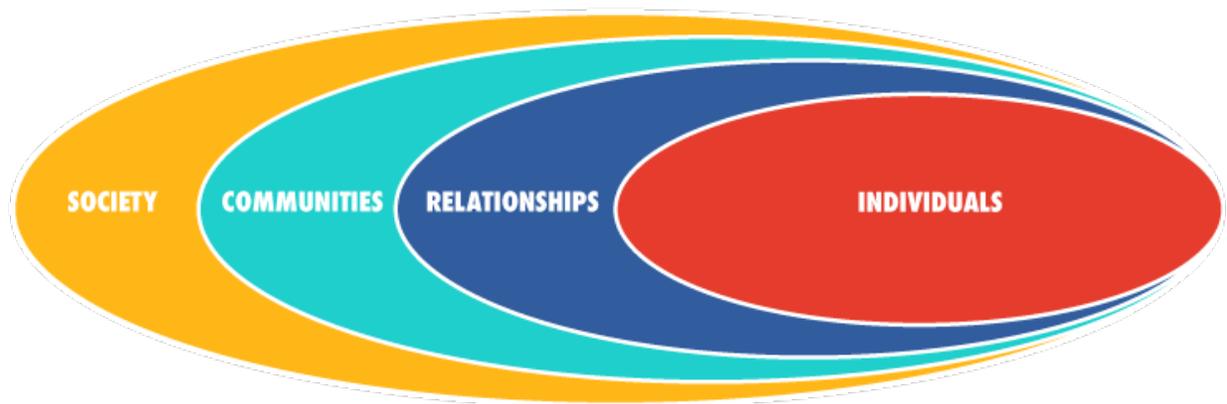


Protective Factors

Protective factors help to promote the positive development of children while also protecting them from the impact of the negative effects of risk or exposure to child maltreatment. Protective Factors also support a child's resilience, the ability to recover from difficult life experiences and often be strengthening by and even grow through those experiences. Resilient children develop skills that help them to withstand future challenges and weather life's ups and downs. Those skills are developed in the context of supportive, nurturing relationships with caring consistent adults. The principal source of those relationships are predominantly the primary caregivers within a child's family.

Characteristics of the physical and social environments that surround a child as well as the individual characteristics of each child interact to enhance protective factors or conversely to detract from protective factors and increase their level of risk. The Socio-Ecological Model of Public Health visually represents how the individual child is nested within those spheres of influence.



Individual

The red circle represents the characteristics of the individual child. It includes the child's personal history, biological and social characteristics of the individual child.

Protective factors for the individual child include:

- Nurturing relationship with one or more consistent caring adults
- Intelligence and problem-solving skills.
- Social emotional competence.
- Adaptable temperament.
- Self-motivation and self-direction.
- Confidence in one's agency, ability to cope and sense of self-efficacy.
- Optimism; a positive outlook.
- Possessing faith, hope, and a sense that life has meaning.
- Good, healthy peer relationships.
- Hobbies or interests.

Protective Factors

Relationship

The blue circle represents relationships. The most influential relationships that a child has are with their primary caregivers and their family. Those relationships are most significant in terms of function and are predominantly, but not necessarily, biological. In order to function well as a unit and promote the optimal development of children, all families rely upon five family protective factors in order to support the well-being of children.

The family protective factors are:

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

Community

The aqua circle represents the characteristics of communities, the settings where families live, work and recreate. When families have access to healthy communities, they are able to draw upon those community protective factors to support their own well-being and that of their children.

Community protective factors include:

- Socio-economic stability
- Availability and quality of employment
- Quality schools
- Availability, affordability and access to childcare, healthy food, housing, health care
- Safety from violence
- Recreational opportunities and green spaces (community centers, parks)
- Opportunities for social interaction

Society

The yellow circle represents the broad societal factors that influence the social climate. These structural factors impact intersections within all of the other settings.

Societal protective factors include:

- Social Norms
- Policies and laws
- Resource allocation
- Values
- Culture



*This is not an exhaustive list.