



stepfamilies

Blending Bonds, Building Harmony

This supplemental parent-education module is designed to provide support for parents and caregivers who are part of a blended family system.

Just as individual family members have distinctive traits, all stepfamilies have their own composition and unique characteristics. When the stepfamily forms, children may face a variety of challenges that can impact their adjustment to the family and overall well-being. However, there are strategies parents can use to help themselves and their children continue to thrive as the stepfamily unit develops and grows.

This module can help parents and caregivers tackle the unique concerns and challenges that can arise as they raise their children in a stepfamily. It offers strategies and insights tailored to the types of parenting roles and coparenting dynamics that commonly occur within stepfamilies. In addition, four fictional blended families are featured throughout the module to demonstrate how parents and caregivers can apply these strategies in real-life situations to support their own stepfamilies.



This supplemental module builds on information and methods that are discussed in the four universal Thrive parenting programs – *Take Root, Sprout, Grow, Branch Out* – so it is recommended that you participate in the age-appropriate universal Thrive parenting program prior to using this supplemental module.

For more information about this supplemental module, visit:

<https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental>



In this module, you will learn how to do the following:



Understand stepfamily dynamics, and identify some of the potential challenges the individuals in your family may face as you blend your family.



Explore factors that may contribute to children's adjustments to the dynamics within their stepfamily, and learn how parents can provide support to their children.



Identify parenting roles and responsibilities, and determine when it may be appropriate for stepparents to assume certain responsibilities, such as discipline.



Understand the importance of adopting an authoritative parenting style, and learn how to use specific components of authoritative parenting.



Incorporate strategies, before and after the stepfamily forms, to help ease the transition for everyone involved.



Examine the dimensions of coparenting and the impact competent coparenting can have on the stepfamily.



Foster healthy relationships within the stepfamily through open communication practices.