

Building Strong Families

Highlights from a Preliminary Survey from YMCA of the USA and
Search Institute on What Parents Need to Succeed

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Building Strong Families: Highlights from a Preliminary Survey from YMCA of the USA and Search Institute on What Parents Need to Succeed

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The in-depth report of this study can be viewed and downloaded at the Web site www.abundantassets.org.

YMCA of the USA, 101 North Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60606; 800-872-9622; www.ymca.net.

Search Institute, 615 First Avenue, Northeast, Suite 125, Minneapolis, MN 55413; 800-888-7828; www.search-institute.org.

The Building Strong Families poll represents the first phase of an ongoing collaboration between YMCA of the USA and Search Institute around strong families and parenting. It is part of the larger Abundant Assets Alliance, which combines the resources of YMCA of the USA, YMCA Canada, and Search Institute—three distinguished organizations with proven success in building strong kids, families, and communities. For more information, visit www.abundantassets.org.



Parents Expect a Lot from Themselves and Little from Anyone Else

If you want to get something done right, do it yourself. That's how the saying goes, and a new poll of parents has found that parents tend to feel quite confident in themselves as parents. Yet many do not have the support, encouragement, and networks that make it easier for them to raise strong kids and overcome the daily challenges of parenting.

What kind of support and encouragement do parents* actually have? How do they view success? What challenges do they face? And what do parents say would help them as parents?

YMCA of the USA and Search Institute have joined together to explore these and related questions in a poll of 1,005 parents in the United States.** This poll represents the first step in a long-term initiative to build a new, positive vision for strong families.



Study Highlights

This poll examines a wide range of parenting issues from how successful parents feel to the challenges they face.

The five key findings are:

Finding #1: Most parents surveyed are going it alone. (See pages 2-3.)

Finding #2: Many parents interviewed lack a strong relationship with a spouse or partner. (See pages 4-5.)

Finding #3: A majority of parents surveyed feel successful as parents most of the time. (See pages 6-7.)

Finding #4: Most parents polled face ongoing challenges. (See pages 8-9.)

Finding #5: Many things these parents say would help them as parents are easy things others can do. (See pages 10-11.)

* We define "parents" broadly to include all those adults with primary responsibility for raising children. These include biological parents, adoptive parents, guardians, stepparents, grandparents raising grandchildren, or any other type of parenting relationship. We also use the term to show the collective sample of parents polled, whether they are single, divorced, widowed, or married.

** See page 13 for details about the poll sample and methodology.

Finding #1: Most parents surveyed are going it alone.

Parenting should not be a solitary task. Research consistently shows that parents are most effective when they have the support and encouragement from those around them: people in their immediate and extended family, friends, and communities.

We asked parents about whether they access three potential sources of parenting help, support, or advice: immediate or extended family, friends, and community resources. What we learned is that most parents who were surveyed rarely seek support about parenting from their families, friends, and communities. (See Figure 1.) In short, too many parents are going it alone.

YMCA of Westfield, New Jersey *Building Community among Families*

Many parents in Westfield, New Jersey, work in New York City and commute, which entails long hours away from the family. To help families have quality time together, the YMCA of Westfield, New Jersey, offers inexpensive weekend and weeklong getaways for families. “We do things to connect families,” YMCA Family Life Director David Mueller says. “Building community among families is so important.”

Most of the weekend trips take place at Promised Land State Park in Pennsylvania, which is about two hours away by car. Mueller groups three families on the getaway for food preparation. The families buy food together and then take turns cooking and cleaning up over the weekend. “We do family games to get people to meet each other,” he says, noting that families also participate in hikes, campfires, service projects, talent shows, and other structured activities. “Families in the Northeast can be slow to warm up to other people, so getting to know others is really important.”

Some family weekend camps are offered during the summer while others occur over long weekends when school is not in session. The Y also offers a weeklong family vacation to the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado.

Because of these weekend and weeklong getaways, parents have told Mueller that their family’s best friends are people they met at these YMCA family events. Others say they sit together at soccer games when they bump into each other. Mueller says these events bring family members closer to each other—and build community among families as well.

Common Sources of Support

When parents do seek help, they are most likely to turn to family and friends, and least likely to turn to community resources. (See Figure 2.) However, African Americans surveyed are almost twice as likely as white parents to say it is “very true” that they seek support from community resources (19% versus 10% for whites).

Parents Are Open to Learning

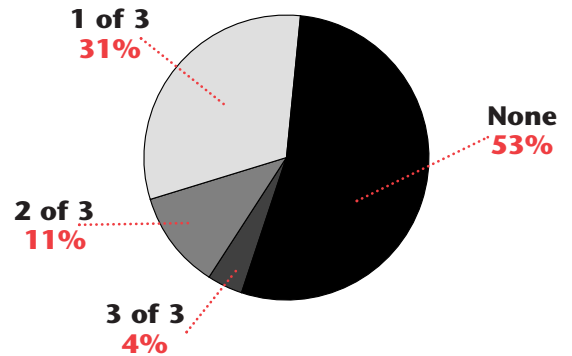
Parents are ready and willing to learn. Eighty percent of those surveyed in this poll strongly agree that there is “always” something more they can learn about being a good parent. When asked in an open-ended question what kind of advice they could use, the top responses from those who answered were: dealing with and understanding teenagers, how to be more patient with their children, and opportunities to learn from other parents who have been in similar situations.



Figure 1: How Many Sources of Support Do Parents Tap?

Parents were asked whether they turn for parenting help, advice, or support to (1) immediate or extended family; (2) friends; and (3) community resources. We then calculated the proportion of parents who regularly sought support from one, two, or three of these potential parenting resources.*

* Based on parents who said it was “very true” that they turned to each group for parenting help, advice, or support.



(Does not add up to 100% due to rounding.)

Figure 2: Where Parents Turn for Help, Advice, or Support

When parents did turn to others for support, they were most likely to turn to immediate or extended family.

	Very True	Somewhat True	Not True
Immediate or extended family	36%	39%	25%
Friends	20%	46%	34%
Community resources	11%	26%	63%

The Jain Family in Illinois Adjusting to U.S. Culture

Fred and Yolanda Jain grew up in the Philippines. In 1975, Yolanda immigrated to the United States, following two of her siblings.

Fred came in 1985. Although Fred and Yolanda knew each other in the Philippines, they didn't marry until 1987 in Illinois. "I was 35 when I got married," Yolanda Jain says. "I was 37 when I had my first child. So I felt emotionally and spiritually mature."

She says it's easier to raise kids in the Philippines compared to America. A key difference, Jain says, is the emphasis on family. "The kids have TV shows and many other influences here than just their families," she says. So she and her husband work hard to keep family an important aspect of their lifestyle. Although both parents work full time, they work different shifts. Jain works midnight to 8 a.m. as a nurse, and her husband works for the postal service during the day. "We have from 5 to 9 together," she says. "We make it a point that when we're both off, we go out together as a family."



Finding #2: Many parents interviewed lack a strong relationship with a spouse or partner.

A key—but often lacking—resource for parents is a strong relationship with their spouse or partner. The parents we interviewed who experience an excellent partner relationship—regardless of whether or not they were married—are more likely to feel successful and up to the challenges of parenting.

Relationship Quality

Half (50 percent) of the parents surveyed say that their relationship with their spouse or parenting partner is excellent, and these parents are clearly more likely to feel successful as parents. (See Figure 3.) Of all the factors we studied with this poll, having an “excellent” partner relationship proved to be the factor most consistently related to a wide range of parenting dynamics. Parents tend to feel consistently more successful if they report an “excellent” relationship compared to a “good,” “okay,” or “poor” relationship. Parents surveyed who report an excellent relationship with their spouse or partner are more likely than other parents to:

- ▶ Feel successful as parents most of the time;
- ▶ Experience fewer challenges as parents;
- ▶ Actively seek support from immediate or extended family as well as community resources;
- ▶ Feel confident in dealing with the daily challenges of parenting;
- ▶ Believe that various additional opportunities could “really help” them as parents; and
- ▶ Consistently do many things that help their children grow up healthy.

Marriage Is No Guarantee

Although married parents we polled are more likely to report an excellent relationship with their partner, marriage is no guarantee of a strong relationship. Only 56 percent of married parents in the survey say they have an excellent relationship with their partner. That compares to 36 percent of unmarried parents.

The Visalia YMCA in California *Easing the Stress of Custodial Exchanges*

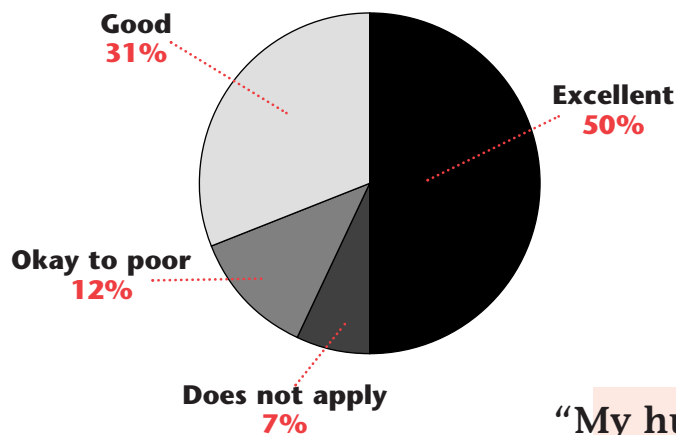
Some parents with joint custody have poor or contentious relationships with their ex. When it’s time to bring their child to their former partner, emotions can run high.

To provide a neutral, safe, nurturing environment for these exchanges, the Visalia YMCA in Visalia, California, provides the Safe Exchange Program for court-ordered exchanges between custodial parents. “This is a place where kids can be kids and not worry about what’s going on at home,” says Safe Exchange Coordinator Kris McClure. Children may stay at the center for up to an hour. While one staff person talks to the parent, another staff person plays with the child until the other parent arrives. Thirty children and their parents use the service on a regular basis.

McClure sees how the program helps children and parents change. Over time, children play less aggressively as they adjust to the positive environment. Stress levels for parents and their children also drop. One young couple created a written agreement establishing goals so that the parents could eventually do exchanges at home. “We help parents put their children first,” McClure says. “I would like to see every child who has a custody exchange to be in a program like this. This type of program helps everyone—the parents and the kids.”

Figure 3: Quality of Partner Relationship

Despite the importance of their relationship with their spouse or parenting partner, only half of the parents surveyed believe that their relationship with their spouse or partner is “excellent.”



“My husband and I present a united front. Even if we disagree privately about a disciplinary situation, the kids never are aware of that.”

*Joan Christianson,
mother of two children,
ages 15 and 18,
Doylestown, Pennsylvania*

The Borud Family in Idaho *Staying Connected as Husband and Wife—and as a Family*

For Lynn Borud and his wife, Claudia, the biggest challenge is keeping connected with each other and their kids when everyone is so busy. Their eldest is at the University of Oregon. Their middle child started college this fall, and their youngest is a senior in high school. One way they have stayed connected has been by making their home a welcoming place not only for their kids but also for their kids’ friends. “Our house is the destination place for many kids,” Lynn Borud says. “Our grocery bills are much higher because we’re feeding so many kids.” Borud has learned, however, that when you feed kids, they’re more apt to open up and talk.



Some of the conversation is about ordinary, everyday things. But other discussions are about tough issues. “In the past 12 and a half months, my kids have lost five friends,” Borud says. Two died in car accidents where alcohol was involved, and three committed suicide. “That’s been really difficult. So we keep talking about those things.”

As part of a two-parent family, Borud says it’s essential for him and his wife to be in sync with parenting. “Claudia and I agree on values and how we parent,” he says. “In a two-parent family, it’s a one-two punch around the house. I don’t mean physically, I mean as reinforcement. We surround our kids with dependable, responsible, caring adults. Parents aren’t going to get it done on their own.”

Finding #3: A majority of parents surveyed feel successful as parents most of the time.

While there are slight differences among the parents surveyed, both mothers and fathers, parents from all types of families, cultural groups, economic levels, and education levels feel successful as parents most of the time.

Parents' Standards of Success

Parents have high standards for themselves. When asked how they would define successful parents, they talked about someone:

- ▶ Whose children are respectful, exhibit good behavior, and have good values;
- ▶ Who gives love to their children;
- ▶ Who is involved and makes the time to be there for their children; and
- ▶ Who helps their children lead a healthy, productive, successful life.

Parents' View of Success

Most of the parents surveyed said they feel successful as parents most of the time. Research results reveal:

- ▶ About one-third of those surveyed (34 percent) say they feel successful nearly every day.
- ▶ An additional 54 percent said they feel successful on most days.
- ▶ Younger parents and African American parents report feeling successful more often than other parents.
- ▶ Only 1 percent of the parents surveyed say they would define successful parents as adults who keep their child off drugs.

YMCA Hiawatha Branch in Minneapolis

Helping Families with Multiracial Children Become More Successful

When the primary caregiver belongs to the majority race, how does he or she parent a multiracial child? That question prompted Barbara Jones to focus on this issue as she facilitated support groups and family programs at the YMCA Hiawatha Branch in Minneapolis in the mid-1980s.

Families learned about how important it was to have role models and friends who represented the cultures and races of these kids. Through these YMCA programs and support groups, they talked about the food they ate, the books they read—even the way they decorated their homes. “They needed the language to talk about these issues at home and in a safe environment,” Jones says. “For a multiracial child, there is another layer about figuring out the child’s identity and peer group.”

Jones, now branch manager, has seen the importance of bringing in adults from the other cultures and races as role models and friends for multiracial kids. “These kids ... need to see themselves reflected in the world around them.”

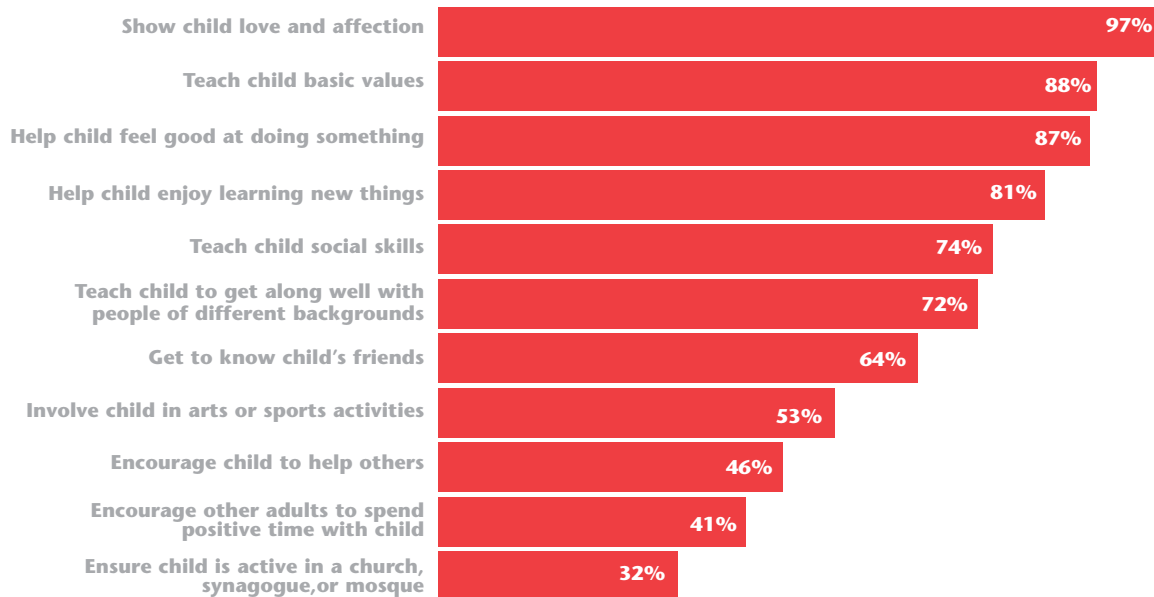
Parents Report Positive Actions

We asked parents how often they do 11 specific actions that help their children grow up caring and responsible. Most of the parents surveyed say they do most of these things daily. (See Figure 4.) Many more say that they do all these actions at least weekly. This is true across all incomes, racial and cultural groups, educational levels, and types of families surveyed in this poll.



Figure 4: What Surveyed Parents Do with Their Children

Percentage of parents polled who say they do each action daily:



“My children are always my priority. I make sure I am always there for my children ... I had my first child at age 15. None of my children who are over 15 are parents. The fact that they don't have children means I'm successful.”

Casandra Winchester,
*mother of four children,
ages 5, 15, 17, and 23,
Baltimore, Maryland*

The Harris Family in Colorado *Feeling Successful at Home—and at Work*

Sandra Harris has always believed in the importance of following your passions. As a parent of three kids, ages 17, 19, and 21, she has shown her children that work and family can both be top priorities, even though it isn't easy.

“Most of the workplaces I've been in, we had a little area for them to hang out at work,” she says. She believes it's important for companies to be family friendly and for employees who are parents to connect with each other to talk about work-and-family issues.

For the past 10 years, an important part of Harris's job has entailed traveling. Whenever she travels on business, she tries to make sure she is gone for no more than two or three days at a time. She also tries to take one of her kids with her once in a while. “It has helped me to get to know them in a new way, a different way,” she says.

When she was younger, Harris's daughter Angie had a recurring dream that her mother would travel and never come back. Now that she's 19, Angie has a different perspective. “Now she's working on her career,” Harris says, “and she says that seeing me work has shown her what it takes to be passionate about and involved with work.”



Finding #4: Most parents polled face ongoing challenges.

Job demands and bickering among their children are the top things that the parents surveyed say make it harder to be a parent. (See Figure 5.) Overall, parents are more likely to experience challenges if they:

- ▶ Are unmarried;
- ▶ Make less than \$50,000 a year or report having a hard time financially;
- ▶ Have child-care arrangements other than staying at home with their child; and
- ▶ Do not have an excellent relationship with their spouse or parenting partner.

Challenges of Different Parents

Since some of the challenges are not as relevant to all parents (e.g. not all parents work, have multiple children, or are single parents), it's more revealing to compare the challenges that different subgroups of parents face. For example:

- ▶ Among unmarried parents, 54 percent say that being a single parent or not having support from the child's other parent makes their job as a parent very much or somewhat more difficult.
- ▶ Sixty-two percent of parents who report having incomes less than \$35,000 say their family's financial situation makes their job as a parent much or somewhat more difficult.

- ▶ Among parents with three or more children, 65 percent say sibling rivalry makes their job more difficult.

Reasons for Dissatisfaction

Among those we surveyed, here are the percentages who say each factor contributes to their feeling dissatisfied with parenting:

- ▶ Feeling unprepared for a situation that arises: 52 percent.
- ▶ Feeling overwhelmed by everything: 46 percent.
- ▶ Feeling unsupported by family or friends: 34 percent.

Despite the difficulties, however, most parents surveyed say they are doing pretty well with the daily challenges of parenting. (See Figure 6.)

The Mills Family in Florida *A Strong Advocate for Her Children*

With two children with special needs, Shirley Mills finds herself constantly educating others about her kids and advocating for them. "I've had a lot of conferences with teachers, and most teachers don't understand my kids," she says. "Over the years, I've become more vocal. I've had to fight for them because so many people don't understand them and don't like what they're doing."

Both her children, now 13 and 14, take classes for people with emotional handicaps. Both have been classified as having emotional problems, but their needs are different. She says one does better academically than the other, who struggles more with school but has better social skills.

As her children grow and develop, Mills says she has also grown. "I started out very naive," she says. "I never used to feel effective. Now I'm more confident in myself. So when people say something about my kids, I say they've come a long way, and I tell them how."



Figure 5: What Makes Parenting Difficult?

Percentage of parents polled who say the following issues “very much” or “somewhat” make parenting difficult:

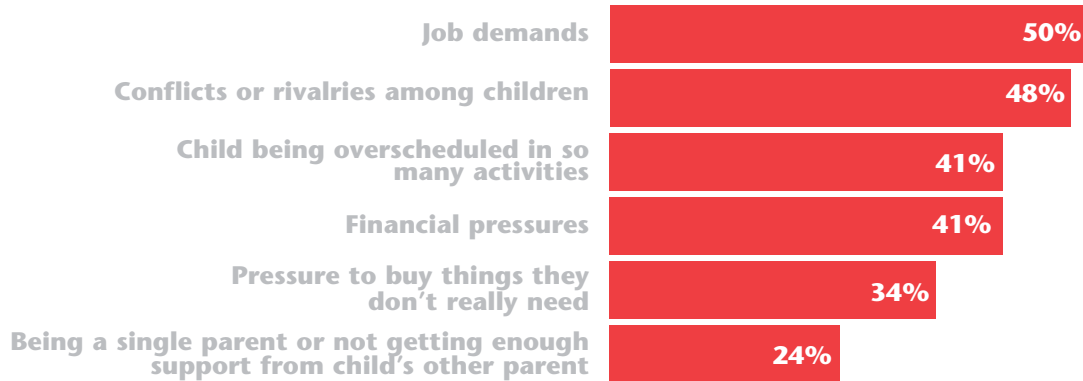
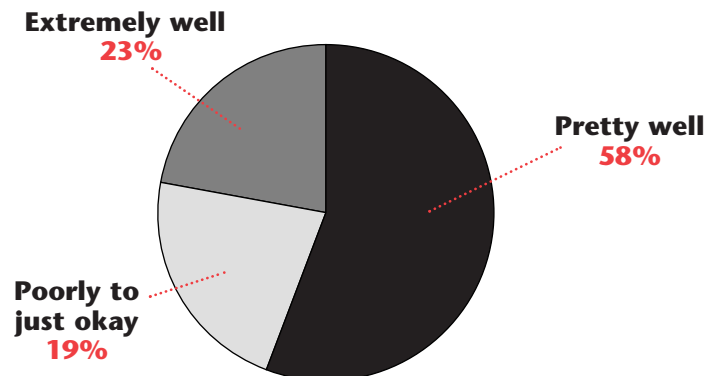


Figure 6: How Well Do Parents Deal with Daily Parenting Challenges?

Percentage of parents polled who say how they're doing with the daily challenges of parenting:



The Beaver Area Community in Pennsylvania Forming a Parent Alliance against Underage Drinking

Alarmed by the rise in underage drinking and many parents' lax attitude about the problem, concerned parents and citizens in the Beaver area of Pennsylvania got together to see what they could do. After much discussion, they created a parents' pledge outlining how to promote the well-being of their teenagers and a responsible homes directory that listed all the parents who had signed the pledge. "As parents, we wanted to support one another," says Ruth Briceland, who was instrumental in creating the pledge and directory as the community coordinator for the Beaver Area School District. "We also wanted to send a strong message to our kids."

By signing the pledge, parents say they will not serve or permit alcoholic beverages and illegal substances to teenagers. They encourage other parents to call about details of an upcoming party or gathering at their home. They also agree to ask neighbors and/or the community police to monitor their home if they will be out of town while their teenage children stay at home.

With the third year of the pledge and directory underway, community residents have noticed changes. Teenagers no longer bring alcohol onto school premises, and parents are talking about the issue more. "Parents now have the support. Our kids now have the support," Briceland says. "It's a broad boundary, but it's an important boundary. We believe it's the community's responsibility to take care of our kids."

Finding #5: Many things these parents say would help them as parents are easy things others can do.

There are a number of things that parents in this survey say would “really help” them. Interestingly, several things they think would help them “very much” or “somewhat” are not expensive or time-consuming to provide. These include:

- ▶ People telling them they’re doing a good job as a parent;
- ▶ Talking with other parents about parenting issues;
- ▶ Getting parenting advice from trusted professionals;
- ▶ People they trust—including friends, neighbors, and extended family—spending more positive time with their kids; and
- ▶ A more flexible work schedule.

The Wish for Affirmation

Being affirmed rises to the top of things that these parents say would really help them as parents. (See Figure 7.) This desire is true across all groups of parents, regardless of marital status, income, or race-ethnicity.

Advice from Trusted Professionals

While these parents may be less likely to value workshops, they do want advice from professionals they trust. Three-fourths of those surveyed say that advice from “my child’s doctor, teacher, or religious leader” would help very much or somewhat.

Other Adults Engaged with Their Kids

The parents in this poll truly value the involvement of adults they trust in the lives of their children. Almost three-fourths of parents surveyed (71 percent) believe that such involvement would help them very much or somewhat as parents.

Different Priorities for Some Parents

Some parents place higher priority on other supports. For example, the parents surveyed who face more financial stress say that a more flexible work schedule and advice from trusted professionals would help them most.

The Community of Santa Clara Valley in California *Connecting Parents through a Study Group*

Parents in California act differently after participating in parent study groups formed in their Santa Clara Valley schools. One parent started to get to know her son’s friends better. Another began talking to the teenage clerk she always saw working at the drugstore. “It’s changing their lives. Parents say that,” says Linda Silvius, who started these groups. “It’s changing how they interact with their kids and in the ways they interact with other people’s kids.” After facilitating one group, Silvius even flew to Kalispell, Montana, to look up her fifth-grade teacher. “That teacher is 92 now,” she said. “I went to visit her to say thank you.”

By getting together once every two weeks for six meetings, parents express their hopes and fears for their children while also reflecting on the way they grew up. They discuss how they support their kids, set and enforce boundaries, teach values, and more. “It’s giving them the confidence to do the little things that really make a difference,” Silvius says. Parents slow down and become more intentional about talking with their kids and doing meaningful activities. They also begin to notice the adults who are contributing to their children’s lives. Parent Colleen Hirano wrote to her 11-year-old daughter’s figure-skating coach. “I expressed my appreciation for her being part of my daughter’s life,” she says, “and the tremendous role she plays.”

Figure 7: How Much Could These Really Help You as a Parent?

	Very Much	Somewhat	Not Helpful
Others telling me I'm doing a good job as a parent	31%	36%	33%
Getting help or advice from my child's doctor, teacher, or religious leader	29%	47%	24%
People I trust . . . spending more positive time with my child	29%	42%	29%
A more flexible work schedule	27%	23%	50%
Talking with other parents about parenting issues	24%	53%	23%
Parenting information I could get in private (books, television, etc.)	16%	42%	42%
More after-school programs or child-care options	13%	15%	72%
Going to a parenting class or workshop	12%	28%	60%

About Classes

African American parents are more likely to say that parenting classes and workshops would help them very much or somewhat (49%) compared to only 28% of white parents.

The Yancy Family in Minnesota *Creating Your Own Extended Family*

When Eric Yancy and his wife decided to raise Yancy's 12-year-old brother, Yancy quickly realized they couldn't do it alone. The boy was skipping school, running away from home, and stealing bikes.

In his monthly meeting with four professional men who gave each other career support, Yancy told them about his brother. "They made a commitment right there that they would be involved in every turn of his life," Yancy says. When Yancy was traveling on business, these men would step in to attend school conferences, spend time with the boy, and give Yancy's wife the support she needed. "They became the strong uncles," Yancy says, "and they were right there."

Yancy decided to nurture his family in this way and build on it. Today he calls 18 people his extended family, and only two of these people are biologically related. All of the Yancy kids (who range in age from 3 to 27 with five of the seven still living at home) select whom to include in their extended family. The kids discuss who is authentically concerned about them, and they choose new aunts and uncles based on consensus.

"My 13-year-old wanted to learn how to fish, and I didn't know how to fish," Yancy says. "I had never fished, and frankly, I never wanted to." One man took Yancy's son fishing offshore. Another man in his 60s took him fishing in a boat. By connecting his son with adults who had a passion for fishing, Yancy helped his son acquire a new hobby and new mentors.

"We need adults who are involved in our kids' lives who are with them, doing activities together," Yancy says. "Although parents have a major influence on kids, parents aren't enough." That's why Yancy gets involved in the lives of other kids he knows and advocates that parents surround their kids with an extended network of support.



Simple, Easy Ideas for Using These Findings about Parents

This study begins to explore parents' own sense of their success, the challenges they face, and the kinds of support and resources they value. Based on the themes in the study as well as other research on child and adolescent development, here are a few ideas that people, organizations, and policy makers can use to support parents and strengthen families. For more ideas (including ideas for parenting children of different ages), see the full report at www.abundantassets.org.

Ideas for Family-Serving Organizations

- ▶ Affirm families in what they're already doing right. Help them see their strengths and show them how to build on their strengths.
- ▶ Talk with parents in your community to learn how well the services you provide match their needs and priorities.

Ideas for Employers

- ▶ Ask parents for ideas on how your company could support them more. Include them in creating new or changing existing company policies.
- ▶ Give parents who are employees opportunities to connect and learn from each other.

Ideas for Communities

- ▶ Sponsor and support community-wide events for families.
- ▶ Ask parents to give input into what your community can offer for families.
- ▶ Create a family directory of your community that includes parks, services, child-care providers, individual music teachers, clubs for kids, dentists, physicians, family events, parenting classes, and other resources your community offers. Distribute the directory to all families in your community.

Ideas for Policy Makers and Funders

- ▶ Recognize the power in creating policies that strengthen families rather than deal only with their problems.
- ▶ Use policies and funding to reinforce the natural and existing resources for parents, such as neighbors, extended family, schools, and communities.

Ideas for Child-Care Providers

- ▶ Learn the names of all the parents of the children you care for. Get to know them.
- ▶ Support parents and treat them as partners in their child's development.
- ▶ Offer child care one evening so parents can enjoy a night out with their partner.

Ideas for Parents

- ▶ Find other parents to connect with and learn from.
- ▶ Take time to focus on strengthening your relationship with your spouse or partner. If you don't have a partner, find friends and relatives who can be strong supports for you and your children.

"Parents just need to hear that they're doing a good job."

*Wanda Schlessor,
Principal,
West Elementary,
New Richmond, Wisconsin*

Ideas for Children and Teenagers

- ▶ Think about ways you can help reduce the bickering with your siblings.
- ▶ Tell your parents when they're doing things right. How can you support your parents?



About This Poll

This preliminary poll, conducted by Global Strategy Group of New York City and Washington, D.C., involved a 15-minute telephone interview in May 2002 with 1,005 parents with children under age 18. Of the parents we interviewed, 82 percent are white, 84 percent are married, 45 percent have at least a college degree, and 49 percent make \$50,000 or more. Ten percent are African American, and 4 percent are Hispanic/Latino. Forty-one percent are fathers. A low response rate means that these findings are not representative of all American parents. However, the study does offer insights into the perspectives of a large, reasonably diverse sample of parents from across the United States. For more information, see the detailed report on the study, which is available at www.abundantassets.org.

Ongoing research by YMCA of the USA and Search Institute will further examine these issues, including research methods focused specifically on the strengths of parents from diverse cultures and in diverse settings. Families featured in this report were not part of the poll, but were contacted separately for their stories and perspectives.

Learn More about the Results

Visit the Web site www.abundantassets.org to view and download the in-depth version of this report, which includes more findings from the poll, more stories of parents and communities, and more ideas on how to support and strengthen families.

Stay in the Loop

Receive regular updates on the study and related research by signing up for the project's free electronic newsletter, *Building Strong Families: Insights from Research*. To subscribe, go to www.abundantassets.org or www.search-institute.org/families.

For more information on family programs at your local YMCA, or for practical parenting resources from the YMCA Strong Families Zone, go to www.ymca.net.

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