

## family series

# Can We Ever Be One Big Happy Family?

*Tips for Strengthening Blended Families*

Chances are you've felt this way about your family. Being a parent is a tough job. **Prevent Child Abuse** Indiana believes that we all want to use the best means possible to build stronger family relationships.

Blended families face special challenges. Each person in the family has to adjust to many new things. Parents have new partners and children, and children have additional parents and new siblings. This change is bound to put additional stress on everyone. By keeping communication open and being patient, blended families can work through these challenges. Here are some suggestions that will help make your family's adjustment a little easier.

- Do not ignore feelings. Let all family members express how they are feeling without being criticized. Keep the lines of communication open and you can avoid many conflicts.
- Emphasize the positive aspects of your new family. Everyone has skills, traditions and customs that they bring to the family.
- Work to create an environment that makes everyone feel welcome and loved in the new family.

- Encourage all family members to spend some one-on-one time with each other. This will help strengthen new and existing bonds.
- Make time with your new partner to communicate your concerns and set goals.
- Be open to asking for help if you need it.

Adapted from "Adjusting In A Blended Family" by Michael K. Tonjum, Ph.D. and "Blended Families" by HealthPLACE Parlay International.

Should you need more information about this or other parenting concerns, please visit [www.pcaain.org](http://www.pcaain.org).



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