



Building Protective Factors to Strengthen Families



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Fishbowl Activity

Remembering back to your childhood/youth, what is the most important lesson you learned about being a good parent?

Remembering back to your childhood/youth, can you recall instances where your parent or parent figure showed resilience in the face of adversity?

What did you learn growing up, or over the course of your lifetime about needing or asking for help?



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Approach to prevent child abuse AND promote child well-being

- National
- Systemic
- Reaches large number of children
- Impact long before abuse or neglect occurs
- Promotes optimal development for all children
- Strengths-Based
- Universally available (not targeted on risk)
- Delivered through new partners and family support networks



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The Four Big Ideas Behind Strengthening Families

1. Building protective and promotive factors, not just reducing risk
2. An approach - not a model, a program or a curriculum
3. A changed relationship with parents
4. Aligning practice with developmental science



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Strengthening Families: Not Your Ordinary Initiative

- Implementing Strengthening Families is about: - small but significant changes in everyday practice and - the shifts in policies and systems that allow/promote those changes in practice
- Implementation funds come from existing dollars
- All national implementation tools are available free of charge



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In Other Words...

By building the Protective Factors known to decrease child abuse and neglect, you will promote

HAPPY, HEALTHY CHILDREN, FAMILIES and COMMUNITIES!



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Protective Factors Framework

1. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
2. Parental Resilience
3. Social Connections
4. Concrete Support in Times of Need
5. Social Emotional Competence in Children



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Keep Learning about Parenting



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Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development



- Basic information about how children and youth develop and the reasons behind behavior
- Basic techniques to manage challenging behaviors and guide development (i.e. developmentally appropriate discipline)
- Alternatives to behaviors experienced as a child
- Perspective to help cope with difficult stages
- Information can come from many sources, including family members as well as classes, books at the library, and surfing the internet
- Take advantage of teachable moments



Be Strong, Not Stressed



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Parental Resilience

Resilience is a positive, adaptive response in the face of significant adversity. Resilience can be increased through:

- Spiritual beliefs and values
 - Hope that things will get better
 - Feelings of competence and confidence
 - Strategies for self-care (meditation, mindfulness, exercise)
 - Healthy relationships with others (connection)
 - Mental health or substance abuse services, if needed
- Those who did not have positive childhood experiences need extra support
 - Children with challenging behaviors, traumatic experiences, and development that is not on track require extra adult attention



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Get and Give Support



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Social Connections



Relationships with extended family, friends, adults, other families with children similar ages

- Develop networks and emotional support
- Opportunities to give support to others



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Get Help When You Need It



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Concrete Supports in Times of Need

- Response to a crisis (food, shelter, clothing)
- Assistance with daily needs (health care, transportation, education, employment)
- Services for parents (mental health, substance abuse treatment and recovery supports, domestic violence)
- Services for children (early intervention for developmental disabilities)

Help getting connected with these resources



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Help Your Child Manage Feelings and Relationships



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Social Emotional Development



- Ability to interact positively with others
- Learn how to talk about their feelings, make friends, and manage their anger creates more positive parent child interactions
- Skills are learned at home and in the classroom
- Should start when a child is born and continue until early adulthood
- Can also help parents see the positives in their children, despite any challenging behaviors



Strengthening Families Resources

www.strengtheningfamilies.net

- Online self-assessment tools
- Protective Factor Survey (evaluation tool)
- Guidebooks
- Action Sheets

www.ctfalliance.org/onlinetraining.htm

- free online training

Strengthening Families Network

- Quarterly meetings to share research, best practices, and trends
- Biennial conference



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How does the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework fit into the Project LAUNCH work?



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