

FOCUSING ON ACTION: STRENGTHENING FAMILIES SELF-ASSESSMENT (SFSA) JANUARY 2023 UPDATES FOR THE SWAG FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (SWAG FRC)

Trisha Bernardin, Angela Tenerelli, and Shandra Nichols

The SWAG SFSA Process



The purpose of the SFSA process was to evaluate Resource Center practices, programs, and services based on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework. The SWAG FRC's SFSA team consisted of 2 direct service staff members, 3 community collaborators from partner organizations, and 4 Community Ambassadors who utilize services and programs at the SWAG FRC. Team members completed a survey with questions related to the implementation of each protective factor at the SWAG FRC. The SFSA team came together for critical discussion and dialog to assess each item and develop action items to address any gaps in programs, services, or Resource Center practices. SWAG FRC staff have been working hard to implement action items with the allotted resources and staff capacities. Updates on action items and plans were categorized into four key themes determined by the SWAG SFSA team for the future and are provided in this report. The key themes are:

- **Theme One:** Peer-to-Peer led trainings, a speaker series and parent support nights.
- **Theme Two:** Increase awareness by utilizing key community members and improving messaging to the community.
- **Theme Three:** Increase engagement with SWAG FRC programs, local businesses, schools, fathers/males, diverse populations, patrons in the planning process for programs.
- **Theme Four:** Begin hosting social connection events, community events and parent-only activities, once appropriate, considering safety and public health recommendations.

As SWAG FRC staff have focused on enhancing services and supports, some action items have been explored but progress has been limited due to funding and staff related restrictions. It is important to recognize that attainment of select action items may be impacted given staff capacities and/or available resources.

It is important to note that any denoted updates apply to the time-period since the last bi-annual update for June 2022. Additionally, for action items related to the Social and Emotional Competence of Children protective factor, there are recommendations in lieu of action items as the team determined the SWAG FRC staff's recommendations would be better served in this area due to their experience. Action items are listed with the protective factor SFSA report they were developed with, but in some cases action items may overlap with another protective factor.

Core Meanings of the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Protective Factors

- 1. Concrete Support in Times of Need**
Access to concrete support and services that address a family's needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges.
- 2. Social Connections**
Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, and spiritual support.
- 3. Social and Emotional Competence of Children**
Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions, and establish and maintain relationships.
- 4. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**
Understanding child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development.
- 5. Parental Resilience**
Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity, and trauma.

1

¹ Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2015). Core Meanings of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors.

SWAG FRC'S ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME ONE: DEVELOP PEER-TO-PEER LED TRAININGS, A SPEAKER SERIES, AND PARENT SUPPORT NIGHTS.

Overarching Action Item: Create a dynamic speaker series and/or programs to reach two audiences - parents and youth.

Action Item Update: To create a dynamic speaker series, the SWAG FRC has partnered with Anthony Ray; creator of the “Dad, can we talk?” podcast series to provide engagement with fathers within the Southwest Gainesville community once a month beginning on February 16th, 2023, during the Community Dinner event.

Social Connections Action Item: Explore opportunities for the development of parent support groups and mentoring opportunities that are parent centered. Consideration may be given to the implementation of a “parent support night” following discussions with parents and Community Ambassadors.

Action Item Update: To support the development of parent support groups and parent centered mentoring opportunities, the SWAG FRC staff are developing a platform where parents from the community can come together to receive social support and peer mentorship; SWAG FRC staff plans to begin this parent group gathering within the next six months.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Explore means and mechanisms for Community Ambassadors to participate in training opportunities.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC is reaching out to local mental and physical health agencies to train community members, including community ambassadors on mental health first aid and standard first aid. A CPR/First Aid course for children will take place on February 2nd, 2023. Additionally, an adult CPR/AED training course will take place on February 16th, 2023.

Concrete Supports in Times of Need Action Item: Explore a peer-to-peer training program, created by and for community members, related to getting needed supports and resources and how to act in a collective manner to advocate for each other.

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC team, with support from the SWAG Board are currently working to establish a Parent & Community Advisory Council (PCAC) within the next six months. A PCAC is being piloted at another of our sites and some staff have received formal training in Parent Advisory Committees. These lessons will be used in the developed of SWAG FRC’s PCAC. The focus of the PCAC will be to provide a community-voice and guidance related to SWAG FRC programming and events, while developing the leadership skills of those participating. Once the PCAC is established, the plan is for participants to have access to trainings provided by community agencies on relevant topics.

SWAG FRC'S ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME TWO: INCREASE AWARENESS BY UTILIZING KEY COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND IMPROVING MESSAGING TO THE COMMUNITY.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Utilize community members to help raise awareness of the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC manager and SWAG Board are currently working to establish a Parent & Community Advisory Council (PCAC) that will play a role in increasing awareness of the SWAG FRC and associated events.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Reevaluate the current engagement and outreach strategies to improve messaging to parents/families/households regarding the agency (SWAG FRC).

Action Item Update: As suggested by the SFSA team, in December of 2022, the SWAG FRC manager began work with the SWAG Board to reach out to an increased number of local landlords and leasing offices of apartment complexes to formalize a relationship where landlords and leasing offices are more consistently disseminating information regarding the SWAG FRC.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Formalize a communication channel between the SWAG Board and the members of the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Team.

Action Item Update: Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Team and SWAG Board members have not yet formalized any consistent methods of communication

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Action Item: Explore the means and mechanisms by which the community can become more aware of parenting and child development supports available at the Resource Center.

Action Item Update: To explore the means and mechanisms to increase community awareness of parenting and child development supports, SWAG FRC will implement Family Reading Nights, UFLI curriculum, Girls on the Run, and increase word-of-mouth of child development programming. Family Reading Nights will begin within the next six months. UFLI curriculum will begin implementation on February 21st, 2023, and Girls on the Run will begin on February 6th, 2023.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Recommendation: Help spread awareness of social and emotional programming by advertising the open-door policy on applications for children's programming. Open-door policy reflects consistent efforts of staff to communicate with parents that they are welcome to approach staff at any time with questions or concerns regarding their children and programming and supports available for children at the FRC and in the community.

Recommendation Update: This language was added to homework help applications that were available beginning January 2023. Furthermore, the Academic Enrichment Coordinator continues to verbalize and demonstrate the open-door policy to all parents whose children are involved in child development programming

SWAG FRC'S ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME THREE: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH SWAG FRC PROGRAMS, LOCAL BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, FATHERS/MALES, DIVERSE POPULATIONS, AND PATRONS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR PROGRAMS.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Increase engagement with local businesses and schools to promote the Resource Center.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC manager plans to establish relationships with feeder schools near SWAG FRC within the next six months. Furthermore, Relationships have been developed with companies including Gas South, Gainesville Health and Fitness, and Exit Reality. All the aforementioned businesses provided either volunteer, cash, and/or other gift assistance during the 2022 holiday season.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Recruit more fathers to utilize the services and programs at the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: In December of 2022, the SWAG FRC manager began planning the addition of a dynamic speaker series to recruit more fathers to utilize the center. On February 16th, 2023, Anthony Ray, creator of the “Dad, Can We Talk?” podcast will begin a monthly dynamic speaking series during SWAG FRC’s Community Dinner to help engage and recruit more fathers to utilize the services and programs at SWAG FRC.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Strengthen partnerships with local organizations such as Meridian Behavioral Health to provide mental health support for the community.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC continues its relationship with Meridian Behavioral Healthcare to provide mental health support to the community. The SWAG FRC manager is currently working to re-establish a partnership with University of Florida’s Equal Access Clinic to also promote and provide mental health support for the community.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Action Item: Ensure that value is placed on peer-to-peer programs and services that are most needed and wanted by parents in the community.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC has re-energized efforts to collect patron satisfaction surveys to ensure feedback is received regarding programs and services that are most needed and desired by parents and other community members. Additionally, peer-to-peer programs for parents in the community are currently being developed including a “Parent Café” and the potential for other parent centered social gatherings.

SWAG FRC'S ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME THREE: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH SWAG FRC PROGRAMS, LOCAL BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, FATHERS/MALES, DIVERSE POPULATIONS, AND PATRONS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR PROGRAMS.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Create a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) to advise the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: A Youth Advisory Council has not been created. After an assessment done by the previous SWAG FRC manager, it was determined that the creation of a YAC would require additional staff and funding, which the SWAG FRC does not currently have available.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Host social connection events with themes catered towards fathers

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC manager has evaluated patron satisfaction surveys and met with the SWAG Board to determine the most appropriate social connection events that also engage fathers in the community. In the next six months several programs will be implemented to address social connections with themes catered towards fathers. Specifically, a dynamic speaker series will begin on February 16th, 2023. The speaker series will be led by Anthony Ray, creator of the “Dad, Can We Talk?” podcast. The speaker series will be held during SWAG FRC’s Community Dinner, with the intent to support and connect the men in the SWAG community.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children Recommendation: Enhance understanding and appreciation for individuals from different cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, languages, and cultural expressions; and include volunteers and interns in cultural competence trainings.

Recommendation Update: The SWAG FRC Staff utilize a warm and nonjudgmental approach to assisting and advocating for patrons. This approach helps staff to understand and appreciate all individuals of various backgrounds, sexual orientations, languages, and cultures. Several staff members speak at least two languages, SWAG has “All Are Welcome” LGBTQ+ stickers throughout the office, and on January 20th, 2023, staff attended a LGBTQ+ Inclusion webinar.

Social Connections Action Item: Explore the creation of a Community Advisory Council (CAC) with broad representation of community members who are motivated to serve the community and enhance supports for its members. Special attention should be paid to ensure the inclusion of fathers and grandfathers as part of this advisory committee.

Action Item Update: SWAG FRC and the SWAG Board are currently working to recruit and establish a Parent & Community Advisory Council. The SWAG FRC and President of the SWAG Board have contacted local patrons, parents, and community leaders to foster community relations and form a Community Advisory Council. Special attention will be paid to ensure the inclusion of fathers and grandfathers.

SWAG FRC'S ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME THREE: INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH SWAG FRC PROGRAMS, LOCAL BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, FATHERS/MALES, DIVERSE POPULATIONS, AND PATRONS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR PROGRAMS.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Recommendation: Enhance trainings to include competence of environmental and economic factors and how these factors play a role in social and emotional development.

Recommendation Update: Within the next six months, SWAG FRC will offer a Mental Health First Aid training. This training will include environmental and economic factors that play a role in social and emotional development.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Create a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) or Community Advisory Community (CAC) to advise the SWAG FRC.

Action Item Update: Within the next six months, SWAG FRC will offer a Mental Health First Aid training. This training will include environmental and economic factors that play a role in social and emotional development.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Explore what the organizational framework would be in terms of engagement and program planning that involves patrons.

Action Item Update: The Parent & Community Advisory Council, once established, will provide direct input into engagement and program planning activities. Additionally, patron satisfaction surveys continue to be used as a method of providing patron input into engagement and program planning.

SWAG FRC'S ACTION ITEM KEY THEME UPDATES



THEME FOUR: BEGIN HOSTING SOCIAL CONNECTION EVENTS, COMMUNITY EVENTS AND PARENT-ONLY ACTIVITIES, ONCE APPROPRIATE, CONSIDERING SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Host a community event to talk about gun violence that can serve to help connect the community with grief counselors.

Action Item Update: The SWAG FRC team, along with other site managers, are planning to host a gun violence awareness event in 2023. The proposed structure of this event is intended to be similar to a block party with other community partners, prizes, and vendors. Decisions will be made about whether to co-host or hold separate events.

Social Connections Action Item: The SWAG FRC needs to reinstate and expand social connection/community events once it is safe to do so, given currently safety and public health concerns.

Action Item Update: All social connection and community events have been reinstated. SWAG FRC has reinstated the indoor community dinner event as of December 15th, 2022. SWAG FRC's community dinner was served in-doors in an effort to provide an avenue for family members to spend time together and for community members to get to know one another. Additionally, on December 14th, 2022, the annual After School Holiday Party was also held in-person at the SWAG FRC. There are also plans to expand social events at the SWAG FRC via a platform for parents to meet and have discussions and with the introduction of a monthly dynamic speaker (Anthony Ray) during the monthly community dinner event.

Social Connections Action Item: Ensure that patrons have supportive and responsive means and mechanism to openly communicate with and/or inform the staff about any knowledge or skill sets they believe staff should have to better serve the community.

Action Item Update: Patron satisfaction surveys have always been available at the SWAG FRC. Since the last reporting period, there have also been renewed efforts to ensure each visitor is aware of this option to provide feedback and openly communicate with staff so that the community can be better served.

Parental Resilience Action Item: Host social connection events with themes catered towards fathers.

Action Item Update: On February 16th, 2023, Anthony Ray, creator of the "Dad, Can We Talk?" podcast will begin a monthly dynamic speaking series during SWAG FRC's Community Dinner to increase social connection of fathers.

THE SWAG FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

807 SW 64TH TERRACE, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA, 32607 | 352-505-6823 | WWW.PFSF.ORG/RESOURCECENTERS/SWAGFRC/

Suggested citation: Bernardin, T., Tenerelli, A., & Nichols, S., (2023) Focusing on Action: Strengthening Families Self-Assessment (SFA) Updates for the SWAG Family Resource Center. Tallahassee: Institute for Child and Family Services Research