



Introduction to Strengthening Families: A Protective Factors Framework

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OF SOCIAL POLICY'S

strengthening families™
A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

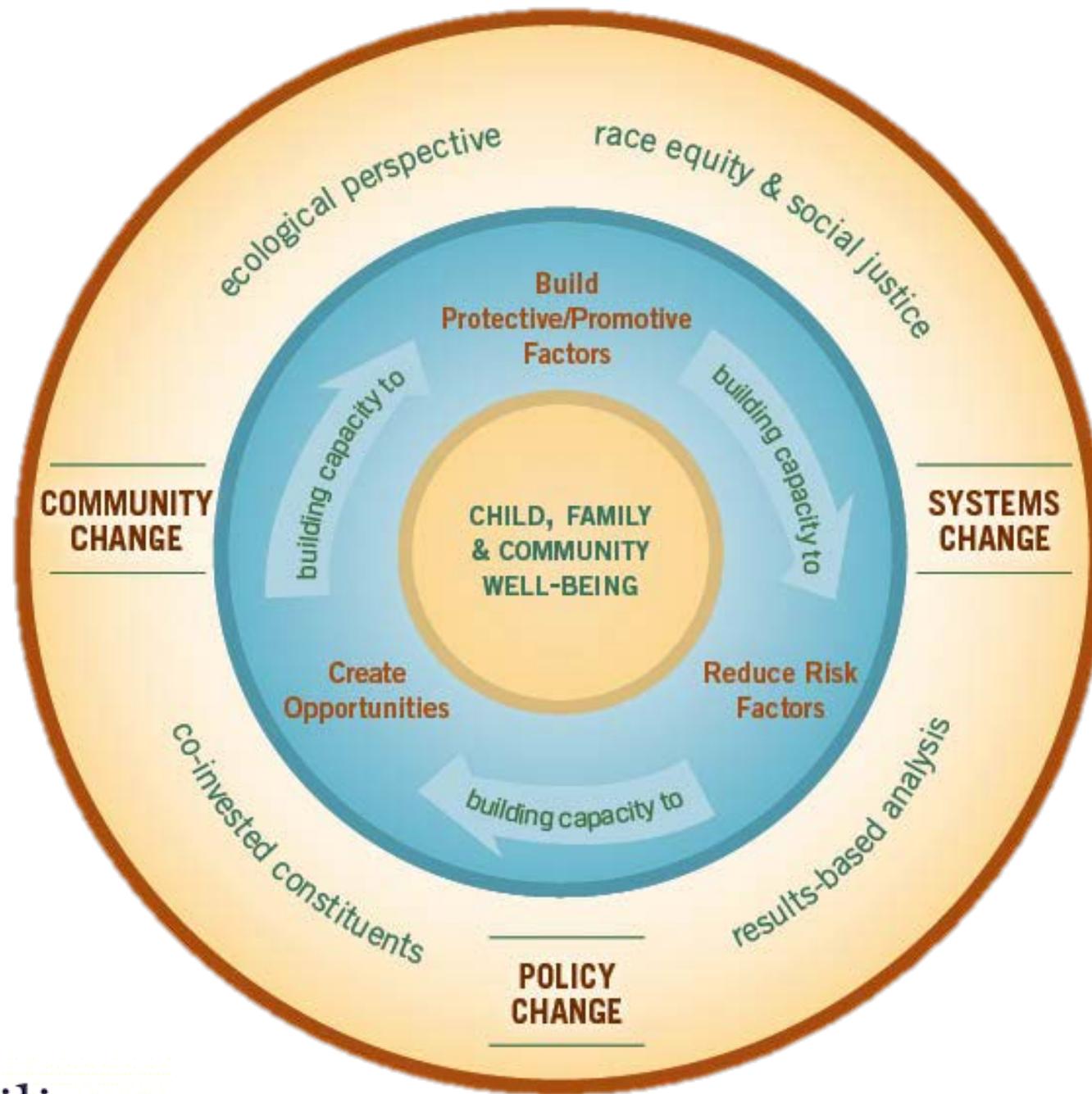
Strengthening Families: Not Your Ordinary Initiative

- Implementing Strengthening Families is about:
 - small but significant changes in everyday practice
 - and*
 - the shifts in policies and systems that allow/promote those changes in practice
- Implementation funds come from existing dollars
- All national implementation tools are available free of charge

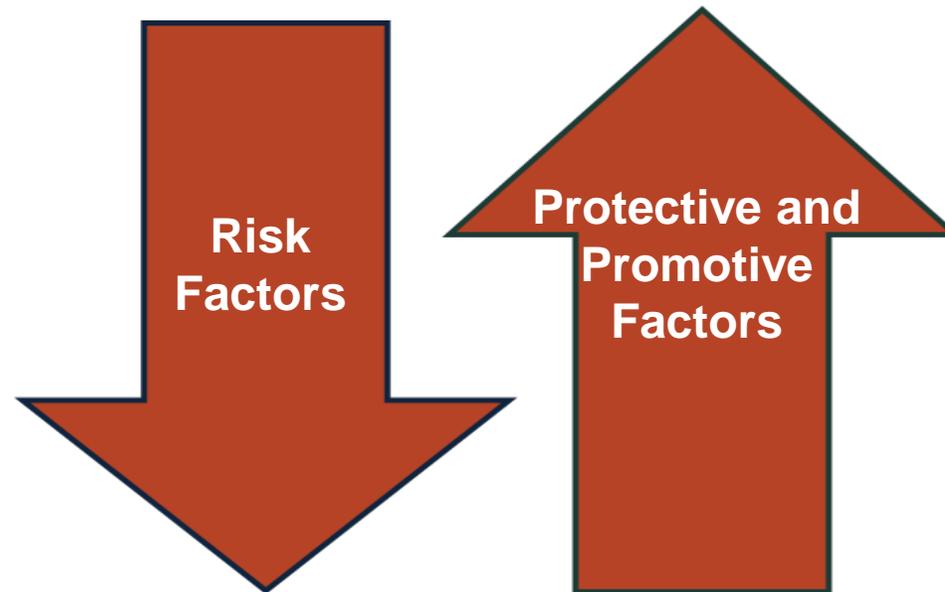


The Four Big Ideas Behind Strengthening Families

- Building protective and promotive factors, not just reducing risk
- An approach – not a model, a program or a curriculum
- A changed relationship with parents
- Aligning practice with developmental science



Big Idea #1: A Protective Factors Approach



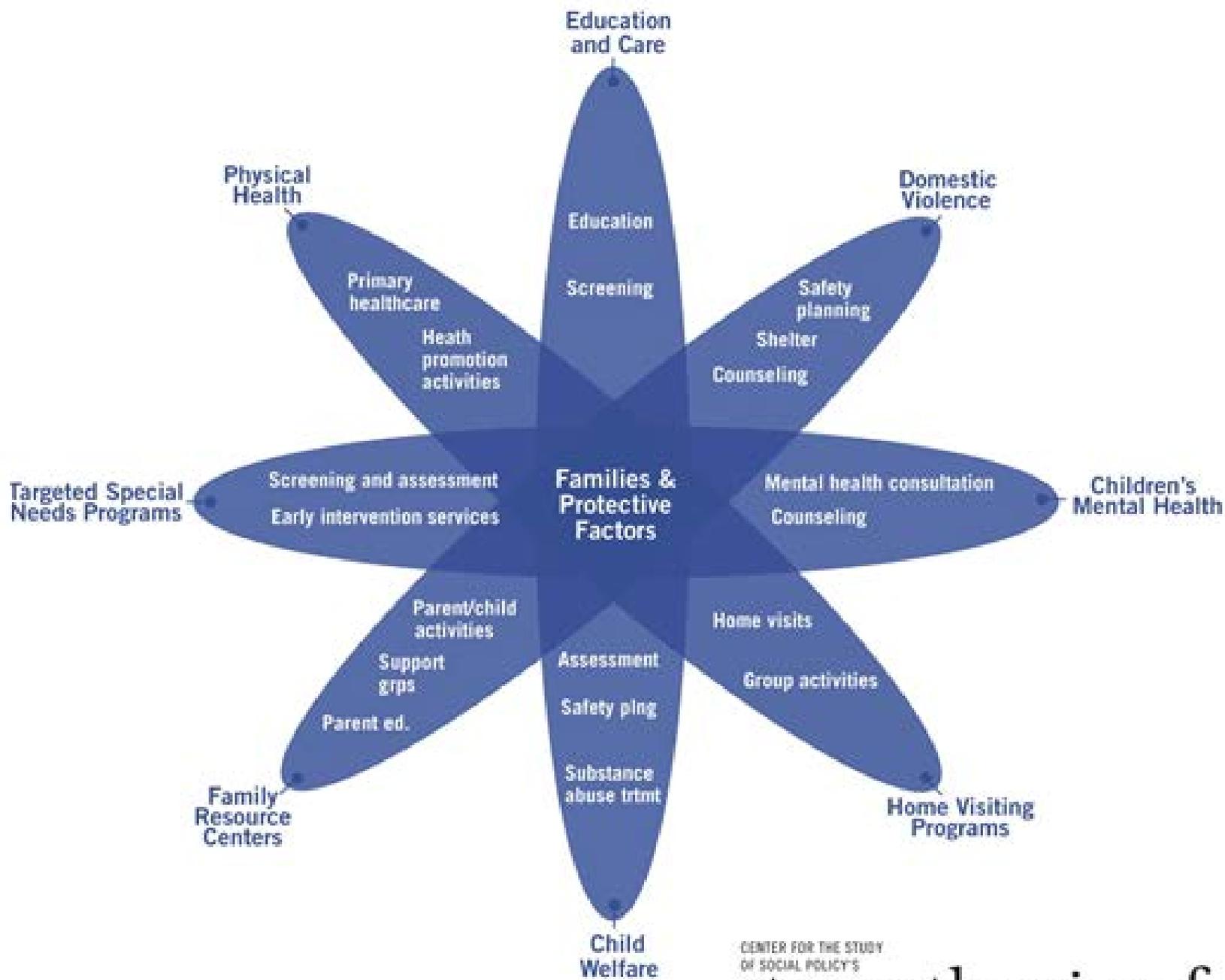
- Protective Factors: conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that mitigate or eliminate risk
- Promotive Factors: conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that actively enhance well-being



What we know: Families gain what they need to be successful when key protective factors are robust in their lives and communities

Big Idea #2: An Approach, Not a Model

- Research-based and evidence-informed
- Applied in any setting that serves young children and their families
- Implemented through small but significant changes
- Not parallel to, but integrated into existing practice
- Cross-sector implementation as core to the approach



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Big Idea #3: A Changed Relationship with Parents

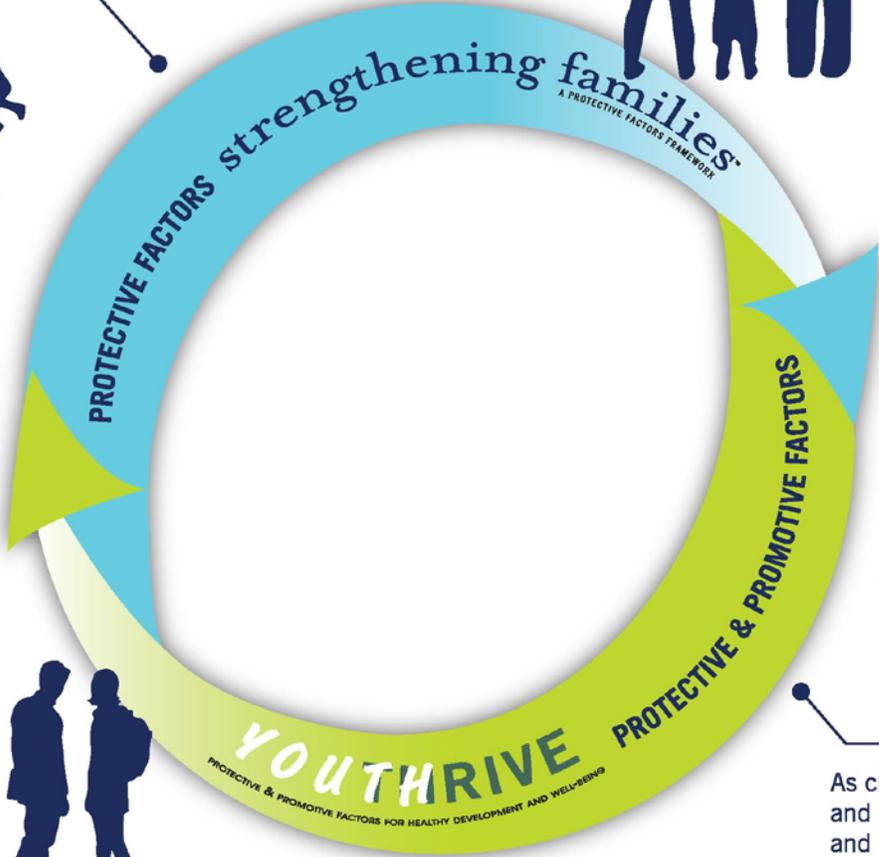
- Supporting parents' ability to parent effectively
- Involving parents as partners in achieving good outcomes for children
- Engaging parents effectively through programs
- Engaging parents directly in mutually supportive relationships that build protective factors
- Partnering with parents to help design systems and policies that work for children and families

Big Idea #4: Alignment with Developmental Science

- Paying attention to what the research tells us:
 - Critical periods of development – early childhood and adolescence
 - Importance of nurturing relationships in early childhood
 - Effects of trauma on development, behavior and outcomes
- Providing tools and guidance to align practice with what we know about child development

A Protective/Promotive Factors Frame Across Development

When children are young, the family environment is very important. That's why Strengthening Families emphasizes parents' protective factors as a pathway to children's well-being.



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROTECTIVE FACTORS

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

YOUTH THRIVE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS

- Youth Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Adolescent Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competence in Youth



As children grow, their own sense of self and experiences in family, peer, school and community contexts are very important. Youth Thrive emphasizes protective and promotive factors as a pathway to well-being during adolescence and in the transition to adulthood.



Five Protective Factors

PARENTAL RESILIENCE

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

KNOWLEDGE of
PARENTING and CHILD
DEVELOPMENT

CONCRETE SUPPORT in
TIMES of NEED

SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL
COMPETENCE of
CHILDREN



Parental resilience

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

What it looks like

Resilience to general life stress

- Hope, optimism, self confidence
- Problem solving skills
- 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

Parental resilience

Everyday actions

- Demonstrate in multiple ways that parents are valued
- Honor each family's race, language, culture, history and approach to parenting
- Encourage parents to manage stress effectively
- Support parents as decision-makers and help build decision-making and leadership skills
- Help parents understand how to buffer their child during stressful times



Social connections

Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, instrumental and spiritual support

What it looks like

- Multiple friendships and supportive relationships with others
- Feeling respected and appreciated
- Accepting help from others, and giving help to others
- Skills for establishing and maintaining connections

Social connections

Everyday actions

- Help families value, build, sustain and use social connections
- Create an inclusive environment
- Facilitate mutual support
- Promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities

Knowledge of parenting & child dev't

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

What it looks like

- Nurturing parenting behavior
- Appropriate developmental expectations
- Ability to create a developmentally supportive environment for child
- Positive discipline techniques; ability to effectively manage child behavior
- Recognizing and responding to your child's specific needs

Knowledge of parenting & child dev't

Everyday actions

- Model developmentally appropriate interactions with children
- Provide information and resources on parenting and child development
- Encourage parents to observe, ask questions, explore parenting issues and try out new strategies
- Address parenting issues from a strength-based perspective

Concrete support in times of need

Access to concrete support and services that address a family's needs and help minimize stress caused by challenges

What it looks like

- Seeking and receiving support when needed
- Knowing what services are available and how to access them
- Adequate financial security; basic needs being met
- Persistence
- Advocating effectively for self and child to receive necessary help

Concrete support in times of need

Everyday actions

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

Social & emotional competence of children

Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships

What it looks like

For the parent:

- Warm and consistent responses that foster a strong and secure attachment with the child
- Encouraging and reinforcing social skills; setting limits

For the child:

- Age appropriate self-regulation
- Ability to form and maintain relationships with others
- Positive interactions with others
- Effective communication

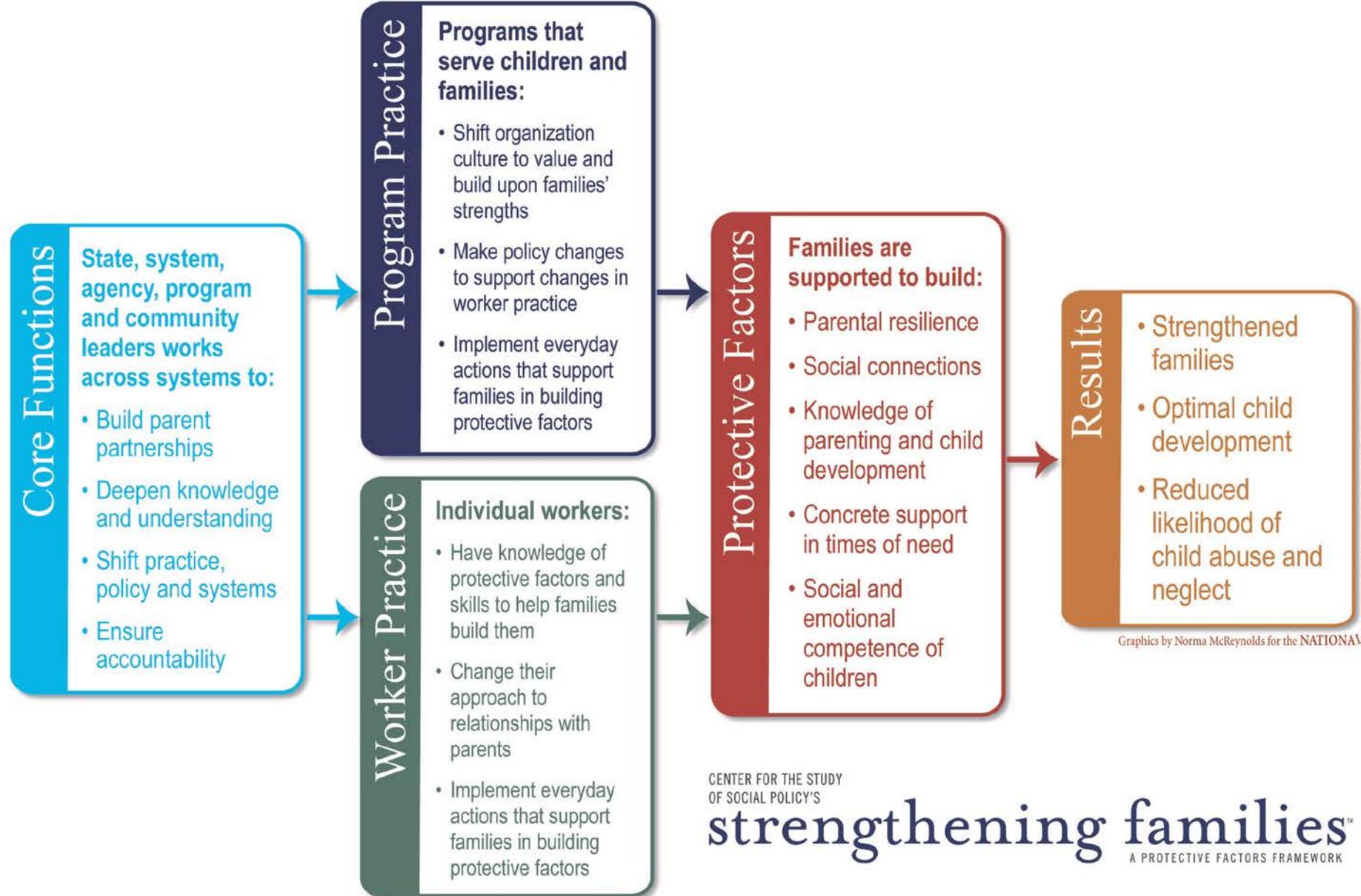
Social & emotional competence of children

Everyday actions

- Help parents foster their child's social emotional development
- Model nurturing care to children
- Include children's social and emotional development activities in programming
- Help children develop a positive cultural identity and interact in a diverse society
- Respond proactively when social or emotional development needs extra support

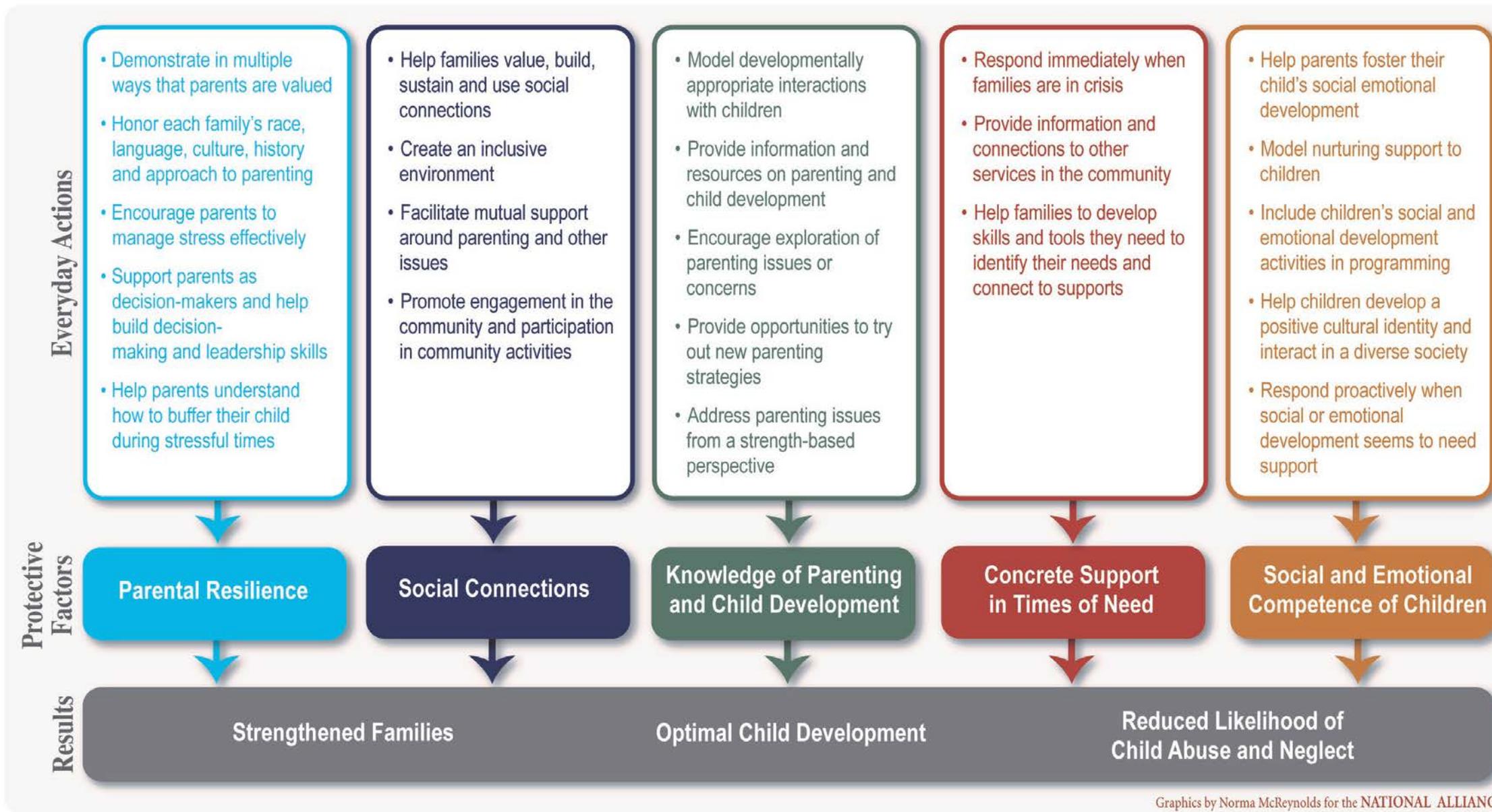
The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework Logic Model



The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

Everyday Actions That Help Build Protective Factors



Strengthening Families National Network



Implementing states, localities and programs
Federal Relationships; Other National Connections

Overview of State Data

Implementation in Early Care & Education						
Year	Quality Rating and Improvement System	Early Childhood Advisory Council	Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)	Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework	Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) planning	Family, Friend & Neighbor care
2011	11	9	15	8	16	7
2012	19	13	24	11	21	15
2013	23	18	23	16	23	17

Implementation in Child Welfare						
Year	Training for child welfare workers	Training for foster parents	Child welfare practice model	Assessment tools	Differential response	New partnerships with ECE programs
2011	6	5	9	5	nc	13
2012	15	8	14	10	8	17
2013	17	9	15	11	9	16

Overview of State Data

Implementation in Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

Year	Provider Training	CBCAP RFP	Local Prev. Planning	Other prevention resources/funding	Mandatory reporter training	Family support programs	Public awareness campaigns	Prevent Child Abuse Chapters
2011	20	20	9	16	5	13	13	nc
2012	27	27	15	25	8	19	16	19
2013	29	28	16	25	9	24	17	26

Implementation in Home Visiting

Year	Part of state MIECHV plan	Common frame across models	Intake and referral services	Training for home visitors	Families referred to other programs using PFF
2012	13	12	6	15	8
2013	17	16	6	19	11



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*Ideas
into
Action*