DEAR READER,

In every corner of New Hampshire, you can see parents and children, laughing and playing, building connections, and learning about what makes their families strong and resilient. While those strengths are unique to each family, we can see them reflected all around us. Like the train the mighty Mountaineer, climbing up Crawford Notch or the Portsmouth tugboats bringing ships in and out of the harbor, families have special sets of skills that are important to future success. And when these skills are passed between family members, the bonds they share grow stronger and stronger.

Strong bonds help the Mountaineer and its many train cars chug through Mount Washington Valley. Parents and children, too, face their own challenges, and yet what keeps them climbing together is the strength of their connection.

Follow New Hampshire’s state bird, the Purple Finch, through your very own Strengthening Families Across New Hampshire Activity Book to learn about ways your family can build strong, resilient connections!

So sharpen your pencils! And prep your family for a whole lot of adventure!

Best wishes,

Erin Pettengill
Board President of Family Support New Hampshire

Can you spot the Purple Finch in every drawing?
Encourage children to be tugboats by giving them meaningful jobs. Helping out at home teaches responsibility and builds confidence.

For every cargo ship, there are helper boats to nudge things in the right direction. These helper boats are called tugboats and they make sure cargo ships get to where they’re going safely. Tugboats are a lot like the many community resources and supports that ensure parents, children, and families have what they need to navigate life’s ups and downs.

When a family’s basic needs are met, parents can focus on strengthening the relationship with their children. STRONG RELATIONSHIPS are key to learning, social and emotional growth, and the future success of children.

NOW YOU TRY! Grab your favorite crayons, markers, or colored pencils and bring the TUGBOATS to life! Can you spot the PURPLE FINCH?

Can you spot 6 THINGS that are different in these pictures?
As the Mountaineer leaves North Conway Station and chugs through Mount Washington Valley, it faces all sorts of challenges. Mountain passes and sharp bends, sheer cliffs and falling rocks, and yet for every hill the Mountaineer huffs 'n puffs over, there is a slope to glide down.

Trains and families have a lot in common. Like members of a family, each train car is unique, and they are all joined together by STABLE BONDS. These strong bonds pull the group up when the going gets tough. To reach the top of Crawford Notch, the Mountaineer must also have a resilient engine. Families have engines too! And the family engine can be made stronger and more resilient with practice.

Make a list of all of the ways your family is RESILIENT! Plan an activity around one of those strengths.

Illustration by Sarah Breisch
Cirсrossing the Merrimack River is a series of railroad bridges that connects one side to the other. Connections like these are important to communities and the people who live in them because they ensure supplies can move across no matter how fast the current or how high the water level.

Connections, too, are just as important for families. When families are socially connected, they have people to lean on, learn from, and laugh with. Social connections also help parents BETTER CONNECT with their own children, strengthening an important bond that will help children thrive.

NOW YOU TRY! Can you connect one side to the other with color? Can you spot the PURPLE FINCH?

A NOTE TO YOUR ADULT
Take a moment to write a short email or text to a friend. Let them know that you’re thinking of them, and that you’re there if they need you.
In the late 1700s, Littleton’s Renaissance Mills were built on the bank of the Ammonoosuc River. The river current turned a waterwheel that spun a large, flat stone grinding grain into meal and flour. For the mill to work, the builders had to understand and interact with their surroundings.

This understanding is similar to mindfulness and how it helps children grow healthy social and emotional skills. Interacting positively with others, regulating behavior, and understanding feelings create positive relationships that BUILD FOUNDATIONS for all learning.

Try “catching” your children being good. It will draw their attention to positive choices and behaviors.

Words can go in any direction. They can also share letters as they cross over each other. Good luck!

Can you find ALL of these emotions?

Words can go in any direction. They can also share letters as they cross over each other. Good luck!

Mindfulness

Illustration by Sarah Breisch

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The 2,032-pound bell inside Concord’s Eagle Square Clock Tower is a reminder of how things change over time. Above the bell sits a newer clock. For the new clock to work, many gears, sprockets, and cogs work together to ring the old bell once an hour.

PARENTING STRATEGIES and our understanding of child development have changed over time too. The inner workings of supervision, nurturing, and guidance all move together so children can grow and parents can feel comfortable that their children are thriving.

WORD SCRAMBLE
Unscramble the words of things you can do to connect with another person!

- selmi
- glahu
- kosob
- senilt
- roocl
- kejo
- smeag
- caned
- gush
- scarf

A NOTE TO YOUR ADULT
Search online for a trusted source about parenting strategies. Don’t be afraid to try a new one!
For pumpkin seeds to grow into big, orange pumpkins, they must be planted in a sunny spot and have plenty of water and nutrients. A fertile environment allows pumpkin plants to develop sturdy roots that feed future growth throughout their lifespan.

For children, strong and secure emotional bonds with their caregivers create the right conditions for social and emotional development. And those strong bonds help children form trusting relationships that can lead to positive choices and improved wellness throughout life.

RECIPE FOR YOUR ADULT

INGREDIENTS:
- 2 tbsp Catching kids showing good behavior and offering praise
- 2 tsp Giving children meaningful jobs at home and positive recognition
- 4 cups Using kind words, tones, and gestures when giving instructions or making requests
- 2 cups Spending time every day in warm, positive, loving interaction with your kids
- 3/4 cup Brainstorming solutions to problems at home or school together
- 2 tbsp Setting rules for screen time
- 3 tbsp Asking about your child’s concerns, worries, goals, and ideas
- 1/4 cup Participating in activities that your child enjoys
- 1 Good egg
- Vanilla to taste

INSTRUCTIONS:
Place ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and mix.

HOW TO MAKE A PINWHEEL:
1. Grab or cut out a square piece of paper.
2. Decorate both sides of the paper.
4. Cut from the four corners toward the center, but stop cutting as you reach the inside circle (see example to the left).
5. Use a sharpened pencil or pin to poke a hole through the circles in the four corners. Carefully create a hole through the straw about a half-inch from the top.
6. Align the small holes on the corners with the center circle.
7. Push the ends of the paper fastener through the holes in the pinwheel, then push the fastener through the center circle.
8. Place the straw on the back side of your pinwheel and push the ends of the fastener through the hole in the straw. Open-up the fastener by flattening the ends in opposite directions.
9. Send us a picture of your pinwheel to be featured on our feeds! nhctcommunications@nhchildrenstrust.org

According to Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA), the pinwheel reminds us of childlike notions and stands for the chance at the healthy, happy, and full lives all children deserve. As the state chapter of PCAA, NH Children’s Trust uses the pinwheel as a symbol of great childhoods during National Child Abuse Prevention Month.
For a house to be sturdy, it must have a strong foundation and plenty of supports. Can you draw your home? What makes your home strong?

To catch the wind, sailboats need all kinds of ropes that can stretch without breaking. Try drawing your own sailboat!

If you could sail anywhere, where would you go?
Find a mirror somewhere in your house. Look at yourself and count to ten. Can you draw what you remember seeing?

Long ago, when people looked up at the night sky, they connected the stars to make shapes called constellations. Some were animals, some were important figures. Can you make your own animal shape out of stars?
Learning something new can be both scary and rewarding. You have to have faith that where you’re going is worth the journey. Can you draw a picture of a time you learned something new? What was it?

Just like plants, people need a nurturing place to grow. Can you draw your favorite place? Why is it so special?
RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

**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.

**servicelink.nh.gov** New Hampshire’s Aging and Disability Resource Center. Your link to information and support services within your community.

**nhchildrenstrust.org** BE PREVENTION—By strengthening NH families with basic supports, increased social connection, parenting education, and information about children’s social and emotional development, families build resilience and drastically decrease incidences of child abuse and neglect.

**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.

**The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Section** 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 reproduction health care of all women and their partners, regardless of their ability to pay. Visit [www.dhhs.nh.gov/dhhs/bchs/mch](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dhhs/bchs/mch) for more information.

**The preparation of this activity book was financed under a contract with the State of New Hampshire, Department of Health and Human Services, with funds provided in part by the State of New Hampshire and/or such other funding sources as were available or required, e.g., the United States Department of Health and Human Services.**

**ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

Sarah Breisch

Sarah is a native of Baltimore, Maryland, who fell in love with New Hampshire during her college years and now makes it her home with her husband, eight children, two dogs, and one cat. Sarah is a Family Support Specialist with the TLC Family Resource Center in Claremont, and has a deep sense of gratitude that she can contribute to her community. Art and literature have been her lifelong pursuits. She studies the humanities and has a BA in Literature. She is a self-taught artist. Before coming to TLC, Sarah had worked as a 4th-grade teacher, tutor, and farmhand, but considers the work of motherhood to be her most challenging and most rewarding occupation.

Leslie Ossoff

Leslie is an illustrator, painter, and mom of three children. She and her husband live in Concord, NH. Her projects and work include children’s book and website illustration, murals and displays at Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum, scenic design and painting for Concord school theatre programs, RB Productions and Prescott Park. She studied landscape architecture at Colorado State University. Further arts education includes illustration classes at Mass College of Art and classes at Kimball Jenkins and the Currier Museum. Other interests include almost any endurance sport that takes place in the outdoors.

**Other funding provided in part by the Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families grant #90CA1858. The contents of this book are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Children’s Bureau.**