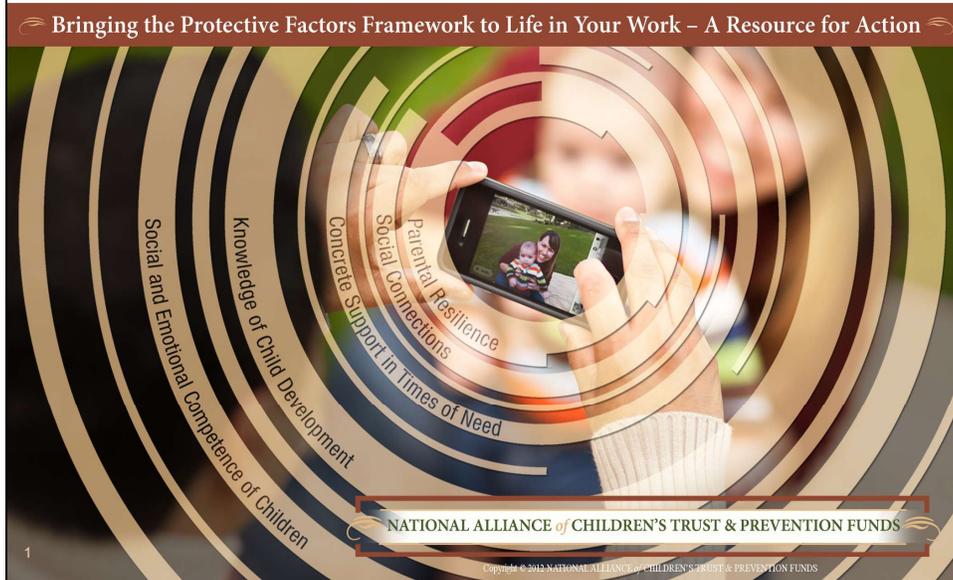


Concrete Support in Times of Need

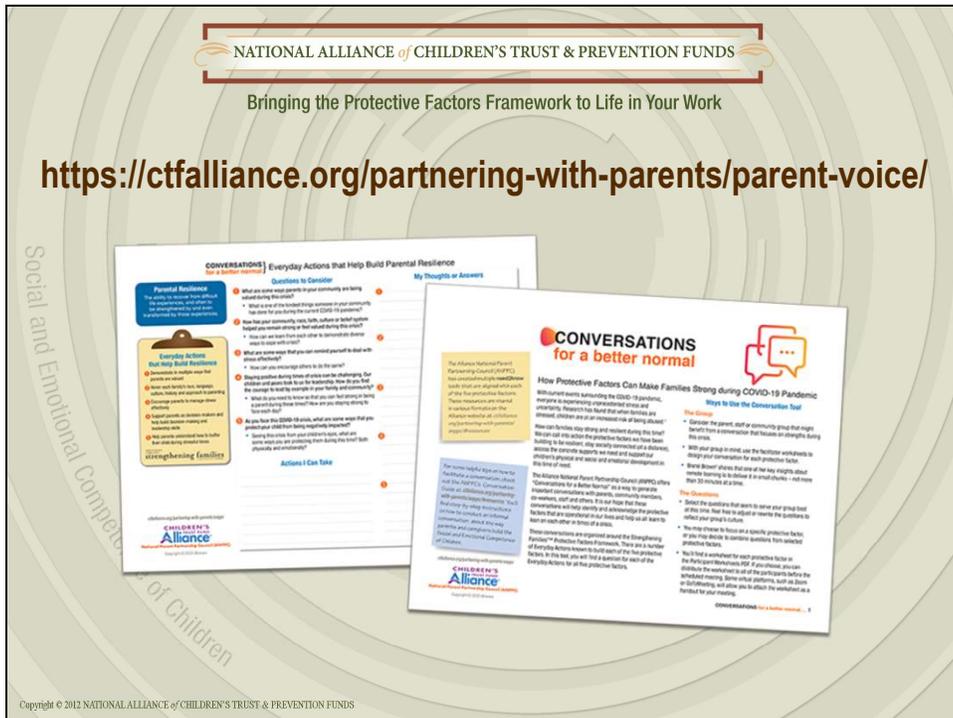


Every family – at some point- needs help. It might be when a child is struck with a serious illness, a parent loses a job, a family moves to a new community or as we are currently experiencing, the world deals with a Pandemic. Even a joyous event like the birth of a child is a time when most families need extra support. Sometimes the challenges are minor, but other times they may be critical to the family's survival. No matter what the level of need, help from relatives, friends, organizations, churches and a variety of other sources can be a lifeline for a family in need.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation defines successful families as those who have their basic needs met. They have economic security, housing, health care and other necessary resources in place. They also have some form of education or skill and are connected to family, neighbors, co-workers or friends.

If we help families find and access these essential sources of help, we will be building protective factors against stress and -in turn- against possible child maltreatment. In the Protective Factors Framework, "concrete support in times of need" means that families have access to whatever they need to handle the challenges they face and to be successful. Depending on a family's resources – financial as well as social and other types of resources (I want to emphasize that these resources/assets are not always tangible – assets are defined as a useful

or valuable thing, person, or quality. So, a family's assets may be skills, strengths, themselves or physical items.) some may be able to access the support they need to weather the storm. Others may not. When families don't have that access, you can help them get it—by providing support or helping them connect to those who can offer them what they need.



April is a special month where we recognize and elevate the reality of preventing child abuse across the nation. The ANPPC has developed several tools to promote the Strengthening Families Protective Factors and help parents navigate the Coronavirus crisis. Each week the ANPPC Campaign will focus on a different protective factor beginning with Concrete Supports in Times of Need. There are memes and resources available at <https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/parent-voice/>. We all CAN be a part of this prevention effort, so I would encourage you to visit the site and share these resources with your social networks. Additionally, we have created a new tool to help facilitate virtual conversations about how the Protective Factors to help navigate the COVID-19 Crisis. There is a facilitator guide and participant worksheets. Another parent group, The Alliance's Birth Parent National Network (BPNN) has provided a COVID-19 Resource List. Please take a moment and check out those links.

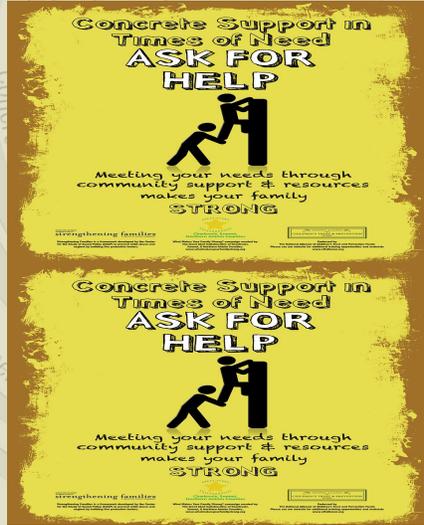


The "five finger poster" was inspired by a parent leadership council with direct input in language. It was created by the Early Childhood Collaborative in Michigan as part of its, "What Makes Your Family Strong?" messaging campaign. It is available for downloading at www.whatmakesyourfamilystrong.org. Since the creation of this poster, the parent leadership council has expanded its messaging campaign to include the website, a community strengthening families guide and additional promotional materials.

- The thumb can help you remember Social and 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 middle finger can help you remember Social Connections because it should never stand alone! We all need a positive social network.
- Your ring finger stands for Parental Resilience because your first commitment must be to yourself in order to be strong for others.
- 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.

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Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work
<http://www.whatmakesyourfamilystrong.org/>



Social and Emotional Competence of Children
Knowledge of Child Development

Essential Elements and Goals



- -The Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework and everyday actions we can take to help families support as we go about our everyday life.
- -The importance of culture and how it impacts families as they seek to build protective factors and how our own culture shapes how we individually feel, act, and think.
- -The critical role parents play in strengthening families.

Essential Elements / Common Threads

The Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework and everyday actions we can take to help families support as we go about our everyday life.

The importance of culture and how it impacts families as they seek to build protective factors and how our own culture shapes how we individually feel, act, and think.

The critical role parents play in strengthening families.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation defines successful families as those who have their basic needs met. They have economic security, housing, health care and other necessary resources in place. They also have some form of education or skill and are connected to family, neighbors, co-workers or friends.



Brené Brown –

“Are you comfortable asking for help?”

Many of us have difficulty asking for help. The first is a video that I would recommend when Brené Brown was on Oprah where she addressed the question, “Are you comfortable asking for help?” Please look this up.

Concrete Support in Times of Need

Jessie Gives and Receives Support

- Jessie said she was usually the one helping others. How do you think she felt when the tables were turned and she found herself having to ask for help?
- We often hesitate to ask for help because we feel we might be a burden. What do you think Jessie learned about receiving help as a result of this crisis?
- Feelings (both receiver and giver) play a big role in how families ask for and receive help. Are there things you might do or say that would help families feel more comfortable asking for help?

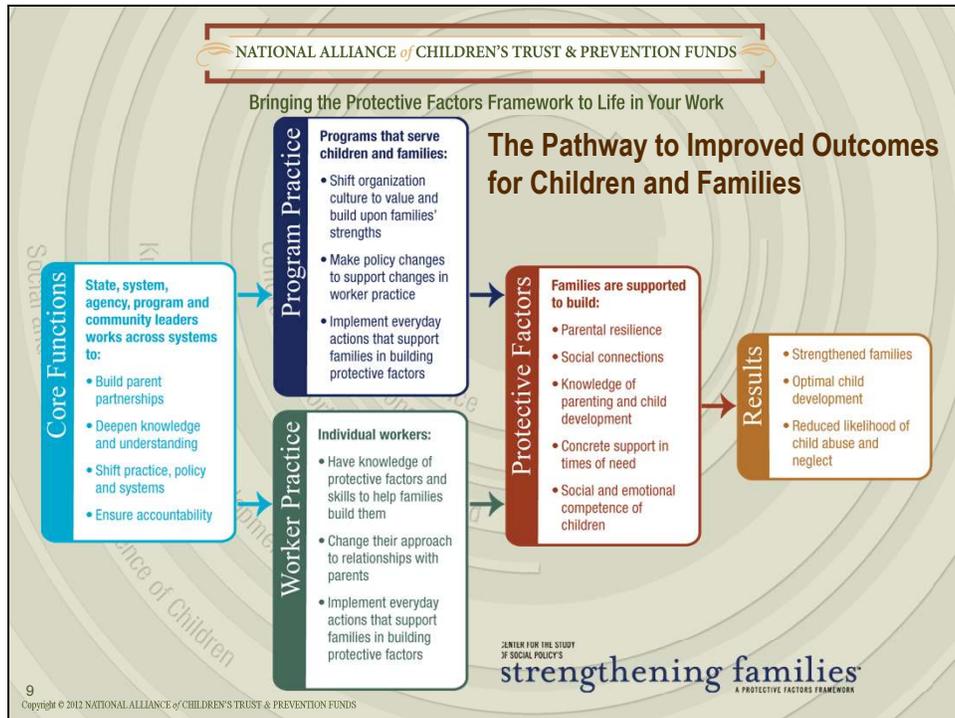
I'd like to share Jessie's story with you. Jessie is a parent that was previously on the Alliance National Parent Partnership Council and participated in the creation of this training. I would like to share my story of how I have always been the person in the community that everybody came to for resources, to help, and I was the person that helped everybody. Everybody knew to come to me for help and I was just always that person there. And so, at a time in my life when I got to the point where my utilities was turned off in the wintertime and I had to ask for help, I asked a friend of mine – one of the families I was helping—if my kids could come over and stay at her house overnight until my power was on. I was just so used to just giving—just giving to people—and the reason I sent I sent my kids and I didn't go was that she was disabled, she had a small trailer, and I felt like that my kids would be better there and I could stay at home. And it made me think about how I had given so much – and I was not used to receiving—asking for help. And also I think that the joy that she gave me in saying, "Of Course you can!" – it made me know that she felt really good about being able to help. And so for me, it made me stop and think that I'm not always the person in the community to give—that I can receive too. But that felt kind-of a little uncomfortable because then when you're not used to receiving, you don't stop to think about the same things that happen to you. So that was what was really unique about that it

and made me think. It also made me realize, too, that people want to give. You don't always have to give—give them a chance to give back to you. So, I think that made it really good for her.

- Jessie said she was usually the one helping others. How do you think she felt when the tables were turned and she found herself having to ask for help?
- We often hesitate to ask for help because we feel we might be a burden. What do you think Jessie learned about receiving help as a result of this crisis?
- Feelings (both receiver and giver) play a big role in how families ask for and receive help. Are there things you might do or say that would help families feel more comfortable asking for help?
- This story/activity is intended to help participants see that giving and receiving support elicit different responses. Understanding – as Jesse did—how much others like to or want to help, may make it easier for us to ask.



Those who offer support to a family may be individuals, groups, or organizations. But, whatever the make-up, each provider becomes a gateway to the services to the services that families need and enables them to experience less stress and a greater sense of empowerment. Families encounter a wide variety of needs. No one program can meet all of those needs. However, an individual service provider who knows the services available in the community and a program that is networked with other community programs can make the referrals and connections to help a family access the services they need. That help enables them to keep their children safer and to experience less stress and a greater sense of empowerment. I think we can all agree that after offering a referral, following up to see if the parent was able to get the help, he or she needs sends a message to the parent that someone cares. That message often helps people take the first step to get involved and continues to ask for help and guidance. Families may face multiple stressors that affect their daily lives. Some of the more common stressors are substance abuse, community violence, illness, domestic violence, depression and poverty. I would like to place a strong emphasis that while poverty seems to be strongly connected to child abuse and neglect, child maltreatment also happens in families that are not poor, perhaps when other stressors impact the family's ability to cope.



Think about how this protective factor – concrete support in times of need – fits into the framework. Children and families benefit when all of the protective factors are closely knit together to form a strong system of supports.

There are specific strategies and everyday actions we can take to help build the concrete support protective factor. The following strategies that are closely related to building concrete support in families: link families to services and opportunities and observe and respond to early warning signs of child abuse and neglect.



The Center for the Study of Social Policy has identified the following “everyday actions” that help support the concrete support in times of need protective factor:

- Respond Immediately when families are in crisis
- Provide information and connections to other services in the community
- Help families to develop the skills and tools they need to identify their needs and connect to supports



Coming from a different culture than the mainstream can also be a stressor for a family, culture influences how we interpret our circumstances, and a family that appears stressed or overwhelmed to you may not feel that way themselves. Rather than if you know what is going on in a family, it is always important to keep in mind a family's cultural context and ask if they feel they need support. When referring families to community supports, be mindful of family culture (again we are not limiting the definition to ethnic or racial categories. Culture can apply to age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, community attitudes and more. Some families feel uncomfortable asking for help, but for some, traditions of independence and a strong sense of pride make it difficult to request the help of others outside the family. In those instances we must find ways to bridge the gap between the family and the services they need. Start by asking questions and listening for cues from families about the types of supports that would feel comfortable for them. See if you can connect them with providers that work specifically with their cultural community. Talk to them about their experience with other providers and help them understand approaches are different from the ones they may be used to.

Linking Families to Services Effectively *Know Your Community*

- Food Bank
- Medical Services
- Mental and Behavioral Health
- Housing Services
- Transportation Services
- Clergy
- Education
- Family Support Centers

Linking Families to Services Effectively: Know Your Community

Food Bank

Medical Services

Mental and Behavioral Health

Housing Services

Housing Services

Transportation Services

Clergy

Education

Family Support Centers



Bremerton Foodline

Yesterday at 9:13 AM · 🌐

We Are An Emergency Food Provider for Those In Need.

True Story: There was a family who fell on hard times. Both parents worked but life had thrown too many curves at them. Dad's work had slowed and one of their cars broke down. Their teenage child overheard the parents talking and came to the Foodline to ask for help. When we reached out to the mother she was embarrassed and felt bad for what her child had done. As we explained, this is our purpose and why we are here. No Judgement, just open arms willing to help in any capacity we can.

So please, if you are in need of food, reach out. Here's how:

Client services at the Bremerton Foodline 1600 12th St. are available Mon-Fri from 10am to 1:30pm. (Facility is modified due to CDC regulations, so please be patient with staff)

You may call [\(360\) 479-6188](tel:3604796188) for questions or more information.

We are also available via Messenger here on Facebook.

This is from my local food bank.

(Family Stress)

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 detached and non-responsive
- Difficulty with payments, managing pick-ups and drop-offs, or other signs of financial stress
- Children's needs going unmet or unaddressed
- Child unsupervised



(Early Warning Signs of CAN) Do You Recognize the Early Warning Signs?

1 Isolation of the child or family



2 Personality changes



3 An unusual presence of fear or apprehension



4 Hyper vigilance



Do You Recognize the Early Warning Signs?
The power of one.
It only takes one person to change a child's world.



- **Be mindful** and aware of **family stress**
- **Recognize early warning signs** that some form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or form of neglect might be occurring or have the potential to occur
- **Intervene** when you are able to **identify signs and symptoms** that abuse may have already occurred

Be mindful and aware of family stress

Recognize early warning signs that some form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or form of neglect might be occurring or have the potential to occur

Intervene when you are able to identify signs and symptoms that abuse may have already occurred



The Children's Trust Fund Alliance:

- 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.

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Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work

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