



National Family Week: Connections Count

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By Traci B. Hawkins, MA LLP

Strong families are at the center of strong communities. *Connections Count* is the theme of *National Family Week* which is organized by *Family Service and Children's Aid* and the *Alliance for Children and Families*. Children live better lives when their families are strong. When they live in communities that connect families to networks of support and tangible benefits, which include economic self-sufficiency, reliable child care, dependable transportation, affordable housing, assessable healthcare, and applicable education and training, families become stronger. Everyone has a role in making families successful!

Families Make Connections Count. To enhance your connections, here are some quick and easy ideas for your family and/or friends to participate in the national celebration:

- ❖ ***Plan a "family supper" with your neighbors.***
- ❖ ***Write a thank you note to someone who helps your family.***
- ❖ ***Send a thank you to a person in the armed forces and lend your support to his or her family.***
- ❖ ***Hold a *Family Night* with games and activities.***
- ❖ ***Encourage employers to consider family-friendly work options like flexible hours and time off to attend school functions.***
- ❖ ***Lend your support to local *Family Week* activities by helping plan them, participate as a volunteer or attend local events such as the *Family Service & Children's Aid* event in Jackson on November 21st which will provide a family dinner and resource fair in collaboration with local agencies, schools, business, churches, politicians, and other community stakeholders.***
- ❖ ***Plan your own *National Family Week* event.***

Traci Hawkins is a clinical psychologist with an office at 107 Chicago Street in Brooklyn. She has 15 years of experience and specializes in depression, anxiety,

eating disorders, weight loss, marriage repair and enrichment, grief and loss, goal achievement and Christian counseling. For more information on

National Family week, visit www.nationalfamilyweek.org or feel free to contact Hawkins at 517-414-0065 or T_Hawk@comcast.net.