

Functional Strengths and Planning

Strength discovery is a critical component of assessment and planning. It builds confidence and empowers individuals to become self-reliant. Oftentimes, an individual may not even be aware of the strengths they possess.

We urge you to consider the functionality of the strength....how can they be useful to the individual or family?

Strength Discovery Conversation Starters:

- *What do you like to do or feel that you do well?*
- *What makes you proud?*
- *What makes you happy?*
- *Who is there for you in a time of need or crisis?*
- *How do you handle difficult situations?*
- *How do you cope with stress?*
- *What do you like about your neighborhood or community?*
- *Who do you like to spend time with?*

Strengths should be integrated into the the plan!!

"Sometimes we are tested, not to show our weakness, but to discover our strengths"
-Unknown

When engaging the individual or family in the planning process, incorporate strengths into action steps. Use your creativity and don't be afraid to think outside of the box. Strengths will fit into each person's life in different ways. Assist the individual with brainstorming about how they can use their specific set of strengths to overcome their needs.

Functional Application of Strengths

✦ ✦ (Examples): ✦ ✦

- Jeremy will use his sense of humor to make new friends at his after-school program. (Interpersonal Skills)
- William will write down the positives in his life when he is feeling down. (Resiliency)
- Raelynn will join a poetry writing group to get involved in something she loves. (Talents/Interests)
- Becky will pray when she is feeling nervous or sad. (Spirituality)
- Mary will use her neighbor to meet her children at the bus stop on the days that she works late. (Community Connection/Natural Supports)
- Camila will attend a recipe share group at the local library that she frequents, to meet some new people. She is proud of her Latinx heritage and plans to share her recipe for tamales. (Cultural Identity)
- Matt will identify community resources to help him meet his needs. (Community Connection)
- Logan will draw or paint when she is feeling anxious or down. (Talents/Interests)
- Antonio's mother watches his kids for him everyday while he works. (Natural Supports)
- Mona will utilize her cooking skills to pursue a part-time job at a restaurant. (Vocational)
- Dylan is active with their local GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) and says that their friends in that group feel like family and they can use them for support when times are tough. (Cultural Identity)

