**Parental Resilience**

### What Is Resilience?

Resilience is the ability to recover from difficult life experiences, and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.

Resilient parents have empathy for themselves and others and are able to keep a positive attitude, solve problems creatively and take life’s events in stride. They are able to “bounce back” from negative experiences. Resilience isn’t about how many bad things you experience; it’s about how you respond to them.

### Everyday Actions that Help Build Resilience

**What are some ways your community (local businesses, day care centers, schools and churches) demonstrates it values parents?**

- My child care has “Dads and Donuts” and “Moms and Muffins” events to say thank you to parents.
- My place of worship offers parenting classes and other ministries for single moms.
- My child’s school invites parents to special conferences, sends out electronic newsletters, offers parent-child activities and many other opportunities to connect.

**Give examples of concrete ways that your family’s race, language, culture, history and approach to parenting is valued as a part of any group in which you participate?**

- My bi-racial children attend a school where less than 3% of the student body is a minority. The school invites guest speakers from many ethnicities, including African-American, and shares books and crafts that honor my children’s heritage.
- Our children represent multiple ethnicities. We help create opportunities where they can explore their individual ethnic histories through reading, meeting others and continuing dialogue.

**What are some ways that you can remind yourself to deal with stress effectively? How can you encourage others to do the same?**

- Look for the humor in the situation. If I can find a way to laugh at what happened or something else about the day, I can “own” it and move forward. Laughter is a life saver.
- Get a sitter and garden.
- I keep a Top Ten List (of things that feed my soul) in the nightstand by my bed. When I have a challenging day, I pull out my list and do at least three of the things on it. (For example, listen to music, dance and take a walk in the mountains.)
- I enjoy nature and photography. I take a walk and take pictures.
- I find it helpful to keep a journal – writing down the good and the bad is a way I can re-group.
- Chatting with a good friend always makes me feel better.
- Pray, read, bake and exercise (not always in that order).
- Be quick to forgive others – especially myself!

**How do you encourage your peers to exercise their unique leadership skills in their own families – and in the community?**

- I go to my “encouraging cupboard” – the strength in my own family is astounding! I am finding ways to be a good steward of the knowledge we have built over generations.
- With several other parent’s help, I started a leadership and advocacy group in our area for families of children with disabilities. Our training events are open to the public and sometimes we offer CEUs. This has been so successful that parents and professionals have been attending from surrounding communities. The best part is that all of our parenting tips apply to all areas of participants’ lives – school, church and more!

**When you face a crisis (small or large), what are some ways that you protect your child from being negatively impacted by this stress?**

- Reflect and remember what skills I have used to manage or overcome struggles in the past.
- I tell myself I’ve been through tough times before – then I drop everything and do something fun with my little one!
- My kids handle stress better when they realize there is stress and a plan to manage it. It is a mistake for me to drag them through it and let them figure out how to cope.
- I keep my children involved in activities with their friends and encourage friendships.
- Make sleep/rest a priority — model self-care for my children.
- Encourage laughter either through silly songs or dancing, telling goofy jokes and reading funny stories. Take time to play, interact and focus on the children — let them know that no matter what – they matter the most!

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**ANPPC**

Alliance National Parent Partnership Council

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Parent Translations: Parental Resilience

The Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework is a national and an international movement. This strength-based approach resonates with individuals, families, communities, organizations, businesses, large state systemic efforts and national level efforts to support all the basic needs and rights of children and families.

It resonates deeply with parents – so much so that many parent groups have worked hard to put the five protective factors into their own everyday language. The translations shared here help us to appreciate and honor family strengths in diverse geographical and cultural settings from across the country.

Arizona Strengthening Families
https://www.pcaaz.org
Parenting is challenging. Having resilience means being flexible, managing stress in healthy ways and giving yourself permission to make mistakes.

Illinois Be Strong Families
http://www.besstrongfamilies.net
Be Strong and Flexible

Protective Factors for Dads
Be a Strong and Flexible Father:
• Part of being a great dad is being able to roll with the punches.
• As a man helping raise a family, there’s a lot of pressure to be the ultimate provider and in some cases the sensitive partner. Times may be tough, but even if we’re not punching a time card every day, we have to be secure in our role as a dad, because it’s a job you’ll never be laid off from.
• But everyday life impacts us all – we have to be able to take the good and bad in stride and be able to bounce back when life happens. We don’t have to be perfect. We need to be the best we can be for our family and kids.

Strengthening Families Alaska
http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/families/default.aspx
Strong Families Have Resilience. They: Make Healthy Choices / Practice traditional values and activities / Don’t dwell on the past / Create balance in your life / Rely on spiritual strength

Community Café Collaborative
http://thecommunitycafe.com
Parental Resilience: I will continue to have courage during stressful times or after a crisis.

Utah Parent Advocacy
http://www.parentadvocacycouncil.org
Parental Resilience (Dad’s Group Version): Don’t Give Up!

ANPPC
Alliance National Parent Partnership Council

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Resource from the ANPPC
Step 1: Cut along the dotted lines
Step 2: Laminate cards
Step 3: Hole punch the marked corners
Step 4: Bind with key ring

Exploring Parents’ Strengths & Needs

Building up families by asking the right questions

What to explore: Ways the parent is currently responding to the child’s needs and behaviors.
What to ask: “What works best for your child when s/he is sad, angry, or frustrated?”

What to explore: How the parent encourages positive behavior through praise and modeling.
What to ask: “How do you know your expectations? What happens when s/he does what you ask?”

What to explore: Whether a parent can identify alternative solutions for addressing difficult behaviors.
What to ask: “How have you seen other parents handle this? What would your parents have done in this situation?”

What to explore: Community, cultural, and ethnic expectations and practices about parenting.
What to ask: “What teaching (discipline) methods work for you? How does your child respond?”

When it comes to questions about raising children, all parents need answers and support from someone they trust. In many cases, that someone could be you, their childcare or preschool provider. These cards were designed to help you ask those difficult questions that help parents identify and build on their strengths, which contribute to the overall well-being of their child.
What to explore: How the parent encourages healthy development.

What to ask: “How do you respond to your baby’s attempts to communicate? How do you encourage your child to try new things?”

What to explore: Any parental concern that the child’s behavior appears to be outside the normal range.

What to ask: “Are there things that worry you about your child? Have others expressed concern about your child’s behavior?”

What to explore: How the parent understands the child’s development.

What to ask: “How do you think your child compares to other children his/her age?”

What to explore: The parent’s view of his/her child’s strengths.

What to ask: “What does your child do best? What do you admire about your child?”

What to explore: How the parent views his/her own role.

What to ask: “What do you like about being a parent of an infant, preschooler, or teenager? What do you find challenging?”

What to explore: How the parent observes and interprets the child’s behavior.

What to ask: “What kinds of things make your child happy, sad, or angry? Why do you think your child cries, says ‘no,’ or breaks rules?”

These cards are an adaptation of the KNO course materials provided by the National Alliance of Children’s Trust & Prevention Funds and is a part of the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development.

For more information on the National Alliance of Children’s Trust & Prevention Funds, visit ctfalliance.org

Cards designed by LAUP.
For more information on LAUP, visit laup.net
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 Index Finger represents Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development because you are your child’s 1st teacher!

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 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.
Introduction to the Protective Factors Framework

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.

Goals

- Understand the five protective factors that help keep families strong and prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Identify multiple strategies and everyday actions that help families to build those protective factors.
- Understanding the role of culture and the impact of bias.
- Understand what it means to work with families in a strength-based way.
Utilizing a Different Lens

Strength-Based Theory: Looking at Families Through a Different Lens
Focus on what’s strong, not what’s wrong!

Protective Factors
The Pathway to prevention and promotion for families

Risk Factors vs. Protective Factors
What are they?

Identifying Protective Factors
5 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

The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

Brook’s Story

Strategies and Everyday Actions that Help Build Protective Factors

Impacts of Culture, Life Experiences and Bias
Big “C” Culture and Little “c” Culture

**Circles of My Multicultural Self**

- Share a story about a time when you were especially proud to identify with one of the descriptors you used.
- Share a story about a time it was especially painful to be identified with one of your identifiers or descriptors.
- Name a stereotype associated with one of the groups with which you identified that is not consistent with who you are. Fill in the following sentence:
  - I am (a/an) ______ but I am NOT (a/an) ______.

Dirty Laundry

Understanding Bias

Four Corners

ACEs in Wisconsin

**Three Types of ACEs**

- **Abuse**
  - Physical
  - Emotional
  - Sexual

- **Neglect**
  - Physical
  - Emotional

- **Household Dysfunction**
  - Mental Illness
  - Mother Treated Violently
  - Divorce
  - Incarcerated Relative
  - Substance Abuse
ACEs in Wisconsin

What Impact Do ACEs Have?

- ACEs are common
- ACEs are interrelated
- ACEs increase the likelihood that adults will experience:
  - Depression
  - Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use
  - Poor Physical Health
  - Poverty
  - Less Education
  - Poor Quality of Life
  - Major Illness

Why Is It Important to Build Partnerships with Families?

- Parents have knowledge
- Parents should be valued
- They are the experts on their history and family culture
- They have the largest investment in their children (gatekeeper)
- Highly involved families almost double the positive odds for their children in education, health promotion and social-emotional development

Being a Parent Partner

How did I get started

- Parent of five children (two with special needs)
- Head Start
- A caring worker who used engaging techniques (she looked at what was strong)
### Being a Parent Partner

#### Why I stay involved
- Parent of five children (two with special needs)
- Beloit community
- My voice has been heard and not everyone (parents) can advocate for themselves or children

#### What do I gain from being involved
- Empowered (people are listening to me)
- Knowledge
- Networking
- My children see me different
- Employment skills and opportunity

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### Small But Significant Changes

**Essential Elements**
- Introduction to the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework
- Strength-Based Theory
- Five Protective Factors
- Understanding the Impact of Culture and Bias
- The Critical Role Parents Play in Strengthening Families
- Everyday Actions Build Protective Factors

### Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

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Goals

- Define what knowledge of parenting and child development means.
- Explore the influence of culture and cultural expectations on parenting.
- Identify actions you can take to help support and strengthen parenting.
- Create a plan to integrate these ideas into your work.
- Care for yourself as a professional and as a parent.

David’s “Rules of Parenting”

“If you had a good enough parent, you are most fortunate because you had a real parent.”
~ Dr. Donald Winnicott

Building upon what parents already know

Parenting is …

Part Natural Part Learned

- Breastfeeding
- Introduction of solid foods
- Crying
- Play
- Toileting
- Discipline
- Weaning

Peek A Boo

Babies
When We See Troubling Parent/Child Interactions…
Parents May Be Calling Out for Help

Some signs a family may be in need of support:
- A recent major change in the family’s life
- Visible signs of stress in a parent or other family member
- Parent short tempered or impatient with child, partner or others
- Child or parent distant and unresponsive
- Difficulty with payments, managing pick-ups and drop-offs, or other signs of financial stress
- Children’s needs going unmet or unaddressed
- Child unsupervised

Creating an Environment Where Parents are Comfortable Asking for Help

Applying a Protective Factors Approach

The Alliance has joined with Casey Family Programs to create the Birth Parent National Network (BPNN) which is working to promote and champion birth parents as leaders and strategic partners in child welfare system reform. Listen as birth parent Jeremiah D. shares about how important it was to focus on his child’s development.
The Gerbil Incident

Essential Elements
- The Importance of Knowledge
- How Culture Influences Knowledge
- How Knowledge Fits into the Framework (logic model)
- Everyday Actions that Build Knowledge
- Strengthening Parenting
- Creating an Environment Where Parents are Comfortable Asking for Help

2-Hour Training Session

Parental Resilience

Goals
- Define and recognize signs of parental resilience.
- Identify actions you can take to help parents build their resilience in your work.
- Give examples of program efforts to value and support parents.
- Give examples of program efforts to respond to family crises.
- Identify steps you will take to integrate these ideas into your work.

Resilience

What it is...
Resilience is the ability to recover from difficult life experiences and often be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences. Individuals who are resilient are able to have empathy for themselves and others, manage stress, keep a positive overall outlook and weather the ups and downs of life.

What it is not...
Resilience is NOT about how many bad things you experience; it IS about how you respond to them.
What Does Resilience Look Like?

The Building Blocks of Resilience

Malcolm’s Story

Resilience Blocks

What is PARENTAL Resilience?

Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity and trauma.

Resilience to general life stress
- Hope, optimism, self-confidence
- Self care and willingness to ask for help
- Ability to manage negative emotions

Resilience to parenting stress
- Not allowing stress to interfere with nurturing
- Positive attitude about parenting and child
Three Types of Stress

- **POSITIVE**
  - Short increases in heart rate, and elevations in stress hormone levels.
  - Injury, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

- **TOLERABLE**
  - Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.

- **TOXIC**

Helping Families to understand how to buffer their child during stressful times by ...

1. Recognizing the signs of stress in children
2. Understanding how stress may impact the child’s behavior and how to shape adult responses to the child’s behavior accordingly

Helping Families to Build Resilience:

*It’s Not About the Nail*

The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

Strategies and Everyday Actions to Build Parental Resilience
The Alliance has joined with Casey Family Programs to create the Birth Parent National Network (BPNN) which is working to promote and champion birth parents as leaders and strategic partners in child welfare system reform. Listen as birth parent Nancy V. shares about the importance of resilience in her experiences with the child welfare system.

### Resilience Blocks

**Everyday Actions to Build Parental Resilience**

- Why does the everyday action point to the particular block you chose?
- How do you or your agency implement that everyday action?
- Which is the easiest for you to support or implement?
- Which is the most challenging for you to support or implement?
- How do these everyday actions build parental resilience?

### Self-Care for Professionals

“...we are stewards, not just of those who allow us into their lives, but of our own capacity to be helpful.”

- Dr. Jon Conte, Ph.D.

### Taking Care of Ourselves

**Do you ever ......?**

- Feel overwhelmed by the needs of the children or families you work with?
- Feel helpless to make a difference?
- Find that you are often angry?
- Experience anxiety or find yourself to be unreasonable fearful?
- Have you found yourself having angry or judgmental feelings towards parents?
- Do you lack the energy or motivation to make an effort?
When Parents have been impacted by Trauma

- Feelings of hopelessness
- Difficulty coping
- Trouble maintaining relationships
- Decreased ability to recognize danger or stress
- Easily angered
- May look shut down or numb
- Anxious, hypervigilant, loss of sense of safety or trust
- Disrupted Sleep
- May look unwell or struggle with physical health challenges
- May struggle to establish and maintain empathic relationship with child
- Child and caregiver may trigger one another
- May struggle to tolerate child’s intense emotions

Daily Experience Impacts Professionals

What do professionals look like when they have been impacted by the intensity of the work and the stories of the families they work with?

When Professionals have been impacted by Others’ Trauma

- Feelings of hopelessness
- Difficulty coping
- Trouble maintaining relationships
- Decreased ability to recognize danger or stress
- Easily angered
- May look shut down or numb
- Anxious, hypervigilant, loss of sense of safety or trust
- Disrupted Sleep
- May look unwell or struggle with physical health challenges
- May struggle to establish and maintain empathic relationship with child
- Child and caregiver may trigger one another
- May struggle to tolerate child’s intense emotions

“Individuals observing or interacting with another experience emotional responses parallel to that person’s.”
- Dr. Charles Figley, Ph.D.

Secondary Traumatic Stress

Compassion Fatigue

Dr. Daniel Siegel, TED Talk
“IT Changed Everything”
Reflective Supervision

Self-Care
Just as You Advocate for Parents, Advocate for Yourselves

• Take time to rejuvenate
• Pay attention to proper rest, good nutrition, exercise and engage in stress reduction activities.
• Take advantage of mental health services when you or others see signs of stress overload
• Do all you can to contribute to making your workplace a reflective and safe environment
• Others?

Self-Care

“We have an obligation to our clients, as well as ourselves, our colleagues and our loved ones, not to be damaged by the work we do.
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Essential Elements

• What is Resilience? What does it look like?
• How Parental Resilience Fits Into the Framework (logic model)
• Everyday Actions that Build Resilience:
  • Valuing and Supporting Parents
  • Honoring Each Family’s Culture
  • Responding to Family Crises
  • Building Partnership with Parents to Benefit Everyone

The National Alliance of Children’s Trust and Prevention Funds:
• Ensures all states have a strong and effective children’s trust or prevention fund capable of leading and investing in strategies, policies and best practices that prevent child abuse and neglect before it occurs.
• Initiates and engages in national efforts that help state children’s trust and prevention funds in strengthening families to prevent child abuse and neglect.
• Promotes and supports a system of services, laws, practices and attitudes that supports families by enabling them to provide their children with safe, healthy and nurturing childhoods.

Contact
If you have questions about Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work, please contact the Alliance at:
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
To find out more information on our Protective Factors Training or to schedule a training, please email Becky Mather at Rebecca.Mather@wisconsin.gov

https://preventionboard.wi.gov

Dr. Daniel Siegel, TED Talk
"It Changed Everything"