



NYS Citizens' Coalition for Children, Inc.
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Assessing Strengths in Parents and Families

Positive attributes that can be named as strengths:

- ✓ Attending visits with their children.
- ✓ Keeping appointments.
- ✓ Being on time.
- ✓ Good personal appearance,
- ✓ hygiene.
- ✓ Gifts for children
- ✓ Attentiveness to children
- ✓ Asking for information about their children
- ✓ Giving information about their children
- ✓ Good manners
- ✓ Staying in touch with caseworker and sharing information
- ✓ Obtaining and/or keeping income or apartment
- ✓ Having a job or attending a job through welfare
- ✓ Any special talents: singing, good language skills, good handwriting, typing
- ✓ Involvement with religious institution or other organized group
- ✓ Bilingualism
- ✓ Family ties.

Negative attributes that can be viewed as strengths:

- ✓ Anger about foster care, being demanding about foster parent's quality of care or caseworker's work - shows that parent cares about child.
- ✓ Being "manipulative," e.g., playing people off each other - shows intelligence, people skills, and goal-oriented behavior.
- ✓ Lack of openness, defensiveness, and stubbornness - shows good sense of self and boundaries, understandable, appropriate behavior/attitudes early in relationship with worker.
- ✓ Withdrawn, depressed behavior - appropriate response to removal of children, could indicate remorse, love for children.

Practice tips derived from working with families in the Families Together Project at St Christopher Otilie Services for Children and Families.