

# Looking at Families Through a Different Lens

## Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life In Your Work



NATIONAL ALLIANCE *of* CHILDREN'S TRUST & PREVENTION FUNDS

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Welcome

Introductions

Who is in the  
room???

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## Essential Elements

- Introduction to the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework
- Strength-Based Theory
- Five Protective Factors
- Everyday Actions that Build Protective Factors
- Understanding and Putting Aside Our Biases
- The Critical Role Parents Play in Strengthening Families
- Parental Resilience
- Children's Social – Emotional Competence



3 -Hour  
Introduction,  
Parental Resilience  
and Children's  
Social/Emotional  
Competence

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## Three Common Threads Throughout the Curriculum

1. **The Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework** – Understanding and communicating the importance of how to use the framework as we go about our everyday work.
2. **The importance of culture** – How culture impacts families as they seek to build protective factors and how our own culture shapes how we individually feel, act and think.
3. **The critical role parents play in strengthening families** – Viewing parents as valuable partners in every phase of the work we do.

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Social and Emotional Competen

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# ACES – Adverse Childhood Experiences

*Three Types of ACEs:*

## Abuse



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

## Neglect



Physical



Emotional

## Household Dysfunction



Mental Illness



Mother Treated Violently



Divorce



Incarcerated Relative

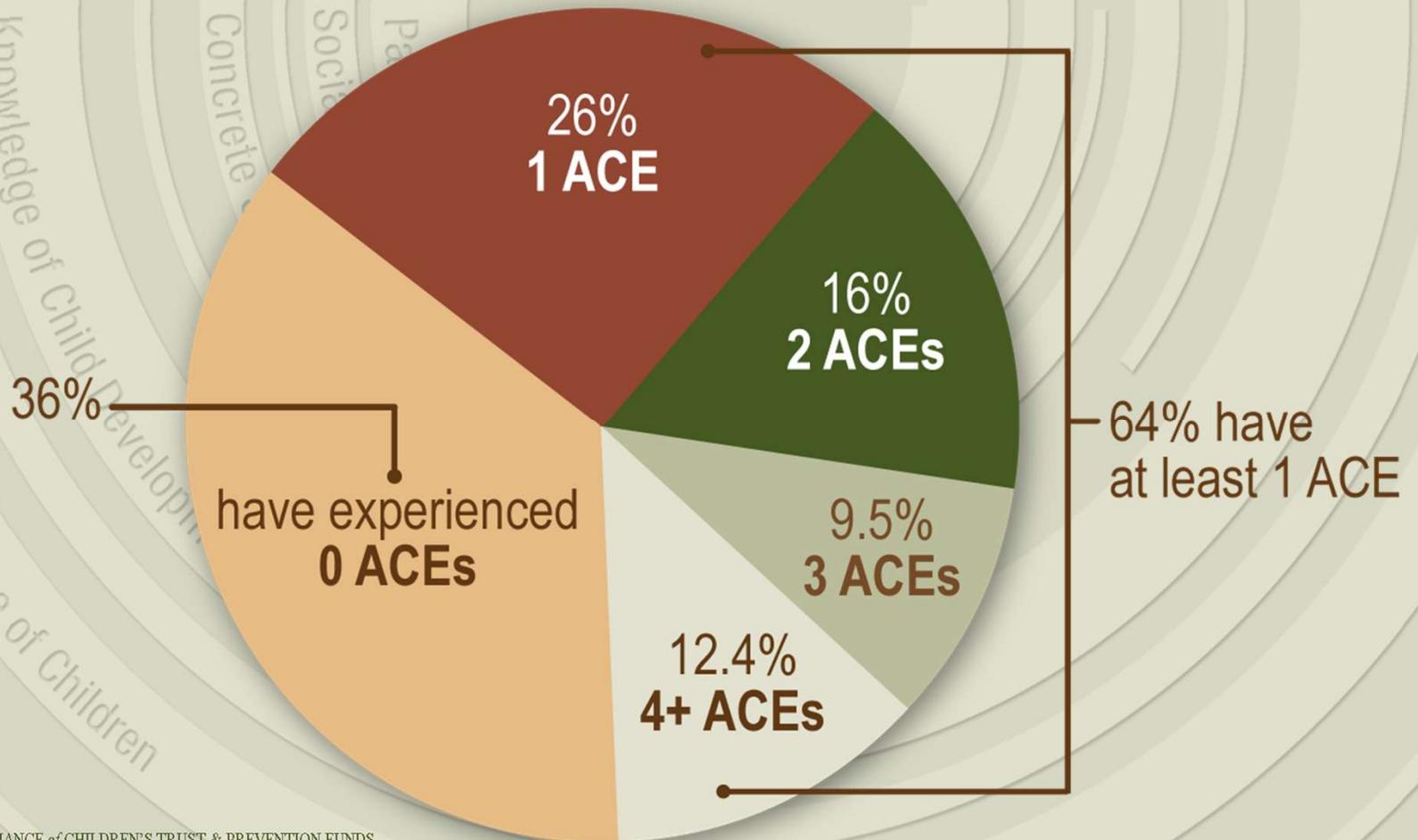


Substance Abuse

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## How Prevalent Are ACEs?

*Of 17,000 ACE Study Participants*



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## What Impact Do ACEs Have?

*Possible Risk Outcomes Include*

### **Behavior**

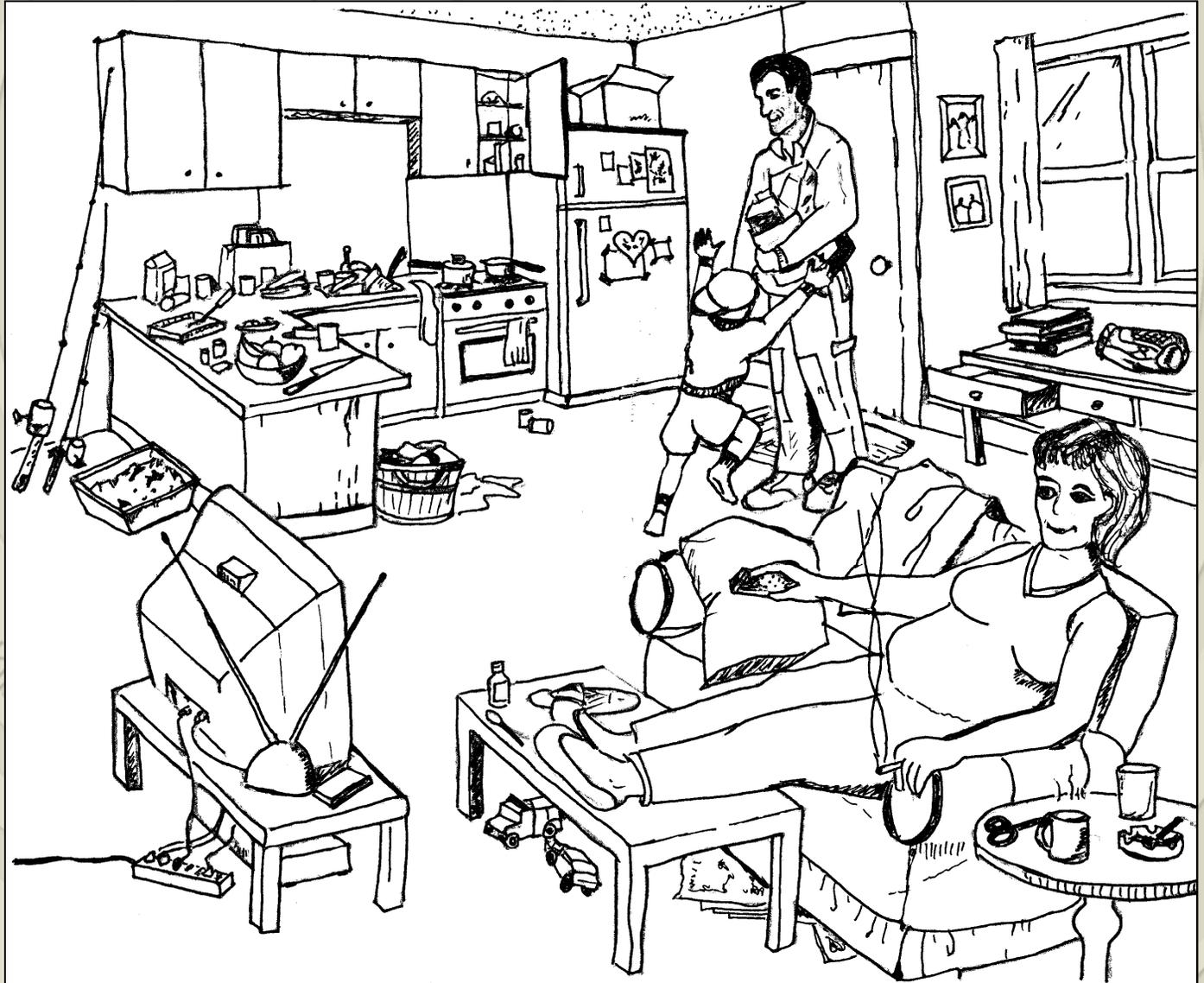
- Lack of Physical Activity
- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Drug Use
- Missed Work

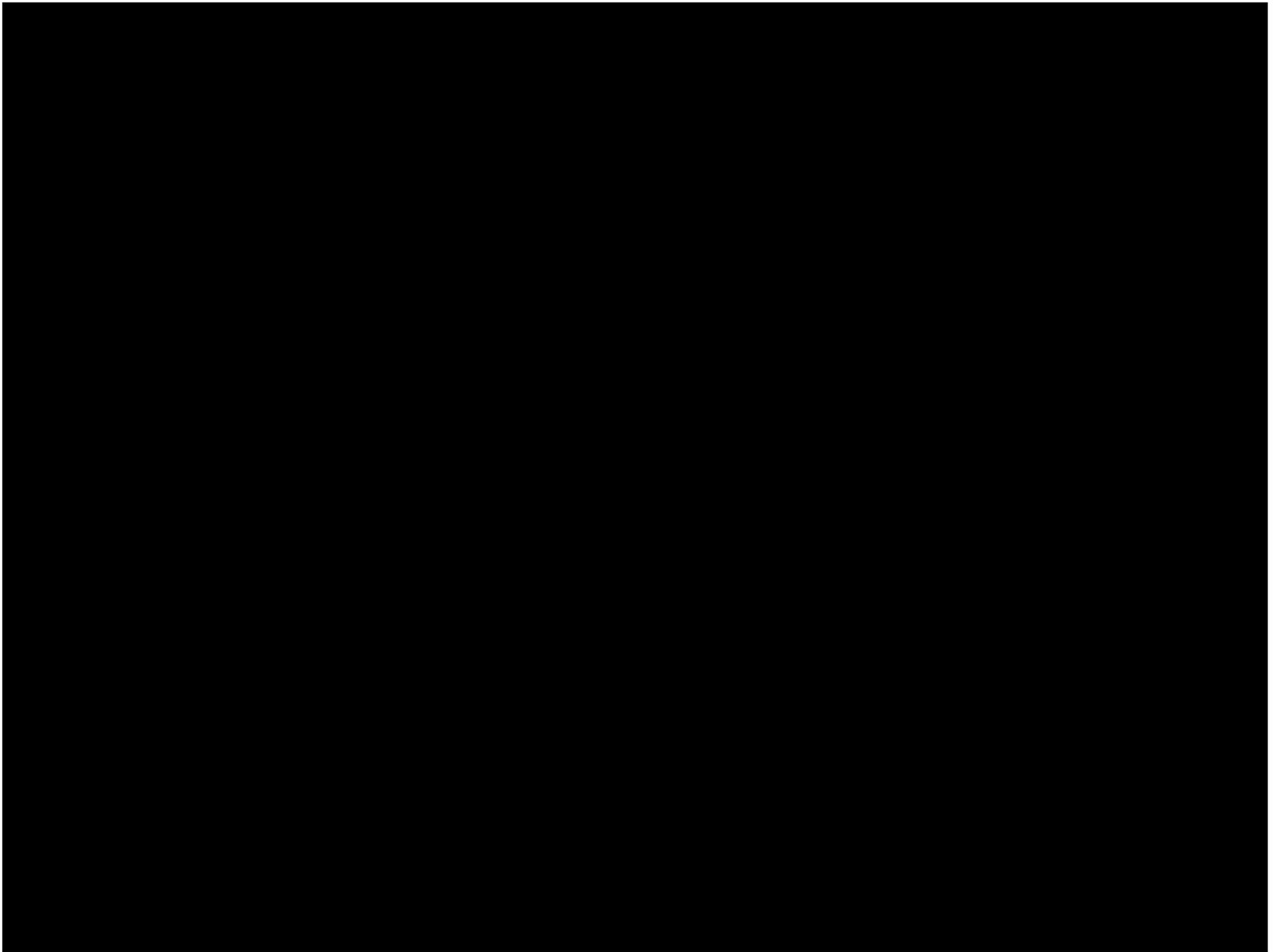
### **Physical and Mental Health**

- Severe Obesity
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Suicide Attempts
- STDs
- Heart Disease
- Cancer
- Stroke
- COPD
- Broken Bones

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# Risk and Protective Factors Cartoon





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# Strength-Based Theory: Looking at Families Through a Different Lens

Focus on what's **strong**,  
not what's **wrong**!



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# The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

## Core Functions

**State, system, agency, program and community leaders works across systems to:**

- Build parent partnerships
- Deepen knowledge and understanding
- Shift practice, policy and systems
- Ensure accountability

## Program Practice

**Programs that serve children and families:**

- Shift organization culture to value and build upon families' strengths
- Make policy changes to support changes in worker practice
- Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

## Worker Practice

**Individual workers:**

- Have knowledge of protective factors and skills to help families build them
- Change their approach to relationships with parents
- Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

## Protective Factors

**Families are supported to build:**

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children

## Results

- Strengthened families
- Optimal child development
- Reduced likelihood of child abuse and neglect

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## 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

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## Families Are Supported to Build

Protective Factor	Definition
<b>Parental Resilience</b>	The ability to recover from difficult life experiences, and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.
<b>Social Connections</b>	Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, instrumental and spiritual support.
<b>Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development</b>	Understanding child development and parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development.
<b>Concrete Support In Times of Need</b>	Access to concrete support and services that address a family's needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges.
<b>Social and Emotional Competence of Children</b>	Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships.

## Learn More About the Protective Factors

- Explore the Alliance online training – with a course on each Protective Factor – free of charge on the Alliance website:

<http://ctfalliance.org/onlinetraining.htm>

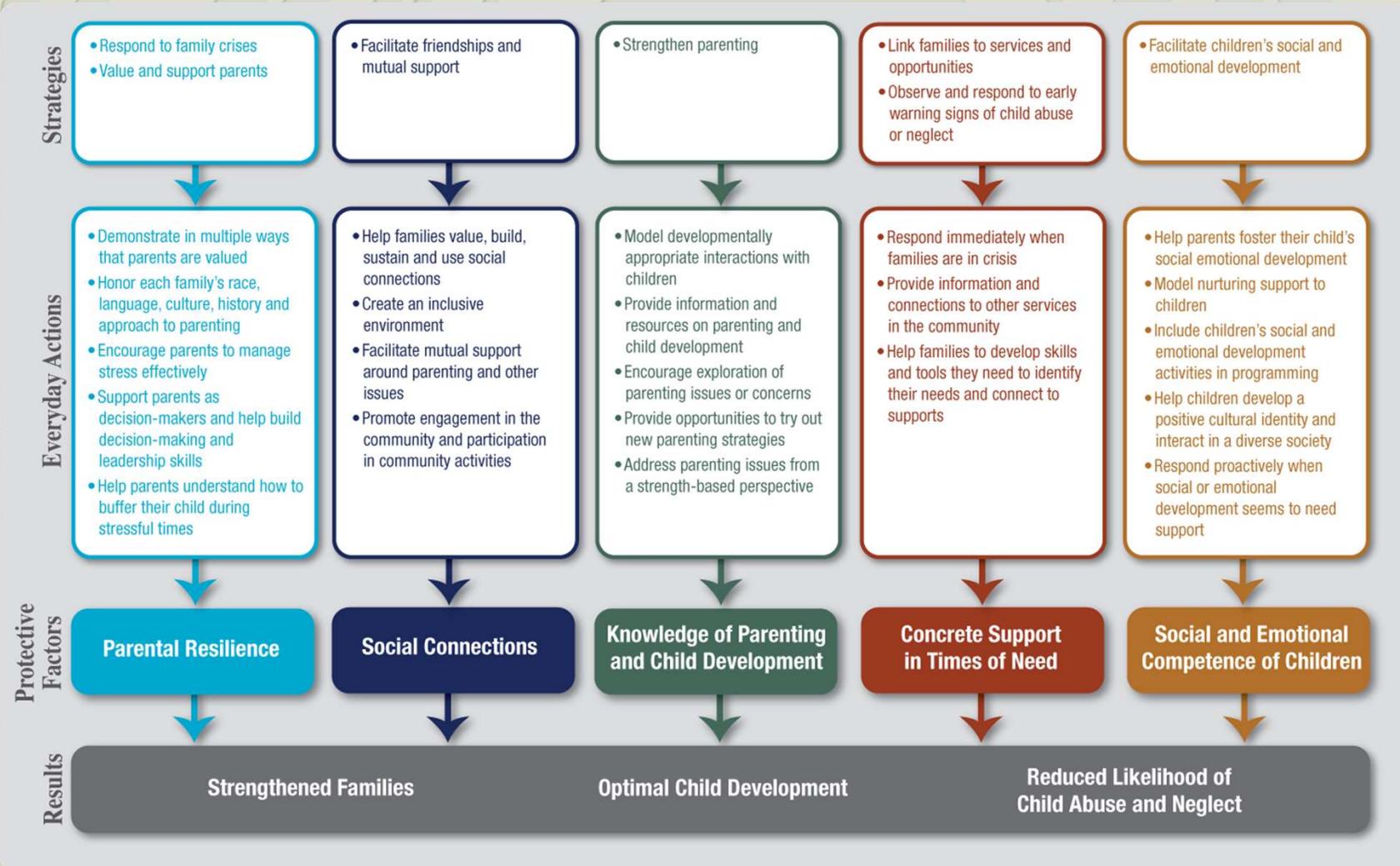
- Discover resource materials about the Protective Factors on the Center for the Study of Social Policy website:

[http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/  
about#protective-factors-framework](http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/about#protective-factors-framework)

- Research briefs about each Protective Factor
- Core meanings of the Protective Factors
- PowerPoint slides about the Protective Factors
- The research behind the Protective Factors

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# Strategies and Everyday Actions that Help Build Protective Factors



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# Understanding and Putting Aside Our Biases

Social and Emotional Competence of Children  
Knowledge of Child Development  
Concrete Support in Times of Need  
Social Connections  
Parental Resilience

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A single parent who is working two jobs, has no transportation, and does not bring his/her child to the center on time.

A parent who just moved here to the city, appears to have an alcohol problem, and has a child with special needs.

## Four Corners

An undocumented immigrant who works a construction job at night, has very limited English skills, and has three children.

A parent of two preschoolers who is in a wheelchair because of cerebral palsy and whose extended family lives very far away.

## Why Is It Important to Build Partnerships with Families?



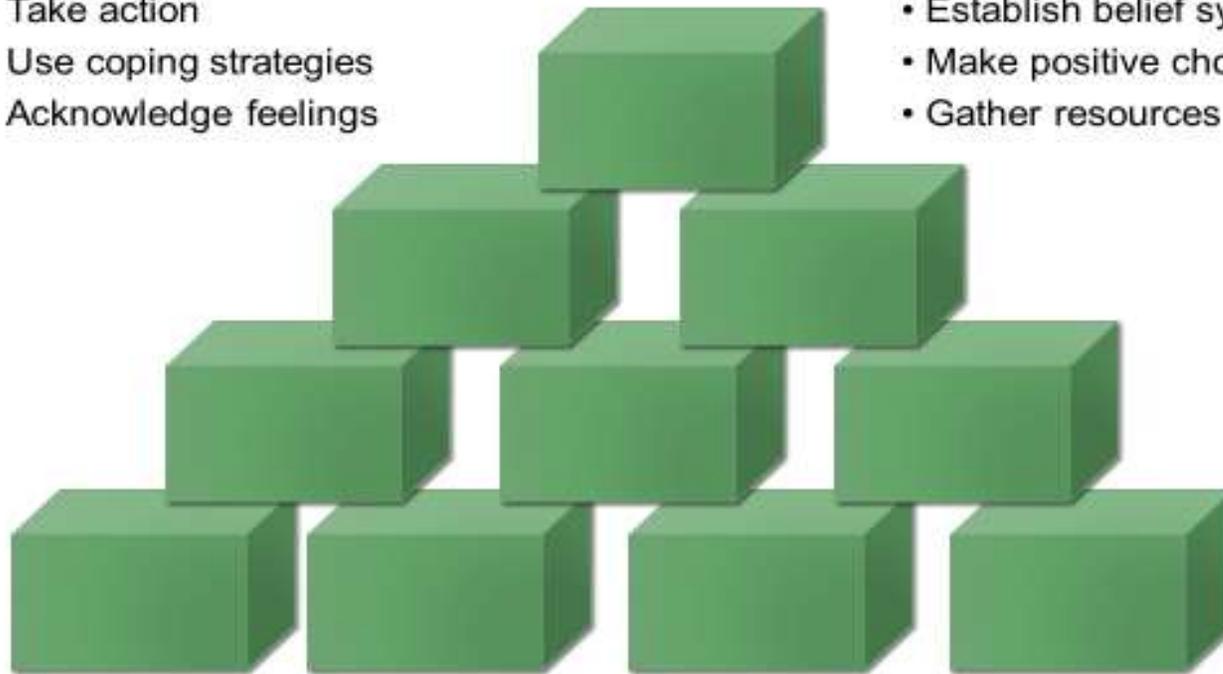
- The family is the center of a child's life; working with parents gives us a more holistic view of how to support and strengthen that family.
- Highly involved families almost double the positive odds for their children in education, health promotion and social-emotional development.

## Defining Resilience

- Ability to recover from difficult life experiences
- Often strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences
- Resilient parents have empathy for themselves and others
- They keep a positive attitude and solve problems creatively
- **ABILITY TO “BOUNCE BACK” FROM NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES**

## Blocks That Support Resiliency

- Recognize challenges
- Use communication skills
- Take action
- Use coping strategies
- Acknowledge feelings
- Problem solve
- Have hope
- Establish belief system
- Make positive choices
- Gather resources



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# Resilience Blocks



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# An Old Quaker Exercise



Social and Emotional Competence of Children  
Knowledge of Child Development  
Concrete Support in Times of Need  
Social Connections  
Parental Resilience





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## ZERO TO THREE

defines social-emotional competence as:

*“...the developing capacity to experience and regulate emotions, form secure relationships, and explore and learn – all in the context of the child’s family, community and cultural background.”*

**SOMETHING'S WRONG**

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All behavior is purposeful  
and to be understood

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## Think of your **SAFE PERSON**

What do they do to make you feel safe?

Very often the things that make us feel safe are the exact same things children need from us.

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***Empathy***



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## Why Do Parents Get Involved?

- They believe the issue is important to them and their family.
- They believe they have something to contribute.
- They believe they will be listened to and their contributions respected.
- They believe that their participation will make a difference.



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## How Do Parents Stay Involved?

- Multiple opportunities for participation, from a small contribution of time to progressively larger contributions of time and effort.
- Families receive sufficient advanced notice.
- Their participation is facilitated by: child care, transportation, dinner, some form of compensation, educational benefits.



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## How Do Parents Stay Involved?

- Families are listened to: their ideas are supported and respected.
- They do not experience retribution as a result of their participation.
- Family participation has an impact.
- Their participation is consciously and visibly appreciated.



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## Getting Started – Engaging Parents

- Ask parents what they want and need from your program.
- Frame it in terms of the protective factors:
  - What's hard about parenting?
  - How can we be a more welcoming place for parents, where families feel comfortable asking for help or advice?
  - How can we reach out to and support families when they are overwhelmed, stressed or isolated?
  - How can we make it easier for parents to connect to each other?

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# How to remember the 5 PROTECTIVE FACTORS that make your family strong.



Use your Thumb to remember

**Social & Emotional Competence of Children**

because a "thumbs up" is one of the first ways we learn to communicate our emotions.



Your Pinky Finger signifies **Concrete Support in Times of Need**

because it is the smallest finger and reminds us that we all need help sometimes.



Your Index Finger represents **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**

because you are your child's 1st teacher!

Your Ring Finger stands for **Parental Resilience**

because your first commitment must be to yourself in order to be strong for others.



Your Middle Finger can help you remember **Social Connections** because it should never stand alone! We all need a positive social network.



www.strengtheningfamilies.org

Social and Emotional Competence

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## Contact

If you have questions about  
*Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work*,  
please contact the Alliance at:

**[info@ctfalliance.org](mailto:info@ctfalliance.org)**

If you are interested in participating in a Training for Trainers for  
*Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work*,  
please contact the Alliance at:

**[tot@ctfalliance.org](mailto:tot@ctfalliance.org)**