

# How to Partner with Families using the KYSF Protective Factors



**Parental Resilience: Families bounce back.** Managing stress and getting through it when faced with challenges, adversity and trauma

- ◆ Families recognize and value their unique strengths.
- ◆ Families identify themselves as hopeful, optimistic, and confident.

- Help parents identify their unique character strengths and how they can use them when managing stress.
  - Validate strengths and good decisions to build the parents' confidence and help motivate them to learn new skills when needed
  - Provide concrete tools for reducing stress such as goal setting worksheets, budget forms, journals, daily planners, and other organization tools.
- ⇒ *What do you find most stressful to you on a daily basis? How do you work through those life stressors?*



**Social Connections: Families have friends they can count on.** Having positive relationships that provide emotional, informational and spiritual support

- ◆ Families maintain multiple friendships and supportive relationships with others.
- ◆ Families feel respected and appreciated in their role as parent or primary caregiver.

- Conduct initial visits with families at their convenience, choice of location, and with family members of their choosing
  - Show families an example of a completed "Eco Map" that identifies formal and informal supports. Be sure to note supports that are most helpful to them and which ones are not helpful. Next, allow families to create their own design and explore what supports exist for them.
- ⇒ *Who do you specifically call on to help you every once in a while?*
- ⇒ *What kinds of things do you like to do for fun or just to relax? Would you be interested in meeting some other parents who have similar interests?*



**Knowledge of Child Development: Families learn how their children grow and develop.**

Understanding child development and parenting strategies that advance physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development

- ◆ Families identify realistic expectations for their child's development.
- ◆ Families recognize and respond appropriately to their child's specific developmental needs.

- Highlight simple and fun parenting tips each month such as positive discipline techniques for the grocery store and going out to dinner. Connect why children exhibit these behaviors and the importance of teachable moments.
  - Encourage parents to see the world from their child's point of view. For example, you might explore a room together on hands and knees, to help the parent understand how to childproof for their toddler.
- ⇒ *How do you continue to learn about parenting skills and your child's development?*
- ⇒ *How do you like to receive new information? For example, reading an internet article on your phone, having printed materials, attending a training, and/or watching a video?*



**Concrete Support in Times of Need: *Families get assistance to meet basic needs.*** Access to resources that address a family's basic needs and minimize stress caused by challenges

- ◆ Families have the resources to meet their basic needs.
- ◆ Families feel supported and valued when reaching out for help.

- Encourage parents to share any positive contacts they have had with community services to help build their confidence in being their own advocate for meeting family's basic needs.
  - Listen to families. Link to services based on the family's wishes--the support they desire in the manner they desire. Follow-up to make sure they were linked with this service.
  - Upon enrollment, ask each parent to identify one concrete need that would lighten their load and list 3 ways they could begin to meet that need (reduce expenses, reach out to local resources for financial help, contact an employment agency). Support the parent on immediate next steps and check-in on progress and barriers.
- ⇒ *What is your greatest need right now? How have you dealt with the problem in the past? Did you have a successful outcome?*
- ⇒ *Do you feel safe and supported in your living environment? What makes you feel safe/unsafe?*



**Social and Emotional Competence of Children: *Families teach children how to have healthy relationships.*** Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to recognize, communicate, and regulate their emotions

- ◆ Families encourage and reinforce their child's positive social skills and set limits in a positive way.
- ◆ Families help their child manage and communicate their feelings.

- Encourage and reinforce social skills such as saying thank you, taking turns and greeting others. Use role play with the child and parent to practice these skills.
  - Share ideas with families on social and emotional learning tools such as books, songs, and articles. Kentucky social and emotional development resources are available at <http://www.kentuckycchc.org/posters-handouts-1/>
- ⇒ *How would you describe the emotional relationship between you and your child?*
- ⇒ *How does your child know that you are expressing love and affection?*
- ⇒ *Is home a safe environment for your child to express his/her emotions?*



**Nurturing and Attachment: *Families ensure children feel loved and safe.*** A child's early experience of being nurtured and developing a bond with a caring adult

- ◆ Families respond to their child with warmth & consistently build a strong & secure attachment.
- ◆ Families teach their child how to form and keep healthy relationships with others.

- Have the parent make a list of everyday acts that lets the child know they are loved.
  - Identify activities the parents and child can do together to build and strengthen emotional bond/attachment
  - Encourage a reward system that earns one-on-one time with family members instead of money or items. For example, instead of allowance for chores, the child can earn a special date with mom or with dad a walk to the park, watch a movie, or play toys.
- ⇒ *How do you engage your child or youth during everyday activities?*
- ⇒ *How do you let your child know you love him or her? What do you do when your child does something great?*



Kentucky's Strengthening Families is a statewide initiative to improve outcomes for young children and families. Research suggests that families in all walks of life improve their chance for success and their ability to cope with stress when protective factors are present.



**Kentucky Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.