

## KEY TOOL #1

# FAMILY IMPACT DISCUSSION STARTERS



The family impact discussion starters parallel the family impact principles. These discussion starters can serve to build awareness and provide an organizing framework for thinking about how policies, programs, agencies, and organizations may have intended and unintended consequences for family well-being. Asking about family impact when policies and programs are being developed, implemented, or evaluated can bring a unique perspective to policy debates or program goals by underscoring the importance of families as institutions that foster commitment to others. Not every discussion starter may be relevant for every issue and purpose.

How will the policy, program, or practice:

- ▶ support rather than substitute for family members' responsibilities to one another?
- ▶ reinforce family members' commitment to each other and to the stability of the family unit?
- ▶ recognize the power and persistence of family ties, and promote healthy couple, marital, and parental relationships?
- ▶ acknowledge and respect the diversity of family life (e.g., different cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds; various geographic locations and socioeconomic statuses; families with members who have developmental disabilities; and families at different stages of the life cycle)?
- ▶ engage and work in partnership with families?