

# What are Protective Factors?

Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. They are attributes that serve as buffers, helping parents who might otherwise be at risk of abusing their children to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress. Protective factors are positive attributes that strengthen all families, not just those at risk, so families do not feel singled out or judged.

For years, researchers have been studying both the risk factors common among families experiencing abuse and neglect and those factors that protect families who are under stress. There is growing interest in understanding the complex ways in which these risk and protective factors interact, within the context of a child's family, community, and society, to affect both the incidence and consequences of abuse and neglect. For each protective factor, the focus is on helping parents identify and build on their strengths and on empowering them to identify strategies for enhancing their parenting capacity.

**ChildHelp Pee Dee  
24 Hour Toll-Free Helpline  
1-866-867-9857  
Parenting is tough. Asking for help doesn't have to be.**



Information brought to you by:  
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