



*Shifting the paradigm: the intersection of domestic violence, child maltreatment and safety and well-being*

## **Homework: Understanding my Parenting Strengths Advocate Guide**

### **Goal:**

To support survivors to articulate their own strengths, parenting capacities and protective efforts. This homework activity is designed to support survivors in identifying their own strengths and gaining confidence in those strengths.

### **Instructions:**

The advocate should discuss strengths with the survivor. The survivor should have a basic understanding of what constitutes strengths, particularly as related to parenting and caring for children. Some examples of strengths that advocates may choose to share with survivors are:

1. Continuing to get children to school despite the violence.
2. Continuing to have consistent rules and discipline.
3. Praising children.
4. Safely getting the children to their room during violence.

The survivor should understand that this activity might be challenging, particularly if she's not looking at how much she's doing well. She should be encouraged to think broadly and feel comfortable to compliment herself.

The survivor should be given the homework assignment to take home and think about if it is safe for her to do so. If it is not safe or if the survivor is struggling to complete it without support, the activity should be done with the advocate or in the domestic violence center. However, the survivor should be encouraged to come up with her own ideas of her strengths.

### **Post-Completion:**

The advocate will go over the answers with the survivor and praise her for her effort. The advocate may also point out additional strengths that have been observed in the survivor.

If the survivor so chooses, she or the advocate may give this homework to child protection, home visitor agencies, mental health providers or others who would benefit from knowing the clients' strengths and protective efforts and can support her and partner with her around her strengths.

Advocates may choose to re-administer the homework after a period of work with the survivor to support her enhanced confidence and understanding of her own strengths.

## Understanding My Parenting Strengths

**Goal:** To help me talk about my strengths, what I do well as a parent, and what I do to keep my children safe.

***The three things I believe that I do best as a parent are:***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

***I keep my children safe by:***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

***I maintain stability (consistency, routine) for my children by doing:***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

***I support my children talking about their fears, concerns and what they've seen or heard by:***

***Because of my parenting, my children are doing well at:***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

***I wish that other people noticed that I'm very good at:***