



Strengthening Families™ Core Messages

The Protective Factors approach is not about giving you more to do. It's about doing more with what you have.

- **small but significant changes** in everyday practice
- implementation through existing funding streams
- **utilize in any setting** with children, youth and families
- creates **shifts in policies and systems** that allow and promote those changes
- **free** education, implementation and assessment tools
- **common language** and collective outcomes across multiple sectors, systems and programs



Families gain what they need to be successful when key protective and promotive factors are robust in their lives and their communities.

- **focus on what's strong rather than what is wrong**
- provides a strong platform for building **collaborative partnerships**
- reduce the likelihood of child maltreatment (a **protective** function)
- characteristics of families that increase the likelihood of optimal development for children (a **promotive** function)



As long as children are nurtured, safe and thriving, parenting along the mainstream isn't essential.

- **effective parenting practices aligned with cultural traditions** benefit children
- **shift perspectives** to see parents as primary agents of change
- parents fully engage when we **respect where they are**
- **parent partnerships** strengthen organizations, programs and systems



Developmental science tells us what is important.

- the presence of a **buffering adult**
- nurturing and responsive **relationships with caregivers**
- **critical periods of brain development** (birth—five and early adolescence)
- ACEs and trauma, left unbuffered, significantly impact health and wellbeing **across the lifespan**

