

Centering the Youth Thrive™ Framework

Key Concepts and Applications

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Conference, Roanoke, VA**



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Introductions

- Name
- Organization
- Core content sought / opening questions
- Current use of Youth Thrive™ / in your programs



Review of Learning Objectives

- Youth Thrive™ (YT) key concepts
- YT Factors
 - Promoting youth resilience
 - Social connections
 - Knowledge of adolescent development
 - Concrete support in times of need
 - Cognitive and social/emotional competence
- Key Links to Family Strengthening™ (SF) framework, Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)



Today's Training Outline

- Introductions
- Background on Youth Thrive™ Framework
- Unpacking the Factors
- How Youth Thrive™ Overlaps with Family Strengthening Work (CSSP's)
- Discussion and Ideas: How Case Managers Can Use the Frameworks & Information
- Wrap Up and Q&A



Background

- Youth Thrive™ → Framework / approach
- It is a lens for assessing current effort & for making changes to the policies, programs, training, services, partnership & systems that impact young people, including those in foster care.
- It is not a specific program or intervention.



YOUTH THRIVE™

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

INCREASE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS

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

REDUCE RISK FACTORS

conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that increase the probability of poor outcomes

DYNAMIC OUTCOMES

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT & WELL-BEING FOR YOUTH

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PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

INCREASE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS

- Youth resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of adolescent development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Cognitive and social-emotional competence

REDUCE RISK FACTORS

- Psychological stressors
- Inadequate or negative relationships with family members, adults outside youth's family and peers
- Insufficient or inadequate opportunities for positive growth and development
- Unsafe, unstable, inequitable environments

DYNAMIC OUTCOMES HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT & WELL-BEING FOR YOUTH

- Physically and emotionally healthy
- Hopeful, optimistic, compassionate, curious
- Ability to form and sustain caring, committed relationships
- Success in school and workplace
- Service to community or society

Background

It is a “strengths-based initiative to examine how all youth can be supported in ways that advance healthy development and well-being and reduce the likelihood or impact of negative life experiences.”

[Harper Browne, C. (2014, September). Youth Thrive: Advancing healthy adolescent development and well-being. Wash., DC: Center for the Study of Social Policy, CSSP]



Background

- 5 Factors
 - **Promoting youth resilience**
 - **Social connections**
 - **Knowledge of adolescent development**
 - **Concrete support in times of need**
 - **Cognitive and social/emotional competence**
- *Factors work together* to increase the likelihood that youth develop characteristics associated with healthy adolescent development and well-being

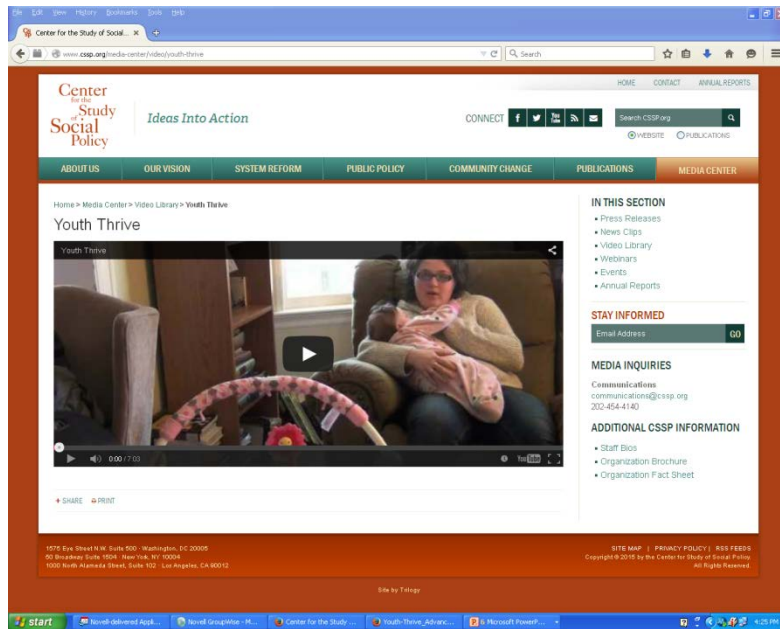


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Share Video

Handout: Core Meanings of YT Factors (2-pager)



<http://www.cssp.org/media-center/video/youth-thrive>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYujnWo-OPQ>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=XYujnWo-OPQ



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YT ~ FACTORS

FACTOR	CORE MEANING	YOUTH VOICE
1 ~ Promoting Youth RESILIENCE	Managing stress & functioning well when faced with stressors, challenges, or adversity; the outcome is personal growth and positive change	~ “Ability to bounce back,” & “You have to be who you are”, YT Video “I’m not going to give up until I have a happy ending.” John, youth who had been in foster care (CSSP, 2 pager, p. 1)
2 ~ Social Connections	Having healthy, sustained relationships with people, institutions, the community, & a force greater than oneself	~ “PO came on a Saturday,” “Everyday I have to see my Grandmother,” “You need friends,” & “Teachers help me out,” YT Video ~ “Its about building a network, support system and soft skills so you can be in a position to thrive. It means being in a situation when you can move forward with all the tools you need.” Wilton, youth advisory council member (CSSP, 2 pager, p. 1)

YT ~ FACTORS

FACTOR	CORE MEANING	YOUTH VOICE
3 ~ Knowledge of Adolescent Developmt.	Understanding the unique aspects of adolescent development (e.g., brain development, the impact of trauma); implementing developmentally and contextually appropriate best practices (e.g., PYD strategies)	“...helps to understand yourself...my brain is still developing,” “we are really normal,” & “see (it) from my perspective,” YT Video
4 ~ Concrete Support in Times of Need	Understanding the importance of asking for help & advocating for oneself; receiving a quality of service designed to preserve youths’ dignity, provide opportunities for skill development, & promote healthy development	“(from Mom) ~ I get a break for me,” & “space to find my potential,” YT Video
5 ~ Cognitive and Social- Emotional Competence	Acquiring skills & attitudes that are essential for forming an independent identity & having a productive, responsible, and satisfying adulthood	“poetry helped me,” “concentrate on the good,” & “trust me ~ I will follow through,” YT Video

Additional Background ~ Context

- **Key Understandings in Developmental Neuroscience**
 - Much evidence points to the central importance of prenatal and early postnatal (birth-3) brain development
 - Early experiences affect the quality of brain architecture
 - Brain development is life-long
- **Adolescence is a time of profound change in brain structure and function**



Overlapping Frameworks

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Frameworks provide a view of 2 interrelated phases of the lifespan developmental continuum: Strengthening Families ~ focuses on families of young children (0-5 years old) & Youth Thrive ~ focuses on youth ages 11-26.

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Protective/Promotive Factors Across Development

VISUAL

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



PROTECTIVE FACTORS strengthening families
A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

YOUTH THRIVE
PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

YOUTH THRIVE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS

- Youth Resilience
- Social Connections
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Knowledge of Adolescent Development
- 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.

Taken together, protective and promotive factors increase the probability of positive, adaptive and healthy outcomes, even in the face of risk and adversity.

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Strengthening Families™ & Youth Thrive™ frameworks exemplify a commitment to identify, communicate and apply research-informed ideas that contribute to the healthy development and well-being of children, youth and families.

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Overlapping Focus Areas

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The Strengthening Families Protective Factors	The Youth Thrive Protective and Promotive Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Parental Resilience○ Social Connections○ Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development○ Concrete Support in Times of Need○ Social-Emotional Competence of Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Youth Resilience○ Social Connections○ Knowledge of Adolescent Development○ Concrete Support in Times of Need○ Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competence in Youth

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Handout: Core Meaning of SF PFs

- Distills the information from the research briefs
- Concrete definition of each protective factor

<http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/2013/Core-Meanings-of-the-SF-Protective-Factors.pdf>

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CORE MEANINGS OF THE STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Protective Factor	Core Meaning
Parental Resilience	<p><u>Resilience Related to General Life Stress</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> managing the stressors of daily life and functioning well even when faced with challenges, adversity and trauma calling forth the inner strength to proactively meet personal challenges, manage adversities and heal the effects of one's own traumas becoming more self-confident and self-efficacious having faith; feeling hopeful believing that one can make and achieve goals solving general life problems having a positive attitude about life in general managing anger, anxiety, sadness, feelings of loneliness and other negative feelings seeking help for self when needed <p><u>Resilience Related to General Parenting Stress</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> calling forth the inner strength to proactively meet challenges related to one's child not allowing stressors to keep one from providing nurturing attention to one's child solving parenting problems having a positive attitude about one's parenting role and responsibilities seeking help for child when needed
Social Connections	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Building trusting relationships; feeling respected and appreciated Having friends, family members, neighbors and others who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide emotional support (e.g., affirming parenting skills) provide instrumental support/concrete assistance (e.g., providing transportation) provide informational support/serve as a resource for parenting information provide spiritual support (e.g., providing hope and encouragement) provide an opportunity to engage with others in a positive manner help solve problems help buffer parents from stressors reduce feelings of isolation promote meaningful interactions in a context of mutual trust and respect Having a sense of connectedness that enables parents to feel secure, confident and empowered to "give back" to others

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Efforts to Best Practices

- Discussion (via video clip/file) with Ms. Tabitha Kelly, Child Welfare Bureau Chief, Arlington, VA, County, Arlington Department of Human Services



Discussion: Efforts to Best Practices

- History of Collaboration with CSSP and Knowledge of Key Ideas (Frameworks)

Discussion: Efforts to Best Practices

Protective Factors in Family Partnership Meetings (FPM)

- Coordination Process
- Strengths Conversation
- Plan Development



Efforts to Best Practices

Entry Points for Building Protective Factors

- Parent Education
- Family Engagement
- Service/Permanency Planning
- Integration with Behavioral Health
- Overlap with Youth Thrive for Adolescents

Discussion: Efforts to Best Practices

Entry Points for Building Protective Factors

- Direct Casework
- Documentation
- Court Reports
- Foster Parent Recruitment Materials

Discussion: Efforts to Best Practices

- Lessons Learned
- Best Practices of Note
- Closing Remarks / Wrap up
- Brief Q&A – with assistance by Ms. LaVoyce Reid, Arlington County, VA (works with Ms. Tabitha Kelly)

Quick Time Check

(After Video and Brief Q&A Session with Ms. LaVoyce Reid,
Arlington County, VA)

- Frameworks Into Action
- About Exemplary Program ~ PHILLIPS Programs ~ Family Partners
- SF Built Out with Logic Model and Best Practices
- Wrap Up and Q&A



SF Ideas Into Action

- Using the Strengthening Families framework, more than 30 states are shifting *policy and practice to help programs* working with children and families focus on protective factors.
- Visit www.strengtheningfamilies.net



YT Ideas Into Action

- ***Jurisdictions:*** YT team is working with New Jersey (state), Brevard County, FL and other locations to make significant changes in their child welfare system policies, operations, contracts, licensing and partnerships to implement strategies that build protective & promotive factors for youth.
 - Goal: Translate the lessons from these jurisdictions for other places and into a national policy agenda impacting youth in foster care.



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15 Selected Programs ~ Exemplary Initiatives

- Anu Family Services, St. Paul, Minn./Hudson, Wis.
- Center for Fostering Success-Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Mich.
- Child Wellbeing Project-Catawba County Social Services, Hickory, N.C.
- FAME-Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.
- FosterEd, Oakland, Calif.
- Just Like Me-Family Support Services of North Florida, Jacksonville, Fla.
- MAAC/EmpowerMENT, Atlanta
- My Life Project-Portland State University, Portland, Ore.
- Next Generation Center-Children's Aid Society, New York
- Youth Advisory Board-Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center, Mechanicsburg, Pa.
- Personal Best for Teens-Ackerman Institute, New York
- ***PHILLIPS Family Partners, Annandale, Va.***
- Unconditional Care Model-Seneca Family of Agencies, San Francisco
- Trauma Informed Care-SaintA, Milwaukee
- Transitional Living Program-Youth Villages, Memphis, Tenn.

<http://www.cssp.org/media-center/press-releases/cssp>

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BUILDING THE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS

Social Connections: The team at PHILLIPS Family Partners invests significant time and effort to make sure there is a system in place to help youth continue to thrive after their involvement with PHILLIPS is complete. They reach out to the people and organizations where youth and families ordinarily spend time – in their neighborhood, schools, faith communities – to ensure they have the supports and resources they need going forward.



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Knowledge of Adolescent Development:

The ordinarily tough dynamics of adolescent development are made harder when you add disability, behavior problems or trauma into the mix. PHILLIPS uses a treatment team to understand and address the comprehensive needs of individual youth. Its strategies are based on a careful review of empirical evidence of effective treatment for families.



YT Ideas Into Action

- *Developing tools and resources*

YT team is supporting the development of a new training curriculum, materials and other tools.

- Goal: Resources – aimed at caseworkers, judges, resource parents and youth themselves – address the unique needs of adolescents and provide information on the myriad options for making practice and policy improvements.



YT Ideas Into Action

- ***Building Networks***

- CSSP conducted a national search to identify on-the-ground examples of innovative programs using protective/promotive factors to achieve better results with adolescents, including those in the child welfare system ~ 15 initiatives were selected.
- Goal: Experts in the field and other allies (e.g., 15 initiatives) – make up national network ~ of practitioners, policymakers & young leaders that share ideas, challenge each other & advocate for change



Additional Materials on Strengthening Families ~ Where to Find Items

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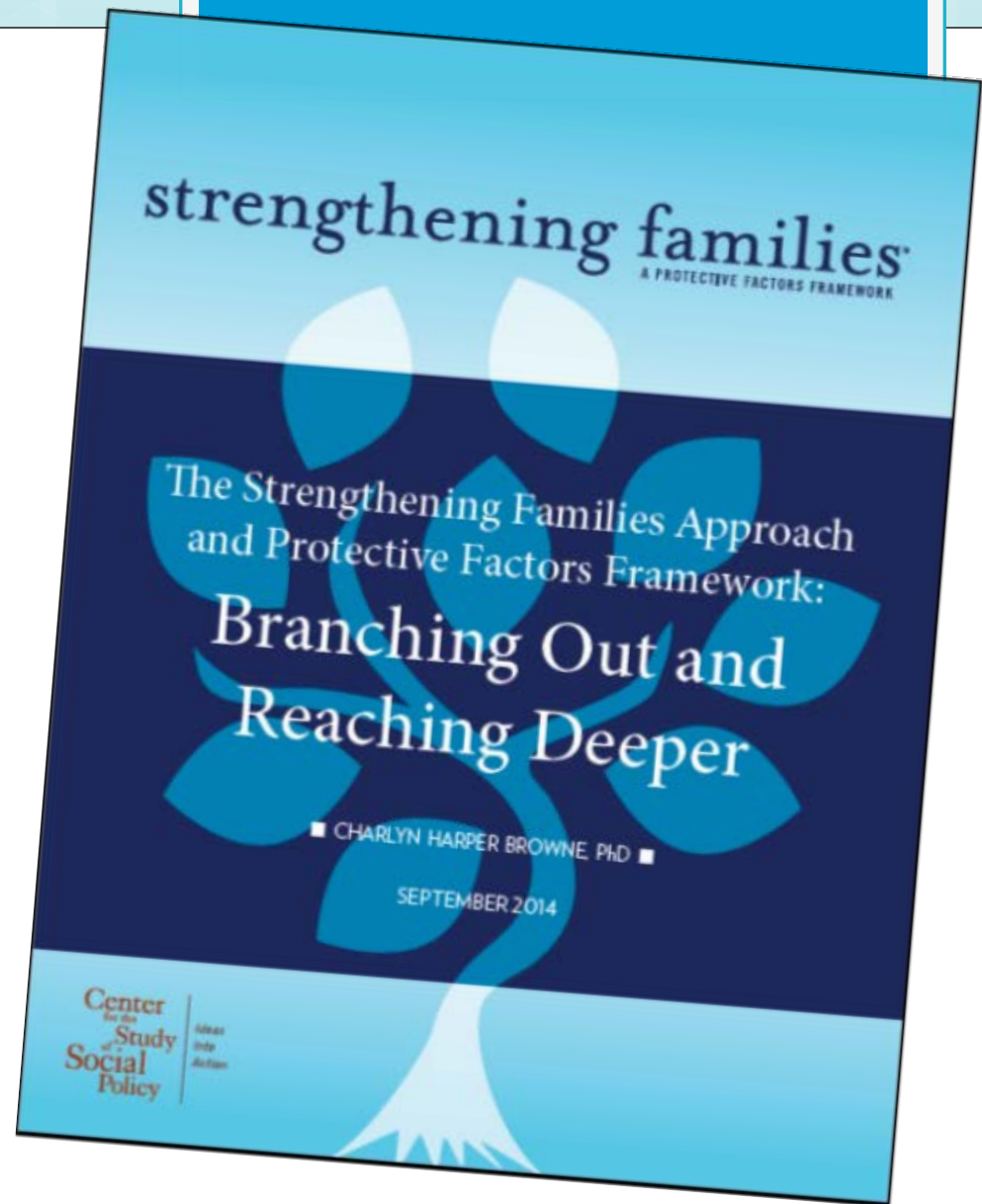
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A synthesis of the ideas and research that further informs the Strengthening Families Approach and Protective Factors Framework

<http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/about/the-research-behind-strengthening-families>



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Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed framework / approach based on 5 protective factors.

These characteristics of families protect against risk factors & poor outcomes for both children and families & promote strong families & optimal development for children.

It is based on engaging families, programs & communities in building 5 protective factors:

1. Parental resilience
2. Social connections
3. Knowledge of parenting & child development
4. Concrete support in times of need
5. Social & emotional competence of children



Logic Model ~ Strengthening Families™

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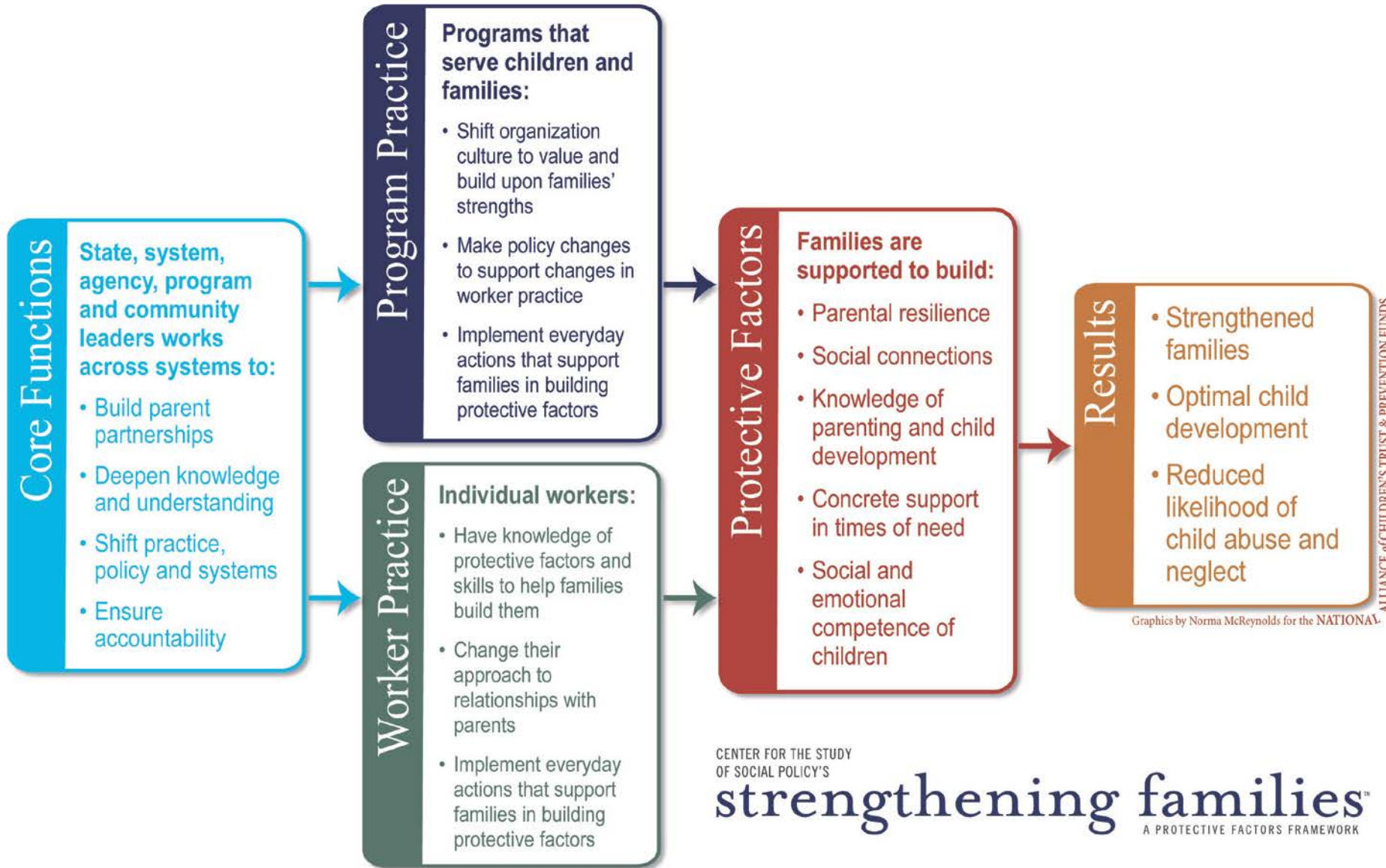
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Logic Model

The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework Logic Model



Efforts to Use ~ Strengthening Families™

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Parental Resilience ~ managing stress & functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity & 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

BEST PRACTICES

- 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, information, instrumental and spiritual support

What it looks like

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

BEST PRACTICES

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



Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development ~ Understanding child development & parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social & 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 & responding to your child's specific needs

BEST PRACTICES

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



Concrete Support in Times of Need ~ Access to concrete support & services that address a family's needs & help minimize stress caused by challenges

What it looks like

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

BEST PRACTICES

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



Social & Emotional Competence of Children ~ Family & child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions & establish & maintain relationships

What it looks like ~ *For the parent*

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

What it looks like ~ *For the child*

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

BEST PRACTICES

- Help parents foster their child's social emotional development
- Model nurturing care to children
- Include children's social & 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



Wrap Up and Q&A





About PHILLIPS Programs for Children and Families

Phillips is state approved to serve students from over 50 jurisdictions with Specific Learning Disability, Emotional Disability, Autism, Intellectual Disability, Health and Other Disability. Students benefit from programs customized to meet their specific needs and a variety of critical program features. At Phillips we partner with parents, school systems, social service agencies and the community so that we can tailor our services to meet a child's individual needs. We deliver these through three key programs: PHILLIPS Family Partners (delivering comprehensive, evidence-based treatment programs and outpatient services), Special Education Day Schools (offering special education at our two non-public non-profit day schools in Annandale, VA and Laurel, MD), and PHILLIPS Building Futures (providing intensive hands on career training and the opportunity to attend school in a non-traditional manner).

About CSSP

Using data, extensive community experience and a focus on results, CSSP:

- Promotes public policies that strengthen families and protect and lift children from poverty
- Mobilizes a national network to promote optimal development of young children and to prevent child abuse
- Helps child welfare and other public human services systems improve their work and achieve race equity for children and families in their care
- Provides tools and resources so community leaders, schools and other health and human service agencies can help parents secure jobs and achieve economic stability and ensure that young children are healthy and succeed in school
- Empowers community residents to be effective consumers of public and private services, securing better goods and services for themselves and their neighborhoods
- Joins with international organizations to share innovations and knowledge



About CSSP

At its core, CSSP is committed to several things:

- It works in **partnership** with federal, state and local public agencies and with private sector organizations, foundations and community members. As resources dwindle and inequities grow – among income groups, across racial and ethnic lines – efforts to create opportunities for those in greatest need require many minds and hands working together.
- CSSP also **engages community residents** so that their views and voices shape the work. It believes that public agencies, foundations and others trying to improve results for children and families must “co-invest” with the parents and community members - the true customers of this work.
- With multiple partners, it’s important that all the work is **results-focused**. Commonly defined results help keep complex strategies on track, whether for community change or systems reform. A shared commitment to results keeps everyone more accountable and focused on making a difference.
- Within all of its work, CSSP is committed to being an **anti-racist organization** - understanding, confronting and addressing inequities based on race, ethnicity, language capacity and more. CSSP is focused on better futures for ***all*** children and families.





Youth**Catalytics**

About Youth Catalytics

Overarching Goal

Based in strengths-based and positive psychology perspectives, the Youth Thrive training gives educators, social workers, policymakers, law enforcement personnel and direct-service workers in any setting the concrete knowledge they need to understand young people and promote their long-term well-being.

Five Critical Premises

Youth Thrive is based on five premises that reflect *what* adults need to do, but even more importantly, *how* they need to do it. Simply put, young people are best supported by professionals who:

- Understand current research on neuroscience and adolescent development, and its implications for working with young people
- Particularly understand the impact of traumatic stress and how to use trauma-informed approaches
- Recognize relationships as a primary source of growth and learning for young people
- Competently provide culturally appropriate services
- Assess and modify their own beliefs and practices, and take care of themselves in challenging environments

Please contact: Cindy Carraway-Wilson ~ cwilson@youthcatalytics.org (207) 319-6009

Key Terms

- **Risk Factors:** conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that increase the probability of poor outcomes.
- **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



Key Terms

- **Family Well-Being:** takes into account the unique characteristics & circumstances of a family, & is conceived as the effectiveness with which family members:
 - Know, unequivocally, they are loved, & experience pleasure in each other's presence
 - Perform various functions (e.g., socialize children; assist with chores)
 - Communicate & interact with each other
 - Provide resources, goods, & services needed to support and maintain the family (e.g., supply adequate food and shelter)
 - Protect its members, particularly vulnerable members (e.g., children, elders)
 - Serve as buffers between its members—particularly children—and negative societal forces or conditions (e.g., community violence)
 - Prepare its members to navigate through or confront negative social experiences (e.g., discrimination based on gender identity)
 - Bond together as a unit to provide reciprocal care, emotional support, hope, encouragement, & guidance; resolve conflicts & seek peace; & assist each other during challenging situations/crises
 - Demonstrate resilience—as individuals and as a unit—in the face of adversity

