



# FAMILIES

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

# TOGETHER

## ORIENTATION FOR ENGAGEMENT AND DISSEMINATION PARTNERS

### We Tell Each Other The Truth! Clear, Consistent Messages

There are a variety of activities this week, and we recommend encouraging your participants to engage in the one that seems to be the best fit. In order to practice skills of **clear communication**, this week's activities encourage family members to:

1. Share information about stressful situations and paths forward
2. Be clear and consistent in what they say and do

Theme 8: “*We Tell Each Other the Truth! Clear, Consistent Messages*” is the *Families Tackling Tough Times Together* resilience theme for this week. According to Froma Walsh, one of the world's leading scientific experts on family resilience, resilience is built from working together with shared understanding of the current situation. Families that can keep things as “normal” as possible while adapting to challenges, help to foster resilience.

This collection offers activities to help family members of all ages to build a shared understanding of hard events, current situations, and future expectations. When family members communicate clearly and are honest with one another, anxieties are eased and trust is built. This collection includes ideas to help parents/caregivers, children, youth, young adults, and older adults build skills related to **communicating clearly**.

There are 2 types of activities associated with this week's theme. One type focuses on developing, speaking and listening skills, such as re-framing statements to “I” statements in order to be heard more clearly or practicing active listening (something we *all* need to practice). The second type of activity focuses on establishing a family's values and goals, based on what has been important to their family and what they want to continue to be important moving forward. Remind your families that these types of activities are going to look different for all families; there is no one-right-way to engage! **Writing and artistic skills vary**, but should not be a barrier. Stories can be shared orally as well as on paper. If your participant families know each other well enough, they can share their family stories in the group!

#### For Additional Information on this Week's Theme

[Watch the interview with Froma Walsh on ways families use clear consistent messages](#)