

CENTER FOR THE STUDY
OF SOCIAL POLICY'S

strengthening families™

A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

Center
for the
Study
of
Social
Policy

*Ideas
into
Action*

Five Protective Factors

1. Parental resilience
2. Social connections
3. Knowledge of parenting and child development
4. Concrete support in times of need
5. Social and emotional competence of children



Parental resilience

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

What it looks like

Resilience to general life stress

- Hope, optimism, self confidence
- Problem solving skills
- Self care and willingness to ask for help
- Ability to manage negative emotions

Resilience to parenting stress

- Not allowing stress to interfere with nurturing
- Positive attitude about parenting and child

Parental resilience

Everyday actions

- Demonstrate in multiple ways that parents are valued
- Honor each family's race, language, culture, history and approach to parenting
- Encourage parents to manage stress effectively
- Support parents as decision-makers and help build decision-making and leadership skills
- Help parents understand how to buffer their child during stressful times

Social connections

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

What it looks like

- Multiple friendships and supportive relationships with others
- Feeling respected and appreciated
- Accepting help from others, and giving help to others
- Skills for establishing and maintaining connections

Social connections

Everyday actions

- Help families value, build, sustain and use social connections
- Create an inclusive environment
- Facilitate mutual support
- Promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities

Knowledge of parenting & child dev't

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

What it looks like

- Nurturing parenting behavior
- Appropriate developmental expectations
- Ability to create a developmentally supportive environment for child
- Positive discipline techniques; ability to effectively manage child behavior
- Recognizing and responding to your child's specific needs

Knowledge of parenting & child dev't

Everyday actions

- Model developmentally appropriate interactions with children
- Provide information and resources on parenting and child development
- Encourage parents to observe, ask questions, explore parenting issues and try out new strategies
- Address parenting issues from a strength-based perspective

Concrete support in times of need

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

What it looks like

- Seeking and receiving support when needed
- Knowing what services are available and how to access them
- Adequate financial security; basic needs being met
- Persistence
- Advocating effectively for self and child to receive necessary help

Concrete support in times of need

Everyday actions

- Respond immediately when families are in crisis
- Provide information and connections to services in the community
- Help families to develop skills and tools they need to identify their needs and connect to supports

Social & emotional competence of children

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

What it looks like

For the parent:

- Warm and consistent responses that foster a strong and secure attachment with the child
- Encouraging and reinforcing social skills; setting limits

For the child:

- Age appropriate self-regulation
- Ability to form and maintain relationships with others
- Positive interactions with others
- Effective communication

Social & emotional competence of children

Everyday actions

- Help parents foster their child's social emotional development
- Model nurturing care to children
- Include children's social and emotional development activities in programming
- Help children develop a positive cultural identity and interact in a diverse society
- Respond proactively when social or emotional development needs extra support