

The Five Protective Factors Equals The Five Strengths



The Protective Factors

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



The Five Strengths

- Helping Kids Understand Feelings
- Parenting as Children Grow
- Connecting with Others
- Building Inner Strength
- Knowing How to Find Help

Every family has strengths and every family can grow stronger.



What is a Strong Family?

Every family defines strength differently. Some examples of what makes a family strong include: **respecting, valuing, and supporting** one another; **spending quality time** together; having **open communication**; **making healthy choices**; **laughing together**; and **asking for help** when needed.

Growing your Five Strengths can help you ...

- feel more confident as a parent.
- prepare for changes in your child as they grow.
- strengthen your connection with your child.
- get through tough times together.
- handle stress as a family.

1 Helping Kids Understand Feelings

Teaching your child how to identify, understand, and talk about their feelings.

What does this mean?

- Teaching your child to recognize and talk about their own and other people's feelings.
- Helping your child learn self-control and problem solving skills.
- Fostering your child's pride in their identity, race, ethnicity, and culture.

Examples:

A child ...

- learning to say, "I feel mad 'cause you won't let me have it."
- passing the ball to a teammate.
- waiting patiently in line.
- comforting someone who is sad.

What you can do?

- Talk about the feelings of characters in a book.
- Play a board game that requires taking turns.
- Make a list of steps to solve a problem.
- Celebrate your child's identity, ethnicity, race, and culture.

2 Parenting as Children Grow

Learning to support your child's growth at every age and stage.

What does this mean?

- Building the foundation for your child's future.
- Understanding how your child is growing and developing.
- Setting realistic expectations and goals based on your child's age.
- Finding ways to keep your child safe.

Examples:

- Using positive discipline.
- Asking your child questions and listening to what they have to say.
- Eating meals together.
- Having a bedtime routine.

What you can do?

- Read or look at books with your children often.
- Help with homework.
- Cuddle and share affection with your child.
- Include your child in household tasks.
- Attend a parenting workshop.
- Seek out positive examples that represent your child in books, movies, and on TV.

3

Connecting with Others

Building a network of people who care about you and your family.



What does this mean?

- Surround yourself with healthy, respectful relationships and positive people.
- Show that you are willing to give and accept help from others.
- Find your people; look for those who will support you as a parent.

Examples:

- Friends with whom you share special events.
- A person who will come right away in an emergency.
- Someone you trust to watch your kids when you need a break.

What you can do?

- Schedule play times with friends for your child, and yourself!
- Trade child care with someone you trust.
- Reach out to someone new.
- Look for places in your community to meet other parents.

4

Building Inner Strength

Staying true to yourself, while shielding your child during times of stress.

What does this mean?

- Finding healthy ways to manage stress.
- Allowing yourself to learn and grow after challenging experiences.
- Safeguarding children from toxic stress.

Examples:

- Walking to calm down when you are really upset.
- Forgiving yourself for crying or losing your temper.
- Strategizing how to get through a difficult time with trusted friends.
- Take a bath, listen to music, watch a movie.

What you can do?

- Learn relaxation strategies like yoga or deep breathing.
- Manage your emotions and expectations when you or your family is under stress.
- Do things that you know help you get through difficult situations, such as making lists, journaling, creating art.
- Give yourself permission to make time for yourself and your own needs.

5

Knowing How to Find Help

Asking for help when you need it and being willing to accept help when it is offered.

What does this mean?

- Knowing where to find help in your community.
- Being persistent.
- Learning effective ways to advocate for yourself and your family.

Examples:

- Asking for a ride to an appointment.
- Giving or accepting clothing donations.
- Applying for state benefits or a better job.
- Requesting help with child care when needed.

What you can do?

- Recognize that asking for help is a sign of strength.
- Keep an up-to-date list of community resources or learn where you can find one.
- Be willing to step out of your comfort zone to ask for help and use resources.
- Remember that EVERYONE needs help sometimes.

