

New Hampshire Children's Trust

2021 RESOURCE GUIDE

BE PREVENTION

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BE PREVENTION

April is Prevention Month

Message from the Executive Director



Cliff Simmonds
Executive Director, NH Children's Trust

First proclaimed in the early eighties, April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time when our nation comes together to celebrate ways to make families strong and children safer. We know that strengthening families with resilience, a sense of community, parenting education, basic supports, and children's social and emotional development drastically reduces the occurrence of child abuse and neglect. We call it Primary Prevention. Increasing family access to those factors is what makes it work.

But what, exactly, does that look like in real life?

This April, New Hampshire Children's Trust (NHCT) and our many family-focused community partners have developed a weekly

series that explores PRIMARY PREVENTION and the activities and services meant to support parents and caregivers, strengthen the family unit, and create stronger communities. Together, we will show the positive impact of prevention in everyday life, how parents can access supports that strengthen their families, and how professionals, parents, community and State leaders can engage in the work that leads to success for children and families.

Please join us for our PREVENTION IS campaign where, together, we'll dig deeper into those factors that strengthen families and protect children through short films, animation, podcasts, webinars, and much more. Learn what you can do as a parent, caregiver, family member and neighbor that will help New Hampshire children thrive.

Check out NHCT's April Resource Guide on the following pages and explore the many ways you can BE PREVENTION and strengthen family in your community.

Warm Regards,

Cliff Simmonds

Executive Director, New Hampshire Children's Trust

What we mean when we talk about PRIMARY PREVENTION

Put simply, PREVENTION IS the act or practice of keeping something from happening—or making sure nothing bad happens. And the something we do to make sure nothing bad happens is the foundation of PRIMARY PREVENTION, the results of which often go unnoticed.

Why?

Because nothing is difficult to see. We know, however, that in order to prevent incidences of child abuse and neglect, a **whole lot** of something has to happen.

PREVENTION IS advocating for legislation and policies that increase family resilience and decrease stress. PREVENTION IS investing in parent access to basic needs and parent education. PREVENTION IS building nurturing environments so children can develop social and emotional skills that will benefit them throughout their lifespan.

PREVENTION IS creating and maintaining strong, thriving families. PREVENTION IS you, me, our families, and our communities working together to make children safer.

Each of us has a role to play. PREVENTION requires something from all of us.

Find your role at <u>www.nhchildrenstrust.org/prevention</u>











BE PREVENTION

Ambassador Action Guide

How you can help

Prevention is a community effort. When parents and caregivers have access to supports, children thrive, families are stronger and more resilient, and New Hampshire prospers.

It's simple: Investing in families and the network of supports they need creates a better New Hampshire.

April is Prevention Month!



Wear Blue!

Thursday, April 1 is Wear Blue Day! Wear BLUE for Prevention. Take a picture and send it to us to be featured!



#UNselfie Photo

Post an #UNselfie photo of yourself that explains how you Prevent. Send it to us!



Connect with Us

Go to our <u>Facebook</u>, <u>Instagram</u>, <u>LinkedIn</u> and <u>YouTube</u> pages like and follow us.



Attend an Event

Join us on **April 7** for a <u>Parent</u> <u>Café about CONNECTION</u>, and on **April 21** for a webinar with Linda Douglas from the NHCADSV.



Promote on Social Media

Download our social media calendar and assets and share them on your feeds!



Listen to Our Podcast

Tune in to our podcast, NH Family Now—share it with your friends!



Download Our Guide

<u>Download the 2021 Prevention</u> <u>Month Resource Guide.</u> Explore all the resources!



Email Your Contacts

Send a <u>personalized email</u> to your contact list sharing the importance of Prevention and how we can all get involved!



Use the Activity Calendar

Download our Parent Activity Calendar to engage your family in the Protective Factors throughout the month!



Donate

Make a gift to NHCT at nhchildrenstrust.org/donate

Download our social media assets, Resource Guide, Parent Activity Calendar, #UNselfie template and more https://www.hearts.com/hearts-self-template and more https://www.hearts-self-template and more <a href="https://www.hearts-self-template and more <a hre



WEAR BLUE

DAY

Thursday

April 1st

April is Prevention Month!

Raise awareness by sharing a photo of yourself on April 1st using the hashtag #WearBlueDay.

Share it with us at nhctcommunications@ nhchildrenstrust.org



UNSELFIE

I PREVENT by ...







202

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Make a list of all the ways you are resilient. Encourage others in your family to do the same. Look for similarities.	Call or write an email to someone in your life who is especially resilient. Let them know it's a quality you admire.	Plan an activity around a resilience resource your family shares. If it's food, cook. If it's humor, watch a funny movie.	Listen to the NH Family NOW podcast. Think about the Protective Factors and your family.	WEAR BLUE! Send us a picture of you or your family to nhctcommunications@nhchildrenstrust.org	Join Melony Williams from TLC for Reflect, Replenish, Be at 10 AM—http:// ow.ly/O98z50DUsgj	Make time to do something YOU enjoy.
CONNECTION 4 Lift up a parent in your community. Let them know you're there to help when they need it.	Encourage your child to write or list the names of their favorite friends. You do it too! Talk about why they bring you joy.	With your child, write a letter to a friend letting them know how much they mean to you. Mail it or take a drive to handdeliver the letter.	Tune in to Greater Tilton Area FRC's Parent Café. Register at http://ow.ly/ IqCN50DVjmE	Arrange a virtual or outdoor playdate to connect your child with their peers.	Join Melony Williams from TLC for Reflect, Replenish, Be at 10 AM—http:// ow.ly/O98z50DUsgj	Join a virtual social or parent group at your local Family Resource Center (FRC). Go to fsnh.org to find the FRC nearest you.
SUPPORT 11 Consider donating to your local food pantry, shelter, or Family Resource Center.	Have a family art night. Encourage your child to depict a family scene. Ask them to explain what they've included and why.	Familiarize yourself with the resources in your community. Find your local Family Resource Center at www.fsnh.org.	Listen to the NH. Family NOW podcast about Concrete Support and why it matters to families.	Download the Strengthening Families Across NH Activity Book HERE!	Join Melony Williams from TLC for Reflect, Replenish, Be at 10 AM—http:// ow.ly/O98z50DUsgjj	Check in on your neighbors to see how they're doing or if there's anything you can help them with.
"Catch" your children being good. Give your child attention for making positive choices.	Cut four circles out of paper and label them: happy, sad, frustrated, and silly. Ask your child to draw a face that expresses each.	Read one of your child's favorite books, paying special attention to faces. Talk about what they mean and why they might be happening.	Join Linda Douglas from NHCADSV for her Helping Kids Find Their Cape webinar. Register at http:// ow.ly/Z8j550DVjrX	Using a well-worn t-shirt, make a cape for a child in your life.	Join Melony Williams from TLC for Reflect, Replenish, Be at 10 AM—http:// ow.ly/O98z50DUsgj	GET MOVING: Plan a dance party, or fun-themed family cleaning day. Keep it light and silly.
Engage you child in a conversation about the type of caregiver they'd like to be.	Search online for a trusted source about parenting strategies. Don't be afraid to try a new one.	Make a list of all of your parenting strengths. Anything missing you'd like to build?	Listen to the NH Family NOW podcast about Parenting and Child Development.	Reach out to a parent you admire. Let them know they're doing a great job.	Join Melony Williams from TLC for Reflect, Replenish, Be at 10 AM—http:// ow.ly/098z50DUsgj	



BE PREVENTION





Are you the primary caregiver for a child that is not your own? The Kinship Navigation Program can help.

Discover family support, guidance, and connection near you.

nhchildrenstrust.org/kinship



Helping Kids Cope with Stress

To adults, childhood can seem like a carefree time.* But kids still experience stress. Things like school and their social life can sometimes create pressures that can feel overwhelming for kids. As a parent, you can't protect your kids from stress—but you can help them develop healthy ways to cope with stress and solve everyday problems.

Kids deal with stress in both healthy and unhealthy ways. And while they may not initiate a conversation about what's bothering them, they do want their parents to reach out and help them cope with their troubles.

But it's not always easy for parents or caregivers to know what to do for a child who's feeling stressed.

Here are a few ideas:

Notice out loud. Tell your child when you notice that something's bothering him or her. If you can, name the feeling you think your child is experiencing. ("It seems like you're still mad about what happened at the playground.") This shouldn't sound like an accusation or put a child on the spot. It's just a casual observation that you're interested in hearing more about your child's concern. Be sympathetic and show you care and want to understand.

Listen to your child. Ask your child to tell you what's wrong. Listen attentively and calmly—with interest, patience, openness, and caring. Avoid any urge to judge, blame, lecture, or say what you think your child should have done instead. The idea is to let your child's concerns (and feelings) be heard. Try to get the whole story by asking questions like "And then what happened?" Take your time. And let your child take their time, too.

Comment briefly on the feelings you think your child was experiencing. For example, you might say "That must have been upsetting," or "That must have seemed unfair to you." Doing this shows that you understand what your child felt, why, and that you care. Feeling understood and listened to helps your child feel supported by you, and that is especially important in times of stress.

Put a label on it. Many younger kids do not yet have words for their feelings. If your child seems angry or frustrated, use those words to help him or her learn to identify the emotions by name. Putting feelings into words helps kids communicate and develop emotional awareness—the ability to recognize their own emotional states. Kids who can do so are less likely to reach the behavioral boiling point where strong emotions come out through behaviors rather than communicated with words.

Help your child think of things to do. If there's a specific problem that's causing stress, talk together about what to do. Encourage your child to think of a couple of ideas. You can start the brainstorming if necessary, but don't do all the work. Your child's active participation will build confidence. Support the good ideas and add to them as needed. Ask, "How do you think this will work?"

Listen and move on. Sometimes talking and listening and feeling understood is all that's needed to help a child's frustrations begin to melt away. Afterward, try changing the subject and moving on to something more positive and relaxing Help your child think of something to do to feel better. Don't give the problem more attention than it deserves.

Limit stress where possible. If certain situations are causing stress, see if there are ways to change things. For instance, if too many after-school activities consistently cause homework stress, it might be necessary to limit activities to leave time and energy for homework.

Just be there. Kids don't always feel like talking about what's bothering them. Sometimes that's OK. Let your kids know you'll be there when they do feel like talking. Even when kids don't want to talk, they usually don't want parents to leave them alone. You can help your child feel better just by being there—keeping them company, spending time together. So if you notice that your child seems to be down in the dumps, stressed, or having a bad day—but doesn't feel like talking—initiate something you can do together.

Be patient. As a parent, it hurts to see your child unhappy or stressed. But try to resist the urge to fix every problem. Instead, focus on helping your child, slowly but surely, grow into a good problem-solver—a kid who knows how to roll with life's ups and downs, put feelings into words, calm down when needed, and bounce back to try again.

Parents can't solve every problem as kids go through life. But by teaching healthy coping strategies, you'll prepare your kids to manage the stresses that come in the future.

Self-Care in the Time of Coronavirus

When you're a parent, self-care often slips to the bottom of the list.* But taking care of yourself isn't a luxury. It's essential. And during this difficult time, when children are home and stress is running high, it's more important than ever. Here are five tips that can help.

Make time for yourself.

The pandemic has been long, and even though the end is in sight, we're all struggling to maintain our mental health. Even now, much of the personal time that was part of daily routines pre-pandemic—commutes, time alone at home or at the store, social time with friends, sitting in a restaurant—is not available for folks with kids at home. Without it, we have to be intentional about creating space to recharge and decompress. This could look like taking a shower or bath, walking around the block alone (or with your dog), or designating time to read or simply zone out after the kids have gone to bed.

Prioritize healthy choices.

The colder weather and ongoing stress we're all experiencing right now can make it easy to slip into habits that feel good in the moment but can be detrimental in the long term. "Make sure you're eating properly, try to get enough sleep (but not too much!), and create a routine that includes physical activity," recommends Jill Emanuele, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute. This doesn't mean pressuring yourself to get into tip-top shape, or not eating ice cream or binging your favorite shows. It does mean being thoughtful and intentional about how you're treating yourself and your body. Small changes like making time to take a walk, do a short exercise routine, or choosing to go to bed a little earlier than usual can reduce stress and help you feel more relaxed and resilient.

Be realistic.

"Perfectionism and the coronavirus don't mix," says David Anderson, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute. "It's time to be exceedingly realistic, both at work and as a parent." Avoid burnout by setting realistic expectations and giving yourself grace if you can't meet them. "Practice forgiveness and self-compassion," says Dr. Anderson. Parents should remind themselves that these are unprecedented times. "There's no playbook for this. Remember you're doing your best during a very difficult time. Cut yourself some slack."

Set boundaries.

It's been a long (long long long) year and anxiety is, understandably, rampant. With so much worry and uncertainty floating around it can be easy to absorb other people's fears and concerns without even realizing it. If you have a friend or family member who's in the habit of sending worst-case-scenario news or is prone to sending anxiety-provoking text messages, practice a little emotional distancing. Let them know you sympathize but that you're taking a break from worrying news, or simply hit the Do Not Disturb button. You can always reconnect when things are calmer.

Reconnect with things you enjoy.

Self-care can be as simple as taking a shower, but it doesn't have to be. Finding time to get back in touch with hobbies or activities you enjoy or making the choice to learn a new skill can be a great way to practice self-care. Maybe there's a knitting project you've always wanted to try, or you've been meaning to learn how to needlepoint. If young children at home make solo activities unrealistic, seek out activities you can enjoy together, like baking bread, or making art.

Finally, remember, being kind to yourself will not only help you stay calm during this difficult time, it will help ensure that you have the bandwidth you need to take good care of your family. When you're running on fumes, caring for others can tax your already depleted resources to breaking point. But when you prioritize your needs, you're filling the tank, emotionally and physically, and that means you'll be in a position to offer comfort and care to others when they need it most.

GROWING a Better Tomorrow for All Children, TOGETHER Every day, we help positive childhood experiences take root.

LEARN HOW YOU CAN **PLANT THE SEEDS** OF A BETTER TOMORROW FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Visit **preventchildabuse.org/**growing-better-together-2021 #GrowingBetterTogether



My Family Checklist

Parental Resilience

Resilient parents are able to properly manage all challenges that their family faces. This means creatively solving problems, building trusting relationships, maintaining a positive attitude, and seeking help when it is needed. Parents who are able to cope with the challenges of everyday life, as well as an occasional crisis, have resilience.

2

Social Connections

Connections help families stay strong, get through the hard times, and provide emotional support. Parents need friends. Having social connections you can rely on is important for every family. This doesn't mean that you have to have hundreds of people in your life—just a few people to lean on, learn from, and laugh with.

3

Concrete Support

Support is access to community resources so parents can devote more time and energy to their children's safety and well-being. All families could use a little help sometimes. Knowing where to turn to meet basic needs keeps the family unit strong. Concrete supports can be family, friends, neighbors, or they can be more tangible items such as clothing, food, shelter, clothing and health care.

4

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Social and emotional competence is a child's ability to interact positively with others, self-regulate behavior, and effectively communicate feelings. Mindfulness in children positively impacts relationships throughout life. When we foster mindfulness, children are better able to understand and communicate with the world around them.

5

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

When parents are aware of their child's milestones, they are better equipped to understand behaviors and know how to respond. Accurate information about child development and expected behaviors helps parents provide an appropriate amount of nurturing, supervision, and guidance. Information can come from family members, parent education classes, public libraries, and much more.





Family Voice is a critical component in navigating concrete supports successfully and getting the support your family needs to thrive.

By Robin deAlmeida, Family Engagement Project Director for the Parent Information Center of NH

Families are experts in their lived experiences. They spend the most time with their children and are their first teachers and caregivers. The questions they ask and the information they share often make the difference in understanding a diagnosis, building an effective treatment plan, and informing service design and delivery. Providers need this expertise to do their jobs most effectively.

Here are three ways of using your voice to ensure your family has what they need to succeed:

1. When trying to obtain or learn about a new diagnosis, don't hesitate to ask for the information you need to feel confident in understanding the situation and all of your options. Whether your child's teacher or physician suggests an evaluation for a developmental or health concern it can be stressful and hard to recall the details of what was said during an appointment. It's normal to have a lot more questions after you have time to process things. Providers understand this and expect requests for more information. So after the dust settles, write down all the questions you have, then call, and ask them. If they don't have all the answers you want, ask who else you could talk to and what resources they recommend to help you find answers.



2. Speak up if a service or activity is not a good fit for your family. Providers and families should collaborate to ensure that recommended services or therapies are realistic and achievable. For example, if your child's occupational therapist recommends an at-home activity for you to do together five times a week, and all you can think about is how stressed and overwhelmed both of you will be trying to do it - share your concerns. Ask what the goal of the activity is and what alternatives are available. This information will help the therapist know your child better and design interventions that meet their individual needs. Working together will mean a higher likelihood of success.



3. Share your experiences and ideas with service providers, educators, and key decision-makers. Service providers, educators, and key decision-makers need to hear from families so that they don't have to make assumptions about what families want and need. When families share their experiences and knowledge, it ensures that services and supports remain responsive to the people who need and use them.



We can't achieve the positive outcomes we hope for without listening and learning together. Family voice plays a significant role in ensuring our children reach their fullest potential and for us to reach ours as providers and caregivers.

The <u>Parent Information Center</u> and <u>NH Family Voices</u> have been helping Granite State families identify and navigate concrete supports for themselves and the children in their care for over 45 years. A big part of the support we offer is helping families realize the vital role their voices play in ensuring they get the care they need and want.

For more information, email rdealmeida@picnh.org.





10 Loving Gifts for Families

Time. If you're healthy, arrange an outdoor play-date with a friend or neighbor's kids (following CDC mask guidelines) for a few hours to give parents time to reconnect and recharge.

Hands. Lending a helping hand can come in many forms—delivering groceries or a home-cooked meal, offering care, or providing transportation. Get creative with the ways you can help out. Chances are you have a skill that can be of service.

Financial support. Received a refund for a family vacation that got canceled? Consider using the extra money to help a family pay utility bills or afford food or other essential household items if you're able.

Groceries. No one should ever have to worry about how they are going to feed their family. The gift of groceries means parents can have a little extra cash to put into their savings.

Connection. Everyone needs a listening ear or a shoulder to lean on sometimes. Check in with anybody who may be struggling and encourage them to talk about how they're feeling or to access the help and support they may need. Texts, emails, phone calls and video calls all help.

Errands. Shop or do errands for quarantined or high-risk families in your community who need to stay home or don't feel safe in public areas. Consider offering other families, such as those who are overwhelmed with work and virtual schooling, the same services so parents have some extra time to take care of themselves.

Community resources. Parents aren't always aware of what resources are available to them in their own communities. Familiarize them with their local Family Resource Center and the services they offer. As families experience increased insecurity, access to these resources becomes even more important.

Concrete support. Every family deserves to have their basic needs met. Donate food or clothing or offer transportation or a full tank of gas to a family who needs it.

Fun! Even children feel the effects of social distancing and isolation. Consider arranging a virtual play-date between friends or relatives so kids are able to connect and play with their peers and family!

Voice. Be an advocate for those in your community. Share trustworthy information with your network either virtually or in conversation. Be a voice for how people can help each other in this time of social distancing, while staying safe. Share what you learn about the needs of those around you and tell people what you are doing to make a difference.

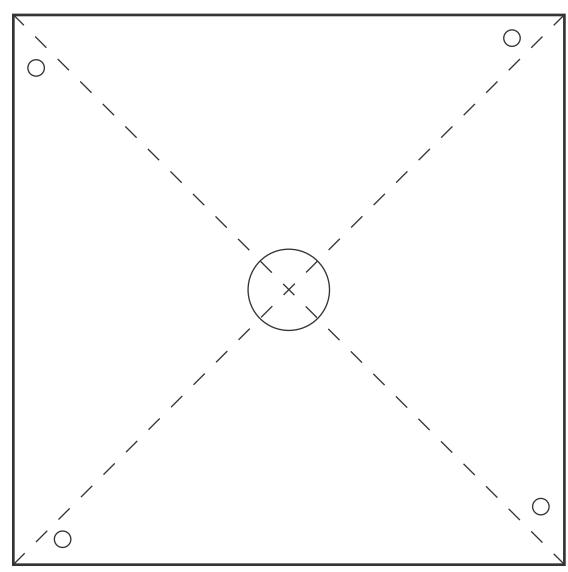
Encouraging words. Parenting is exhausting, confusing, and frustrating at times (especially during a pandemic). Being in a parent's corner makes all the difference!





Make Your Own Pinwheel

Activity Sheet



According to <u>Prevent Child Abuse America</u> (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.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

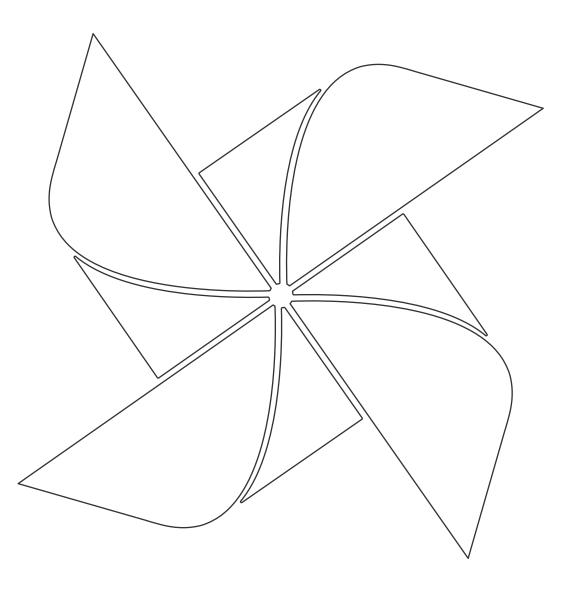
- A pencil with eraser
- 8.5 x II sheet of construction paper
- Scissors
- Colored pencils or markers
- Paper fastener
- Plastic drinking straw

HOW TO MAKE A PINWHEEL:

- 1. Print out the pinwheel pattern. You can reproduce this pattern on white construction paper with a copy machine.
- 2. Cut-out the pinwheel on the solid lines only.
- 3. Decorate both sides of the construction paper pinwheel.
- 4. Cut the dotted lines from the four corners to the center circle. Try not the cut into the center circle.
- 5. Use a sharpened pencil to poke a hole through the circles in the four corners. The pencil point also works well to poke a hole into the straw. Carefully push the pencil point through the straw about a half-inch from the top.
- 6. Align the small holes on the four 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 a picture of your pinwheel to nhchildrenstrust.org to be featured on our feeds!



Pinwheel Hunt



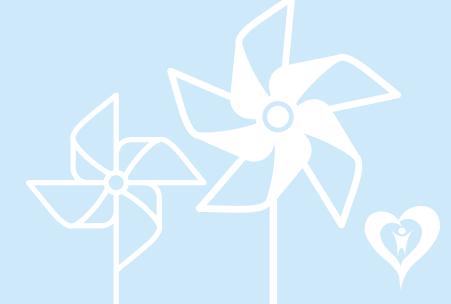
Visit <u>www.nhchildrenstrust.org/prevention</u> to download the full April Prevention Month Resource Guide!

April is Prevention Month, and increased awareness is more important than ever as parents and caregivers work hard to provide and be present for their families.

Unleash your creativity and engage in our campaign with this fun activity for the whole family! Anyone can participate—all you need is some paper, colored pencils, tape, and scissors!

Follow these instructions and remember to have fun!

- I. Print out this page (you can make as many copies as you want!) and decorate the pinwheel below.
- 2. Once you've finished designing your pinwheel, cut it out and tape it to a window in your home that faces the street.
- 3. Encourage your neighbors to participate—the more the merrier! Find a day to get outside and go on your own pinwheel hunt in your neighborhood. How many other pinwheels can you find?
- 4. We'd love to see what you create! Take pictures and post them to social media with the hashtag **#beprevention** to be featured on our feeds!



Additional Resources

NH Government Resources:
NH Bureau of Family Assistance www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/index.htm NH Department of Education. www.education.nh.gov NH Department of Health & Human Services www.dhhs.nh.gov NH Division for Children, Youth and Families www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf NH Office of the Child Advocate childadvocate.nh.gov/
Resources that Connect:
NH 211www.21Inh.orgNH Care Path.www.nhcarepath.dhhs.nh.govService Linkwww.servicelink.nh.gov
Concrete Supports:
Child Care Aware of New Hampshire Disability Rights Center—NH NH Food Bank New Hampshire Homeschooling Coalition New Hampshire Housing New Hampshire Legal Aid Parenting Resources: nh.childcareaware.org nh.childcareaware.org nhfoodbank.org nhfoodbank.org nhhomeschooling.org www.nhhfa.org nhlegalaid.org
Family Support New Hampshire
Grand Families Specific Resources:
Generations Unitedwww.gu.orgGrandFamilies.orggrandfamilies.orgStep Up Parentswww.stepupparents.net
COVID Resources:
CDC COVID-19 <u>www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/</u> NHCT Parent & Caregiver Guide to COVID-19 <u>www.nhchildrenstrust.org/covid-19</u> NH DHHS COVID-19 <u>www.nh.gov/covid19</u>
Recovery Resources:
Granite Pathways

Thank you to our Champions of Prevention



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Children's Hospital at Dartmouth-Hitchcock





Be Prevention

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