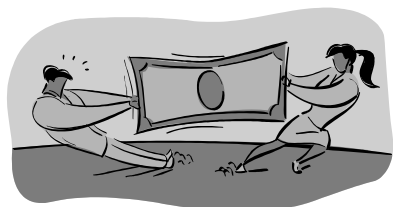


Tips for Helping Families in Tough Economic Times



The San Francisco Family Economic Success Workgroup* developed these tips for how Family Service Providers can help families in these tough financial times:

Connect Families to nearby Family Resource Centers—There are Family Resource Centers throughout the City where anyone can find information, classes, and counseling. Locate the one nearest you by calling 2-1-1 or visiting the Resources for Families page on www.dcyf.org.

Encourage Families to Utilize Public Benefits—Families suddenly experiencing a decrease in household income may be eligible for public assistance benefits. Call 2-1-1 to for info on food stamps, health care benefits, and more. San Francisco families and individuals will soon be able to access online eligibility screening at www.benefitssf.org.

Ensure Families Know How to Obtain Assistance for Basic Needs—San Francisco families can call 2-1-1, search www.211sf.org, or www.myhousing.org for food, clothing, child care, housing/shelter, employment, counseling, and more.

Share Ideas for Fun on a Budget—For free and low-cost family events, afterschool care, classes, volunteering, and a wide range of advice and information for youth and families, visit www.sfkids.org. Each season the SFkids editors prepare a printed sampling of cheap, but cool, family activities (especially useful for families without internet access).

Link Families to Earn It! Keep It! Save It! —Most low-income and working families qualify for significant tax credits and refunds. Households with less than \$45,000 in 2008 who missed the April 15 tax filing deadline are still eligible for free tax services. Call 2-1-1 for details about available services.

Help Address Stress and Violence—Financial stress and the overall economic uncertainty can place added pressure on families already struggling to make ends meet. Crisis hotlines, such as the 24 hour/7 days a week crisis line (415) 781-0500, the TALKLine for parents and caregivers (415) 441-KIDS, and domestic violence hotlines are available for immediate help.

Support Financial Empowerment—Families need access to safe and secure financial products and help with budgeting, saving, and debt reduction. Unbanked families can save as much as 5% of net income by using a low- or no-cost checking account instead of a check casher. Other products, such as emergency loans, as well as an array of financial education opportunities, including classes that can be taught at your agency are available through Bank on San Francisco. For more information, contact Marco Chavarin from Bank on San Francisco (Office of the Treasurer) at marco.chavarin@sfgov.org or (415) 554-7444, www.bankonsf.org.

Attend Family Economic Success Workshops—Direct service providers working with San Francisco families can attend free workshops to learn how to work with families during the economic crisis and access the myriad of services available. Workshops take place on the third Thursday of the month and topics include housing options in San Francisco, understanding clients' credit, and accessing non-public benefits. For more information, contact Corey Chandler, Training Coordinator for the SF Family Support Network, at corey@sffsn.org or (415) 934-4837.

* Member organizations of the San Francisco Family Economic Success Workgroup: Department of Children, Youth & Their Families, EARN, First 5 San Francisco, Human Services Agency, Mayor's Office of Community Investment, Office of the Treasurer, San Francisco Family Support Network, SF Works, Single Stop, TaxAid, and the United Way of the Bay Area.