



THE SIX PROTECTIVE FACTORS

| Protective Factor | Definition |
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| Family Functioning / Parental Resiliency | Having adaptive skills and strategies to persevere in times of crisis. In order to deal with the stresses of life, parents need to be strong and flexible, and they need to be able to bounce back when adversity hits. |
| Social Connections and Support | Informal support from family, friends, and neighbors that helps provide for a parent's emotional needs. When parents have an informal network of trusted friends in their community, they have a support system for meeting both practical and emotional needs. |
| Concrete Support for Parents | Perceived access to tangible goods and services to help families cope with stress, particularly in times of crisis or intensified need. Everybody needs help sometimes, and families that can get help when they need it are able to stay strong and healthy. |
| Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development | Understanding and using effective child management techniques and having age-appropriate expectations for children's abilities. Parents who understand normal child development have reasonable expectations for their children. Parents who have alternative strategies for dealing with children's challenging behavior can avoid harsh punishments. |
| Nurturing and Attachment | The emotional tie along with a pattern of positive interaction between the parent and child that develops over time. When parents have healthy relationships with their children, they are "in tune" with them: they can listen to their children, understand them, and perceive their needs. A parent who fully comprehends and accepts the role of parent serves as the child's chief provider, protector, and teacher; shows love for the child; and strives to meet the child's needs and provide a solid foundation for life. Through this relationship, children can trust, learn, grow, and explore the world. |
| Social & Emotional Competence of Children | Parenting can be especially difficult when children act out or exhibit challenging behaviors. When children can communicate their feelings appropriately and interact positively with their families and with other adults and children, parenting becomes less stressful. |