

## 1.3a. Engagement and Team Preparation Qualities of Strong Families

1. Belief and sense of commitment to promoting the well-being and growth of the individual as well as the growth of the family unit.
2. Appreciation for small and large things that individual family members do well and encouragement to do better.
3. Concentrated effort to spend time and do things together, no matter how formal or informal the activity or event.
4. A sense of purpose that permeates the reasons and basis for “going on” in both bad and good times.
5. A sense of congruence among family members regarding the value and importance of assigning time and energy to meet needs.
6. The ability to communicate with one another in a way that emphasizes positive interactions.
7. A clear set of family rules, values, and beliefs that establish expectations about acceptable and desired behavior.
8. A varied repertoire of coping strategies that promotes positive functioning in dealing with both normative and non-normative life events.
9. The ability to engage in problem-solving activities designed to evaluate options for meeting needs and procuring resources.
10. The ability to be positive and see the positive in almost all aspects of their lives, including the ability to see crisis and problems as an opportunity to learn and grow.
11. Flexibility and adaptability in the roles necessary to procure resources to meet needs.
12. A balance between the use of internal and external family resources for coping and adapting to life events and planning for the future.

Figure 1. Lewis et al.

**This information can be applied practically in many ways, including the following:**

1. Laminate this information on a wall chart and post it at the Family and Child Team Meetings to be referred to as the ideal to strive toward.
2. This information can help the family and other team members see what a family needs to achieve optimal functioning.
3. Family members can rate each area in this chart from 1-10, with 10 being the highest score, and then discuss what they feel needs to be enhanced in their particular situation.
4. This information can be referred to as a way of celebrating what is already working for the family. The Facilitator points out when the family uses one of the areas, comments on it and lists it on a strengths list. This process makes the covert overt, and makes the strength available for use the next time it is required. This process validates that something is “going right” for the family.
5. The information can be used as a visual map of new avenues that might provide more support for the family.
6. Family members can each choose the areas of this information that they think are important to them as individuals. They can then be discussed and applied to the life domain areas.