



Strengthening Families Protective Factors

Protective factors are strengths of individuals, families and communities that serve to protect children and promote their healthy development and well-being, especially during times of stress. They are attributes that help families navigate difficult situations. Building these strengths at every opportunity is a proven way to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

Parental Resilience: Be strong even when stressed

Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity and trauma

- Take care of yourself and ask for help when you need it
- Feel good about yourself and hopeful about your future
- Maintain strength, flexibility and courage during difficult times
- Keep positive even after a lost job or health challenges

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development: Learn more so you can parent better!

Understand child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development

- Knowing what to expect can help with realistic expectations
- Recognize your child's unique needs
- Know developmental milestones
 - What is age appropriate for your child to walk, talk, potty-train, have tantrums, climb, write?



Social Connections: Get and give support

Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, instrumental and spiritual support

- A network of caring people in our life helps us feel more secure, confident and empowered
- Reconnect with family and friends with a call, text, email or card
- Join a library book club or plan a child play date

Concrete Supports in Times of Need: Everyone needs help sometimes

Access to support and services that address a family's needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges

- It's okay to ask for help; it's a sign of resilience and good parenting
- Learn about your community resources
 - Food bank, financial/utilities assistance, clothes closets

Social and Emotional Competence of Children: Help your child manage feelings and relationships

Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships

- Teach your child the words they need to express how they feel
- Be a good role model; show your child how to interact with others
- Praise right choices; notice and compliment friendly behaviors like sharing, taking turns and being polite

Strengthening Families
strengtheningfamilies.net

Children's Trust Fund Alliance
ctfalliance.org/protective-factors/

Child Welfare Information Gateway
childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/



ctf4kids.org