



# The CAPC Connection

A publication of the Child Abuse Prevention Council of Santa Barbara County because their world depends on us!  
Member of the Coastal Tri-Counties Child Abuse Prevention Council

April 2009

## 5 Protective Factors

[www.strengtheningfamilies.net](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net)

What is a Protective Factor? Protective Factors are different from risk factors; they are the characteristics that make people more likely to have positive experiences with their children as well as healthy outcomes despite the sometimes insurmountable odds (risk factors) they may have in their lives. When protective factors exist children are less likely to become victims of child abuse and neglect. This is where you as a professional can help.

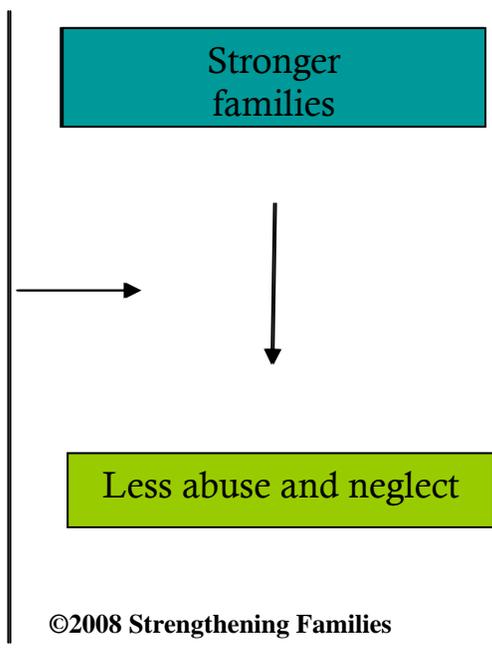
The flow chart below sums up the concept behind the 5 Protective Factors. It is provided by the **Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education** Initiative developed by the Center for Social Policy in Washington, D.C. Readers can find this information and many more resources at

**Promoting social and emotional competence** refers to activities on three different levels: First, children must be given opportunities to learn how to relate to others. Just like adults, children need to be able to express their emotions and solve conflicts. When children have behaviors that might be deemed *challenging*, how parents and caregivers respond to that behavior will affect the child's development. When behavior problems are resolved, a healthy, positive relationship between the child and his/her parents and/or caregivers should follow. Finally, for children with serious socio-emotional difficulties, or those who have experienced trauma, special attention must be paid to their social and emotional development.

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**RECENT FEEDBACK on the CAPC CONNECTION. . .**

- *I am very impressed with the format of the newsletter! . . . Congratulations on producing this excellent resource.*
- *Just received your first newsletter. It is great. I plan to distribute it to my centers and share it with administrators. I will also use it at staff meetings to refresh some of the guidelines for reporting.*
- *I also like the idea for an activity for "Incredible Kid Day" Thank you for putting together this great resource*



As a professional working with children, you already know that many pieces of a puzzle must come together to foster healthy growth in children. As caregivers and professionals we must continuously challenge ourselves to provide information on **child development and parenting techniques** in ways that parents and children can accept the information and benefit. We have to give children the opportunity to learn through healthy modeling and observation, show parents how to use positive parenting techniques and explore discipline alternatives with them. Parents who are challenged by addiction, stress, or other stressful obstacles also have teachable moments and as professionals we must take it upon ourselves to assist parents when crises arise so that child abuse and neglect can be diminished and eradicated.



ance during social gatherings and can pair parents together or make a special effort to reach out to parents who do not usually participate in school-based activities.

When families are in crisis, the incidence of child abuse rises.

While in many cases schools are not able to provide **basic and crisis services** directly, it is important for staff to understand the network of agencies in the community that can provide assistance. Being a resource for families and being knowledgeable about community programs will enable you, your school or your agency to better connect with the parent or caregiver in crisis.

The last of the 5 Protective Factors is **parental resilience**. Resiliency does not just happen overnight. Parents, just like children, go through a leaning curve. Parents who are resilient are able to respond to stressful situations in productive ways, feel supported and able to solve problems, and develop trusting relationships with others. Staff should ensure that parents know that they are valued and that there is a genuine concern for their well-being and the well-being of the child.

Professionals that are an integral part of a child's life must be willing to step beyond the boundary of classroom teaching. Agencies and staff must be willing to consider the family environment of each child. Staff should also be willing to learn how they too can improve and be willing to listen to feedback from parents. Another crucial element is to build a healthy relationship with local community-based organizations that provide advocacy and education in the community, with your



local Child Abuse Prevention Council, and Child Welfare Services (CWS). Your local Council and CWS staff have a breadth of knowledge regarding child abuse and neglect prevention and are eager to assist your program with preventing child abuse and neglect before it happens.

*Information adapted from **Strengthening Families**, an initiative from the Center for Social Policy and the Office of Child Abuse Prevention.*

*For more information about what is happening locally with **Strengthening Families**, please e-mail the CAPC Connection at [capc.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:capc.newsletter@gmail.com)*

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**The Santa Barbara County Child Abuse Prevention Council welcomes your feed-back, ideas and training and resource requests.**

**E-mail us at:**  
[capc.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:capc.newsletter@gmail.com)

**The Child Abuse Prevention Council meets the third Thursday of every month (except August and December) from 10:30-12:30 at the St. Ines Mission. All meetings are open to the public. To receive agendas or for more information, please call the KIDS Network at 346-8222.**

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**The CAPC Connection Newsletter is compiled by Ann McCarty, a member of the Santa Barbara County Child Abuse Prevention Council.**



## Child Sexual Abuse Facts You Should Know

When child abuse hits the news, especially child sexual abuse, many people question why victims of sexual abuse do not tell. The following information is provided for you so that you have a better understanding as to why children do not disclose abuse right away.

### What is child sexual abuse?

Child sexual abuse is any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer. Sexual abuse can include both touching and non-touching behaviors. Touching behaviors may involve touching of the vagina, penis, breasts or buttocks, oral-genital contact, or sexual intercourse. Non-touching behaviors can include voyeurism (trying to look at a child's naked body), exhibitionism, or exposing the child to pornography. Abusers often do not use physical force, but may use play, deception, threats, or other forms of coercion to engage children and maintain their silence. Abusers frequently employ persuasive and manipulative tactics to keep the child engaged. These tactics—referred to as “grooming”—may include buying gifts or arranging special activities, which can further confuse the victim.



### Who is sexually abused?

Children of all ages, races, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds are vulnerable to sexual abuse.

### How can you tell if a child is being (or has been) sexually abused?

Children who have been sexually abused may display a range of emotional and behavioral reactions, many of which are characteristic of children who have experienced other types of trauma. These reactions include:

- An increase in nightmares and/or other sleeping difficulties
- Withdrawn behavior
- Angry outbursts
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Not wanting to be left alone with a particular individual(s)
- Sexual knowledge, language, and/or behaviors that are inappropriate for the child's age

### Why don't children tell about sexual abuse?

There are many reasons children do not disclose being sexually abused, including:

- Threats of bodily harm (to the child and/or the child's family)
- Fear of being removed from the home
- Fear of not being believed
- Shame or guilt

If the abuser is someone the child or the family cares about, the child may worry about getting that person in trouble. In addition, children often believe that the sexual abuse was their own fault and may not disclose for fear of getting in trouble themselves.

### Tips to Help Protect Children from Sexual Abuse

- Teach children accurate names of private body parts.
- Avoid focusing exclusively on “stranger danger.” Keep in mind that most children are abused by someone they know and trust.
- Teach children about body safety and the difference between “okay” and “not okay” touches.
- Let children know that they have the right to make decisions about their bodies. Empower them to say no when they do not want to be touched, even in non-sexual ways (e.g., politely refusing hugs) and to say no to touching others.
- Make sure children know that adults and older children never need help with their private body parts (e.g., bathing or going to the bathroom).
- Teach children to take care of their own private parts (i.e., bathing, wiping after bathroom use) so they don't have to rely on adults or older children for help.
- Educate children about the difference between good secrets (like surprise parties—which are okay because they are not kept secret for long) and bad secrets (those that the child is supposed to keep secret forever, which are not okay).
- Trust your instincts! If you feel uneasy about leaving a child with someone, don't do it. If you're concerned about possible sexual abuse, ask questions.



For more information, please visit <http://nctsn.org>

### WHAT TO TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT SAFETY

Today, kids need to be empowered with positive messages and safety skills that will build their self esteem and self confidence while helping to keep them safer. Kids don't need to be told the world is a scary place. They watch the news, hear adults talking, and may even experience violence firsthand. Rather, they need to know their parent, guardian, or another trusted adult is there for them if they are in trouble; and most adults they encounter in their lives are basically good people.

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



In the inaugural edition of CAPC Connection we presented five short scenarios regarding possible child abuse situations. Below are the questions again as well as the suggested responses. The bottom line is, if you SUSPECT child abuse is occurring, you MUST report it. As a Mandated Reporter, I am required by law to report the following:

1. I am a teacher, and while I was out walking my dog in my own neighborhood I observed a man angrily kick his child while screaming obscenities. *While you are not mandated by law to report because when walking your dog in your own neighborhood you are not within the scope of your job, each of us must recognize our moral obligation to report child abuse. It is only when we all stand up and speak up for children can we truly make a difference.*
2. I am a teacher, and while on lunch duty at school, I observed a woman come to the school to pick her child up. The mother was yelling at the child on the way to her vehicle and the child was crying. *This can be a form of verbal abuse. Since you do not know why the mother was yelling, one step you could take would be to speak to the mother directly at that time if you are able to. This scenario can be a gray area, however, if you suspect that the child is in danger, you must report.*
3. I am the principle of XYZ School and while on my way to a lunchtime meeting at the School Board office I observed a man punching what appeared to be a young teen. *You are still within the scope of your job even though you are not on school property, you are still performing school duties. You are mandated to report this incident and must call the police department ASAP.*
4. I have a relationship outside of the classroom with a child's parent. Today the child disclosed to me that his father had made him touch his private parts. *While on a personal level this may put you in a precarious situation with your friend, you first and foremost have an obligation to protect this child. The child disclosed to you during the scope of your job and therefore you must report.*
5. I am the custodian at ABC High School and today while sweeping up the bathroom a young girl came in upset. I asked her what was wrong and she blurted out that she was assaulted a few weeks ago and she just saw the guy on the school grounds. She thought that he had been arrested. *Since she thought that the perpetrator had been arrested it sounds like a police report was made, however, you can never go on assumptions when dealing with abusive situations. Take the child to the office / counselors office so that she has a private place to be and fill the counselor in on what just occurred. Chances are she will feel comfortable with the counselor and will open up. If the case was not reported to the police then a call must be made to make the report.*



**IVAT**  
Institute on Violence,  
Abuse and Trauma



**Project FRIEND**  
First Response Education on Disability

**Child Abuse Victims with Disabilities**  
**First Responder Training Program 2009**  
**San Luis Obispo – May 28, 2009**  
 Marriott Courtyard  
 1605 Calle Joaquin Road  
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93405  
**8:00 am – 5:00 pm**

**Registration and Continental Breakfast start at 7:30 am!**

**Who should attend?**  
 Law Enforcement  
 Child Protective Services  
 Paramedics  
 Firefighters  
 Emergency Room Physicians and Nurses

**What you learn:**  
 How to interview kids with disabilities  
 Current laws on child abuse and disabilities  
 Officer safety considerations  
 How to build good cases  
 How to work with interpreters  
 Multi-disciplinary team skills

**What you keep:**  
 24/7 resource backup  
 Access to trainers through the Internet  
 Participant manual

**Training Fee:**  
 \$30 in advance (CE credits +\$10, POST credits free of charge)  
 \$40 Onsite (CE credits +\$15)  
 Lunch and Refreshments Included





Register Online!  
[www.IVATcenters.org](http://www.IVATcenters.org)  
 Questions? Call Kori Ryan, Special Projects Coordinator: (858) 527-1860 x 4310  
 or email: [ivatsp@alliant.edu](mailto:ivatsp@alliant.edu)

Funding for this Child Abuse Victims with Disabilities First Responder Training was made available by a grant from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services through a federal Children's Justice Act grant.