

Five Protective Factors

Every child deserves to be happy, healthy and safe. We believe that starts by building strong families – and that’s what our services do, through parent coaching, developmental screening, education, home visiting and prevention-based programming.

To build strong and safe families, we focus our efforts on helping parents:

- Be strong and flexible. Parents who can cope with the stress of everyday life as well as the occasional crisis have the resilience and flexibility to bounce back when things aren’t going well.
- Find social support. Parents with a social network of supportive friends, family and neighbors often find that it’s easier to care for their children and themselves.
- Access resources and education. Children thrive when their parents provide not only affection, but also respectful communication, thoughtful listening, and consistent rules and expectations. Parents are more able to practice these positive parenting skills when they know what to expect of their children as they grow and develop. We offer regular education around positive parenting practices and child development.
- Ask for help. Parents sometimes need concrete support when challenges arise. This might include financial security to cover day-to-day expenses and unexpected costs, access to formal supports like TANF and Medicaid, and informal support from their social networks of friends, family members and neighbors. Family Futures is available as a listening ear and trusted referral source when parents need help.
- Help children communicate. A child’s ability to interact positively with others and communicate his or her emotions effectively is important to their growth and development.

Research supports the common-sense notion that when these Five Protective Factors are well-established in a family, the likelihood of child abuse and neglect diminishes. Research shows that these protective factors are also factors that build family strength and a family environment that promotes optimal child and youth development.

For more information, please visit the Center for the Study of Social Policy at <http://www.cssp.org/>

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