work with won’t be receiving a stimulus payment, talk with them about how they will adjust to changes in their income and emergency expenses.

## Plan Concrete Actions

- Provide families with resources and tools that can help them meet their financial needs and goals.
  - Share tools like the Make a Budget Worksheet from the Federal Trade Commission website, which families can use to create a budget or a spending plan for their stimulus payment.
- Use the Program Planning and Professional Development Tool in the Economic Mobility Toolkit for Head Start and Early Head Start to review existing data from community needs assessments. Identify key partnerships and make referrals that can help families achieve their financial goals. Even organizations operating remotely may be able to partner with families.
  - For example, if a family wants information on how to budget their stimulus payment, consider connecting them with a financial coach or sharing an online budgeting tool.
- Refer to the Key Topics in the Economic Mobility Toolkit to help families access needed information and take action.
  - Key Topics include: Accessing Financial Education, Coaching, and Counseling; Building Credit and Managing Debt; Accessing State and Federal Benefits; and others that may be useful to families

## Track Progress and Celebrate Successes

Follow up with families to see how they are addressing their immediate financial needs caused by these challenging times. Also ask about their progress toward their long-term financial goals. Celebrate successes!



### Staff Tip

You may be facing similar financial challenges to those affecting families with whom you work. Consider your own needs and follow the steps in this tip sheet to help you maintain your own financial well-being during emergencies. Practicing self-care is a critical part of ensuring you can provide families with the support they need to weather unexpected challenges.

Check out the other tip sheets in the *Partnering with Families to Build Economic Security During Emergencies* series for staff. Review and share the Family Tip Sheets in this series with families. These tip sheets include valuable information families can use to improve their family economic security during emergencies.

#### Related Resources

- **Learn More.** All of the resources mentioned in this tip sheet are available on the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website. To learn more about how to support parents' and families' goals for economic mobility, explore all of the resources in the Building Foundations for Economic Mobility series available on the ECLKC.
- **Join the Economic Mobility Learning Community.** Engage with your colleagues around the country in the online Economic Mobility learning community hosted on the MyPeers platform. You can network, share, and learn from each other about partnering with families to achieve their financial security.
- **Subscribe.** The Building Foundations for Economic Mobility (BFEM) E-newsletter is produced quarterly by the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE). It is dedicated to staff working with families.

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