

## Keeping your Family Strong

Every family has strengths, and every family faces challenges. When you are under stress—the car breaks down, you or your partner lose a job, your child’s behavior is difficult, or even when the family is experiencing a positive change, such as moving into a new home—sometimes it takes a little extra help to get through the day. Protective factors are the strengths and resources that families draw on when life gets difficult. Building on these strengths is a proven way to keep the family strong and enhance child well-being. This tip sheet describes six key protective factors and some simple ways you can build these factors in your own family.



### Protective Factors and What It Means

#### Nurturing and Attachment:

- Our Family shows how much we love each other

#### Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:

- I know parenting is part natural and part learned.
- I am always learning new things about raising children and what they can do at different ages.

#### Parental Resilience:

- I have courage during stress and the ability to bounce back from challenges.

### What You Can Do

- Take time at the end of each day to connect with your children with a hug, a smile, or a few minutes of listening and talking.
- Find ways to engage your children while completing everyday tasks (meals, shopping, driving in the car). Talk about what you are doing, ask them questions, or play simple games (I spy).
- Explore parenting questions with your family doctor, child’s teacher, family, or friends.
- Subscribe to a magazine, website, or online newspaper about child development.
- Take a parenting class
- Sit and observe what your child can and cannot do.
- Take quiet time to reenergize: take a bath, write, sing, laugh, play, drink a cup of tea.
- Do some physical exercise, stretch, dance.
- Share your feelings with someone you trust.
- Surround yourself with people who support you and make you feel good about yourself.



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## Protective Factors and What It Means

### Social Connections:

- I have friends, family, and neighbors who help out and provide emotional support.

### Concrete Supports for Parents:

- Our family can meet our day-to-day needs, including housing, food, health care, and counseling.
- I know where to find help if I need it.

### Social and Emotional Competence of Children:

- My Children know they are loved, feeling they belong, and are able to get along with others.

## What You Can Do

- Participate in neighborhood activities such as dinners, community events, powwows.
- Join online support group of parents with children at similar ages.
- Make a list of people or places for calling support.
- Ask Principle at child's school to host a Community Resource Night so parents can see what help your community offers.
- Dial 2-1-1 to find out about organizations that support families in your area.
- Provide regular routines, especially for young children. Make sure everyone who cares for your child is aware of your routines around mealtimes, naps, and bedtime.
- Talk with your children about how important feelings are.
- Teach and encourage children to solve problems in age-appropriate ways.



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