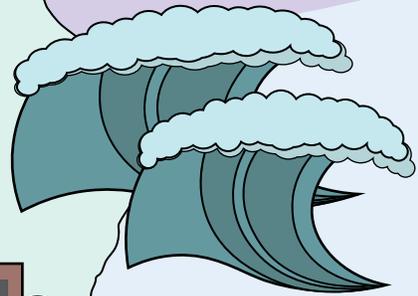
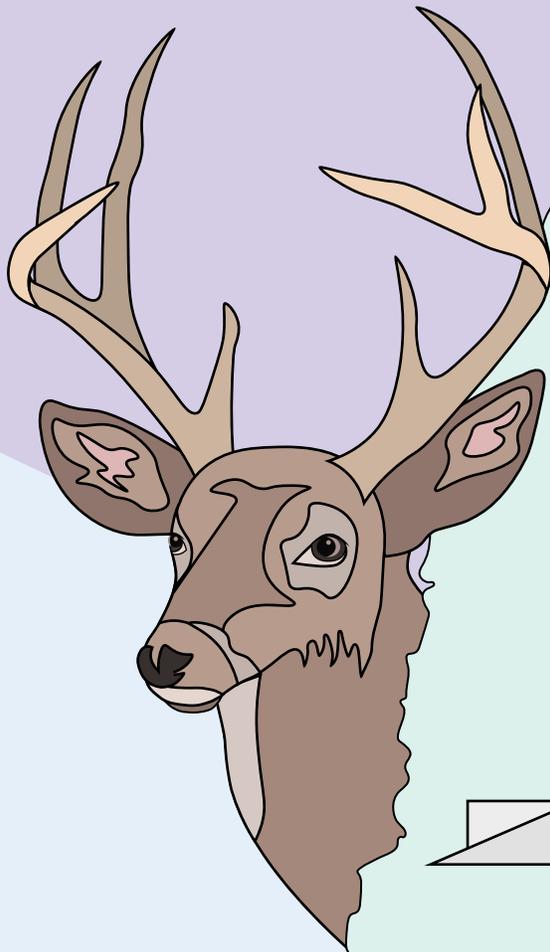
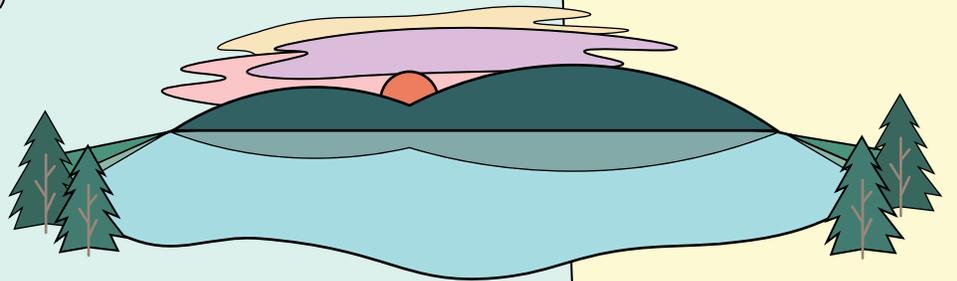
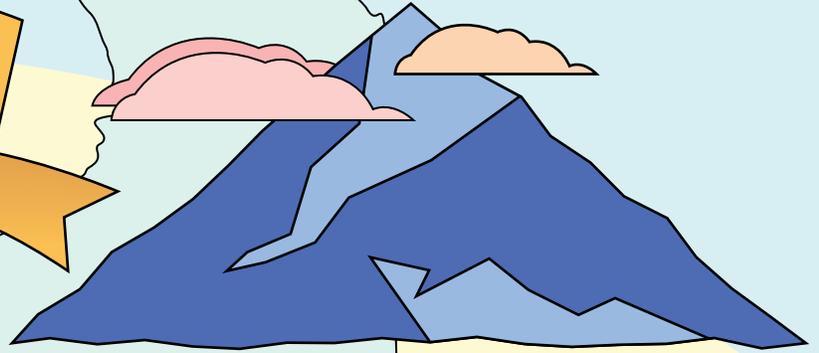
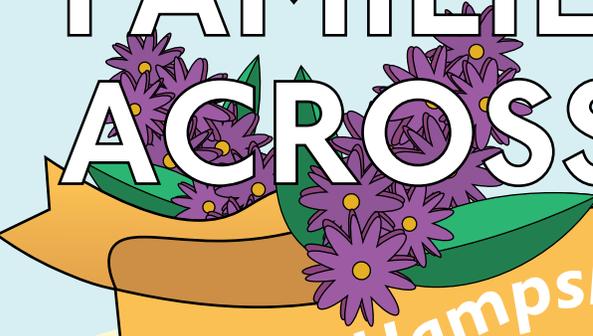


STRENGTHENING FAMILIES ACROSS

New Hampshire



For the children, families, parents, and caregivers of New Hampshire



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

Dear Future Artists, Families, and Friends,

Each day that passes I am reminded just how strong New Hampshire families and communities have become and how caring Granite Staters are, especially when faced with challenges. Community members, parents, caregivers, and leaders continue to work together because we believe that every child deserves to live, grow, and learn in safe, stable, and nurturing environments.

And to create safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children, we understand that parents and caregivers need support not only during challenging times but throughout their parenting journey. Much like the White-tailed Deer, NH's state animal, is able to navigate obstacles with grace, children and families succeed when they can move through life's challenges with the right support at the right time.

While families may come in all shapes and sizes, research tells us that children are more likely to thrive when their families possess five protective factors:

- Knowledge of parenting, child, and youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports in times of need,
- Social and emotional competence of children

Although "nurturing and attachment" is not expressed as one of the five protective factors, it creates the emotional bond that allows for healthy, trusting relationships.

Please join me in coloring the beautiful illustrations created by New Hampshire children and community members from every region of our state. Let the White-tailed Deer guide us through the Strengthening Families Protective Factors on our journey to build safe, stable, and nurturing environments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chitah T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor

Table of Contents

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development.....	4
Parental Resilience.....	6
Social Connections	8
Concrete Support in Times of Need	10
Social and Emotional Competence of Children	12
Nurturing and Attachment	14
Resources for Parents and Caregivers.....	19

About

Conceived by the Center for the Study of Social Policy ([CSSP](#)), the [Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework](#) describes five protective factors, that when present and robust, keep families strong, give children the best chance for optimal development, and reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect.

For more information about the protective factors and how to promote them in your community, please visit www.nhchildrenstrust.org/strengthening-families.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

No parent can be an expert on all aspects of infant, child, and teenage development or on the most effective ways to support children at each stage of their journey.

Kids (and animals!) grow so quickly. When parents are aware of normal developmental milestones, they are more equipped to interpret their child's behaviors and know how to respond to and effectively manage a child's behavior.



How does your parent take care of you?

Draw an example of a time your parent showed they loved you.

Parent Action: Try to see the world from your child's point of view. For example, you might explore a room on your hands and knees to help understand how to childproof your home for your toddler.

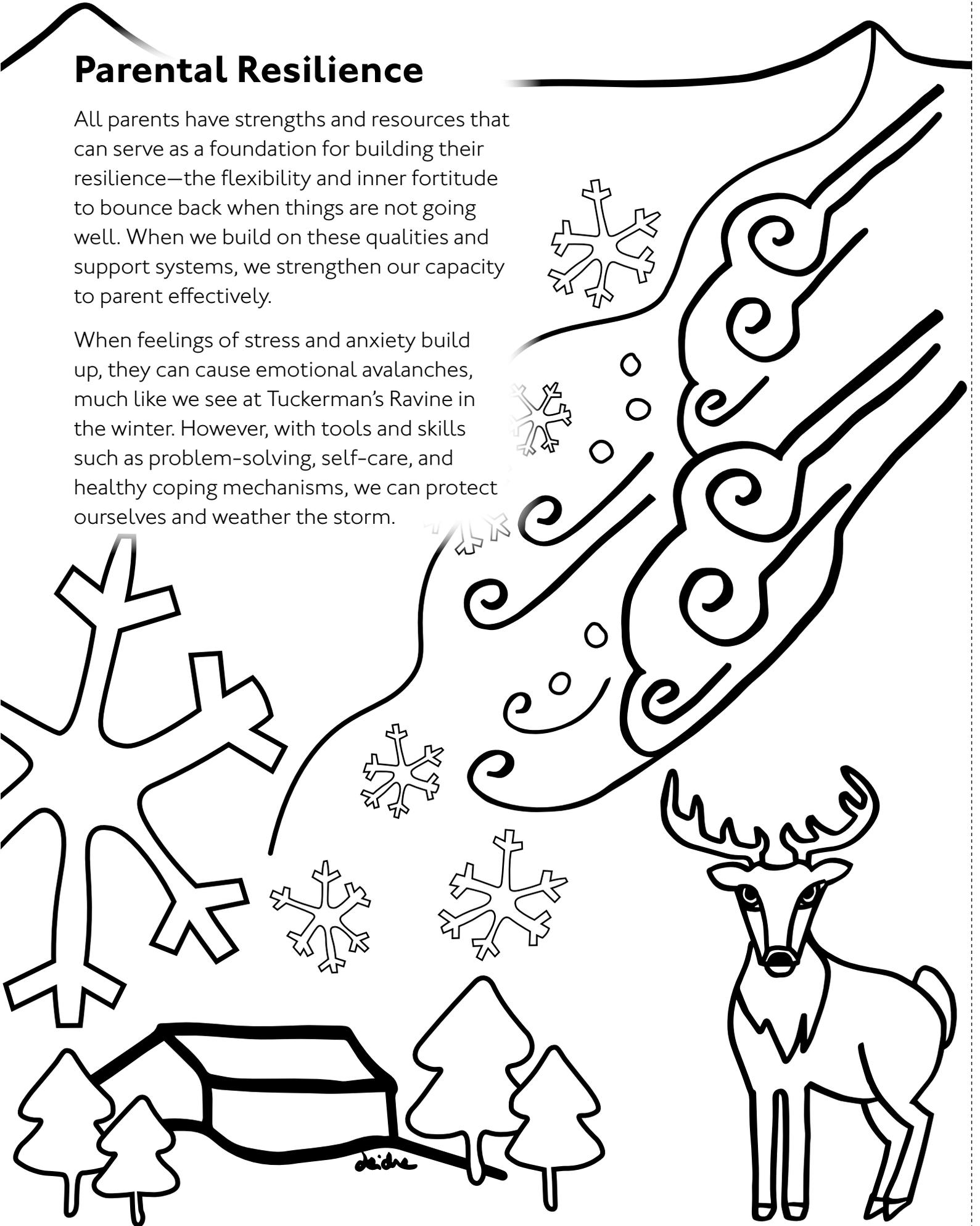
Post the artwork to social media with the hashtag **#StrengtheningFamiliesNH** or email us directly at info@nhchildrenstrust.org so we can celebrate and share your child's creation.



Parental Resilience

All parents have strengths and resources that can serve as a foundation for building their resilience—the flexibility and inner fortitude to bounce back when things are not going well. When we build on these qualities and support systems, we strengthen our capacity to parent effectively.

When feelings of stress and anxiety build up, they can cause emotional avalanches, much like we see at Tuckerman’s Ravine in the winter. However, with tools and skills such as problem-solving, self-care, and healthy coping mechanisms, we can protect ourselves and weather the storm.



Where does your parent get their strength from?
Draw your parent as a superhero with a strength or
power of your choice.

Parent Action: Take time to re-energize and practice self-care. Reach out and talk with friends or family. Create daily habits to take care of yourself—some examples include exercising, writing or journaling, reading a book, or just taking time to breathe.

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Social Connections

Like the famous covered bridges in our state, it's important to reach out to others and create points of connection. Positive relationships with friends, family members, neighbors, and other members of a community provide essential supports for parents.

All parents need people they can call on once in a while when they need a sympathetic listener, advice, or concrete support, such as transportation or occasional childcare. Constructive social connections are beneficial to both parents and children.



Who are the people that support you? Who are the people you trust?

Draw a picture of your favorite people or of a new friend you've made.

Parent Action: Stay in touch with friends and family and foster your positive relationships. Consider joining a group such as a faith community, play group, parenting group, or anything that welcomes and supports parents.

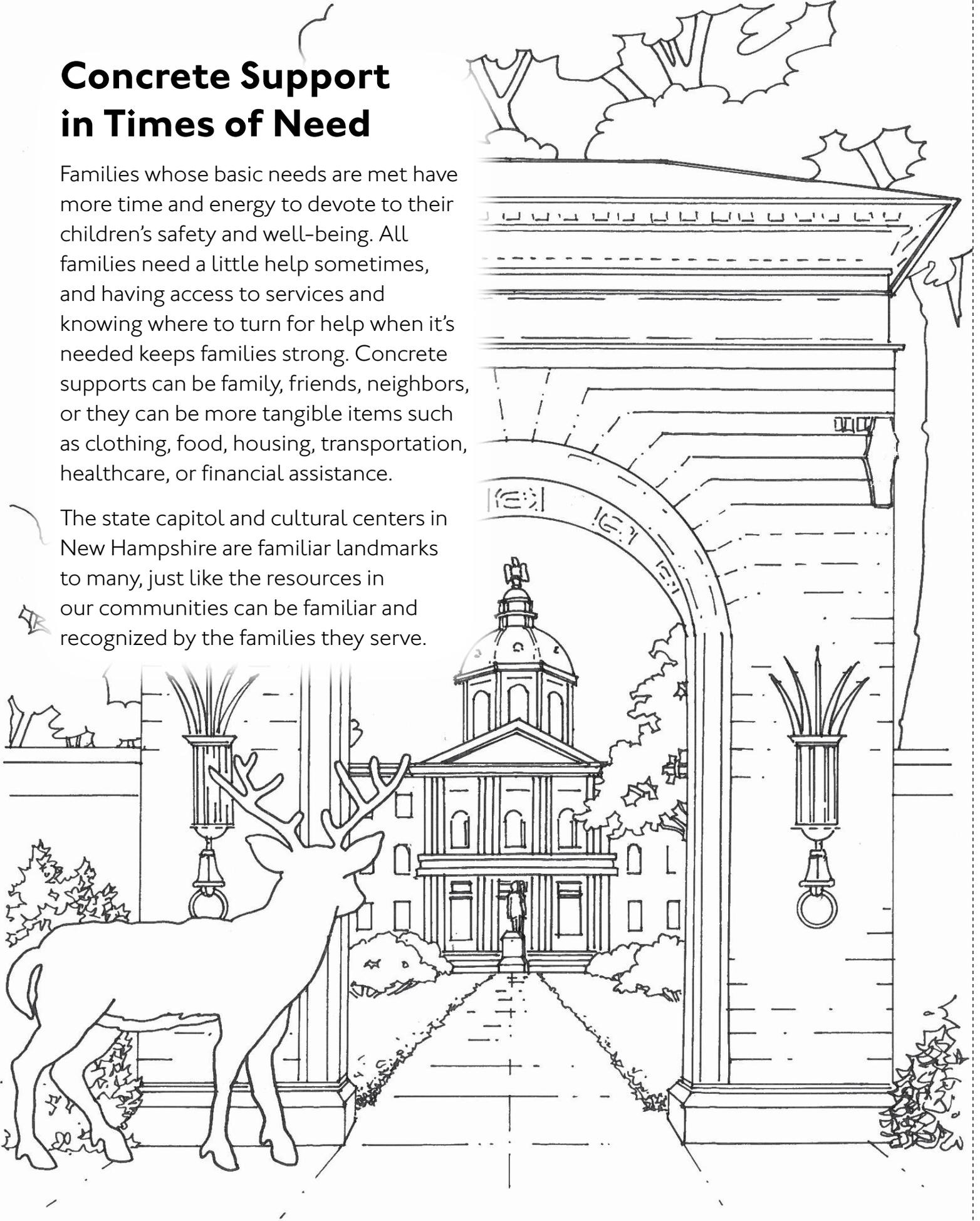
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Concrete Support in Times of Need

Families whose basic needs are met have more time and energy to devote to their children's safety and well-being. All families need a little help sometimes, and having access to services and knowing where to turn for help when it's needed keeps families strong. Concrete supports can be family, friends, neighbors, or they can be more tangible items such as clothing, food, housing, transportation, healthcare, or financial assistance.

The state capitol and cultural centers in New Hampshire are familiar landmarks to many, just like the resources in our communities can be familiar and recognized by the families they serve.



Think about what things, places, or people help keep your family strong.

Pick what you think is most important and draw a picture of it.

Parent Action: Familiarize yourself with your local resources—visit your local Family Resource Center or consider making a list of people and places to call for support. Learn about the programs or services available to you in times of need.

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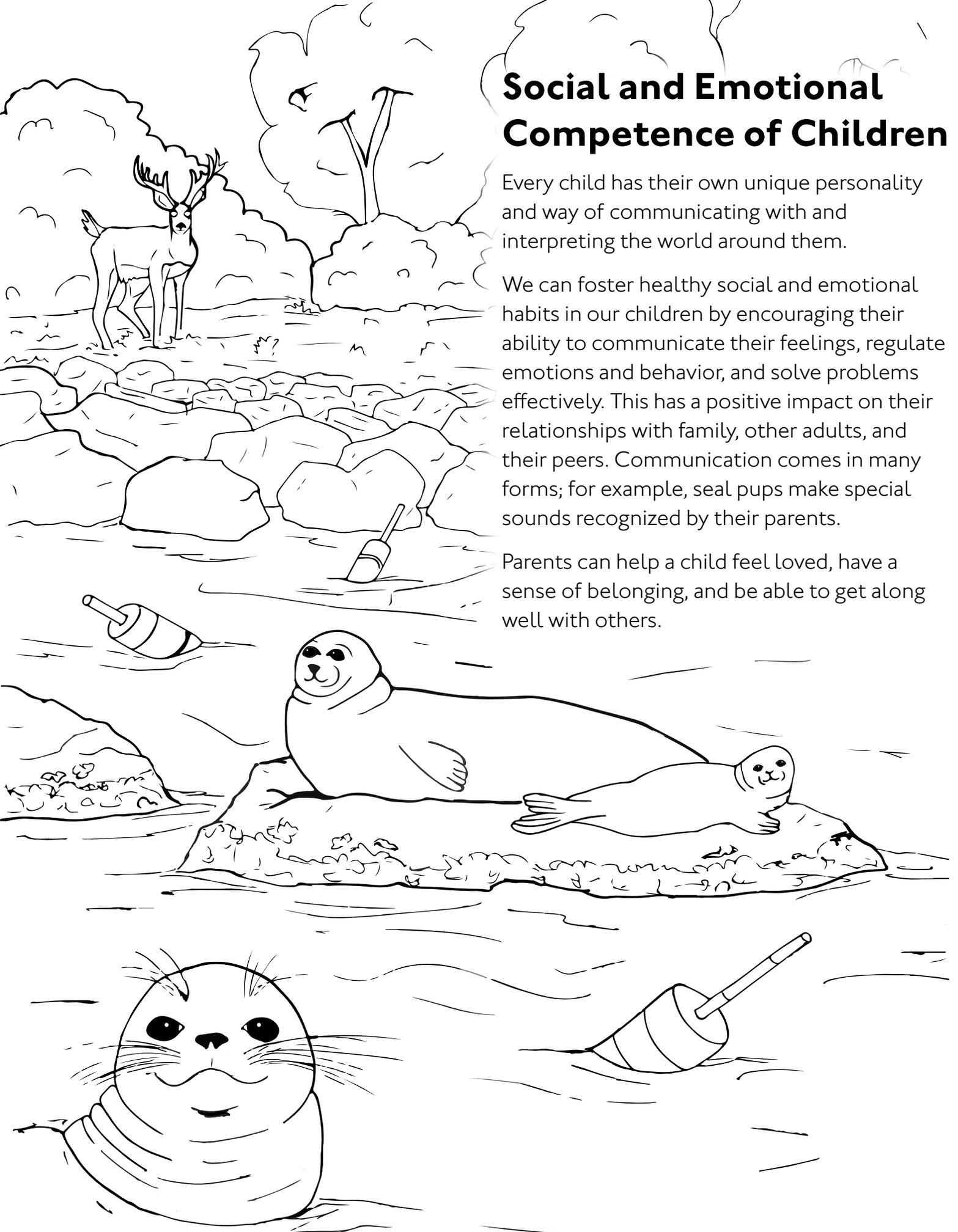


Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Every child has their own unique personality and way of communicating with and interpreting the world around them.

We can foster healthy social and emotional habits in our children by encouraging their ability to communicate their feelings, regulate emotions and behavior, and solve problems effectively. This has a positive impact on their relationships with family, other adults, and their peers. Communication comes in many forms; for example, seal pups make special sounds recognized by their parents.

Parents can help a child feel loved, have a sense of belonging, and be able to get along well with others.



How do you show how you feel? Do you speak, act, or write down your feelings?

Draw how you think your friends or family see you.

Parent Action: Encourage your child to use words to identify their feelings. Model this through naming your emotions, or talking about how characters in a book or TV show might be feeling.

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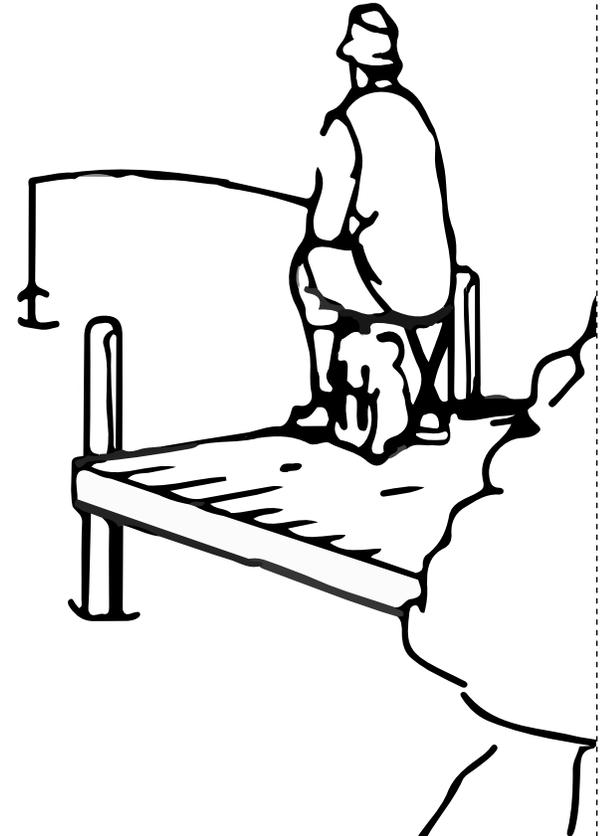


Nurturing and Attachment

A strong and secure emotional bond between children and their caregivers is critical for children's physical, social, and emotional development, including their ability to form trusting relationships and to exhibit positive behaviors.

See how otters cuddle their pups and hold them to their chests to feed. They use their dense fur to support their pup in the water before they can swim, float, and feed on their own.

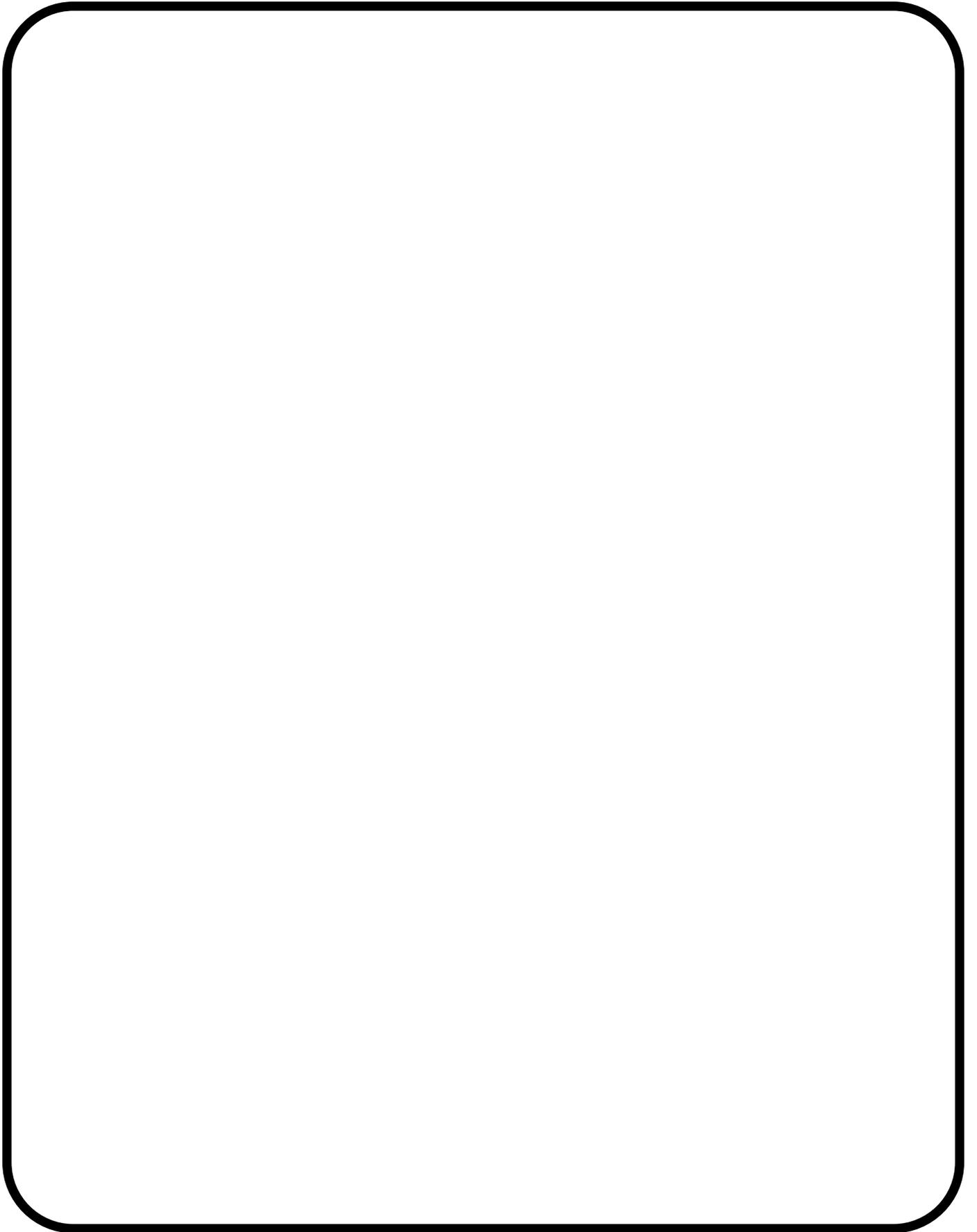
Otters protect and care for their young. Even when otter parents dive for food, they wrap their waiting pup in kelp to keep them safe and secure.



Draw a picture of your family doing a fun activity together.

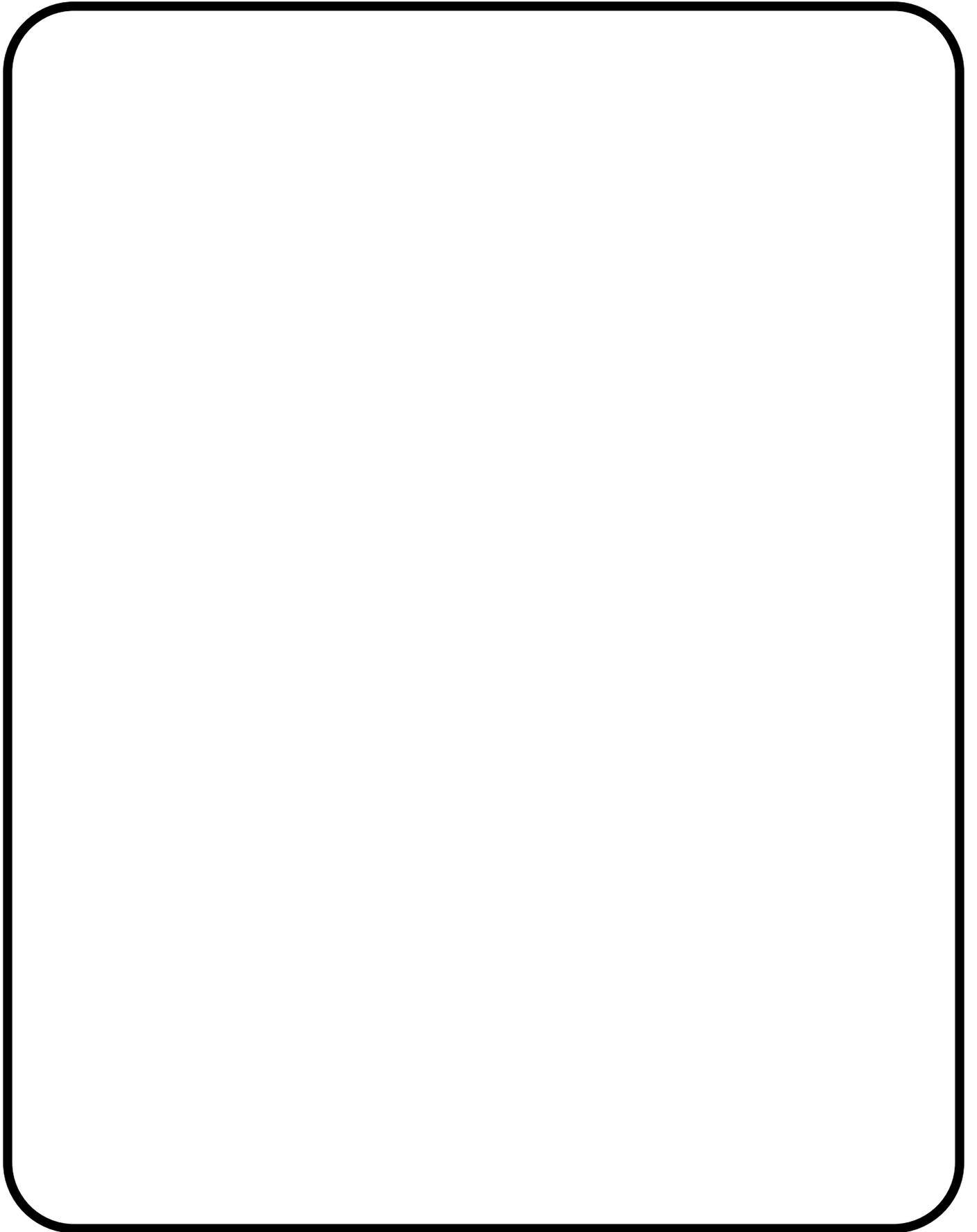
Parent Action: Take time to connect with your family—enjoy a meal together, play a game, or go for a walk. Engage with your family throughout the day by showing affection, asking questions, and taking time to listen. Post the artwork to social media with the hashtag **#StrengtheningFamiliesNH** or email us directly at info@nhchildrenstrust.org so we can celebrate and share your child's creation.





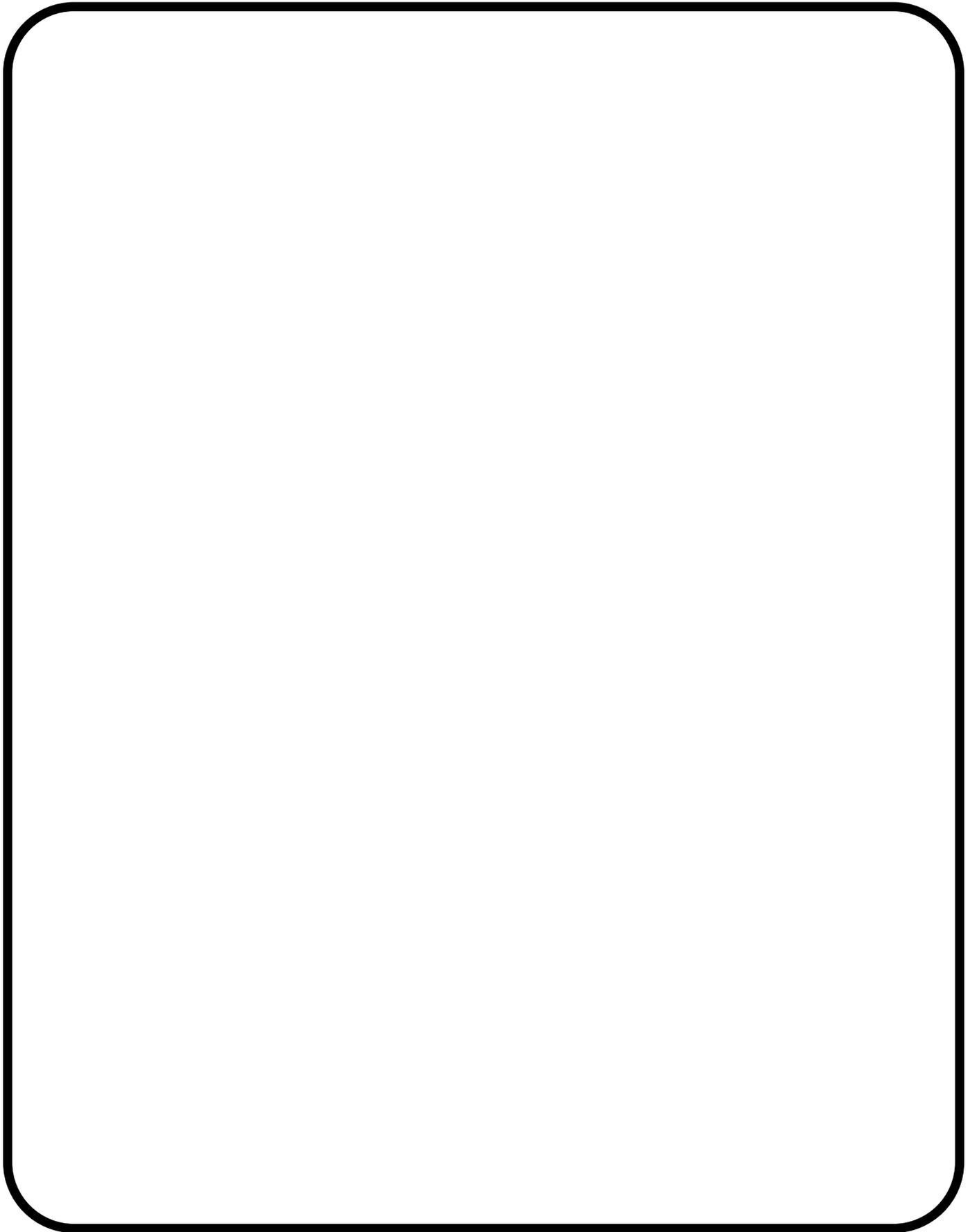
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Resources for Parents and Caregivers

www.211.org | Call, text, or chat with your local 211 to speak with a community resource specialist in your area who will help you find services and resources that are available to you.

www.fsnh.org | Family Support NH is a coalition of non-profit family resource centers (FRCs) and family support programs (FSPs) that are designed to meet the needs of the communities they serve. Programs and services provided by FRCs and FSPs vary, but they all seek to strengthen families by promoting health, wellbeing, self-sufficiency, and positive parenting through support and education.

www.nhchildrenstrust.org/parenting | Whether you're looking for services for yourself, a friend, a family member, or a parent with whom you are working, NH Children's Trust's searchable database will help you find a home visiting program or family resource center serving any town in New Hampshire.

If you are unable to find a local program to fit your needs, or your needs fall outside of program offerings, you can use the NH Family Resource Centers interactive emergency contact list to find and contact your local Family Resource Center to access services and supports.

[Waypoint Family Support Warm Line: 1-800-640-6486](http://www.waypointnh.org) | The Waypoint Family Support Warm Line is a free phone-in service where callers can talk confidentially to a family support professional to get help with everything from coping strategies, child behaviors, family dynamics, household management and emotional distress, to gaining access to tools, resources, and services that can help navigate life during challenging times. Visit www.waypointnh.org for more information.

[The Maternal and Child Health \(MCH\) Section](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/bchs/mch/) | The MCH Section supports a broad array of programs to improve the availability of and access to high quality preventive and primary health care for all children, and for the reproductive health care of all women and their partners, regardless of their ability to pay. Visit www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/bchs/mch/ for more information.



Coös Coalition for Young Children and Families



Engage. Empower. Inspire.

