

Understanding the Protective Factors

Research has shown that families who demonstrate the following protective factors are better able to navigate difficult situations, resulting in stronger families and brighter childhoods.¹



PARENTAL RESILIENCE: *“I can overcome hard times.”*

- Take care of yourself and ask for support when you need it. Self-care is a critical tool in the prevention of child abuse.
- Stop stress from getting in the way of providing loving care for your child.
- Enjoy time with your child and celebrate what you like about being a parent.



SOCIAL CONNECTIONS: *“I have people who know and support me.”*

- Accept help from others and look for opportunities to give back.
- Reach out to others. Talk about what is going on in your life. You’ll be amazed at how much better you feel.
- Focus on nurturing relationships where you feel respected and appreciated.



KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING & CHILD DEVELOPMENT: *“I know where to go to find out about parenting skills and my child’s developmental growth.”*

- Discover what to expect as your child grows.
- Try new skills and tips to help your child progress and thrive.
- Respond in a positive way when your child misbehaves.



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN: *“I know how to help my children talk about their feelings.”*

- Respond warmly and consistently to your child.
- Allow your child to express their emotions.
- Model how to be kind and interact positively with others.



CONCRETE SUPPORTS IN TIMES OF NEED: *“I know where to turn for help.”*

- Know what help is available. Make a plan for what programs you might need if you were faced with unemployment or severe illness.
- Reach out and ask for support when needed.
- Share information with others about programs and resources that have helped you.

¹Center for the Study of Social Policy. <https://cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families/>