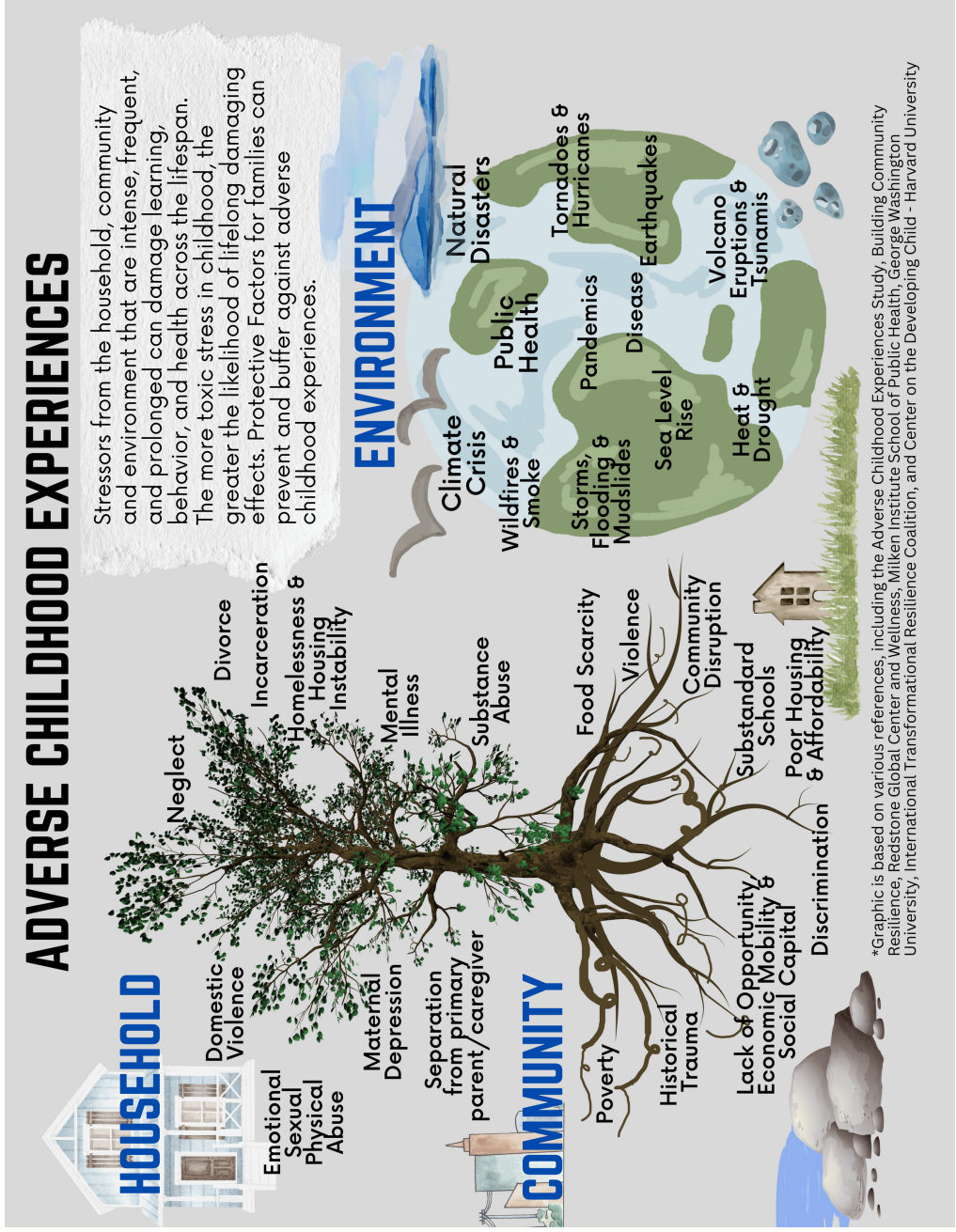


Adverse Childhood Experiences Study and Research

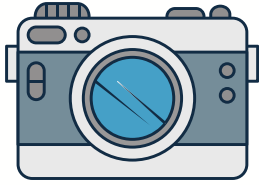
The ACE Study and similar research have revealed legitimate connections between childhood trauma and subsequent adult health issues. The ACE Study, in particular, perhaps more than any other, has changed how childhood trauma is viewed by physicians, therapists, social workers, education, early care, and other disciplines that work with families and children.

However, additional research has shown that there are many ways to prevent, buffer and heal from adverse childhood experiences. The protective factors framework, unlike other child abuse and neglect prevention approaches, recognizes that ALL families need protective factors to build a strong family, promote healthy child development, and reduce the likelihood of abuse and neglect. When families are strong, they can provide positive experiences for children.





Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work



Discussion on Strength-Based Theory

This training is about looking at families through a different lens. This new way of thinking focuses on what's strong, not what's wrong! This is a new and refreshing concept - don't wait until families have serious problems; partner with parents and provide support before a family crisis occurs.

Introducing the Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

A protective factor is a characteristic that makes a parent, child or family more likely to thrive and less likely to experience a negative outcome. A protective factor is the flip side of a risk factor. Think of protective factors as what help children and families thrive despite whatever risk factors they might face.

The five Strengthening Families™ protective factors were chosen based on extensive research about children and families. They were selected because they can be built through interaction with the people and systems families encounter in their day-to-day lives.

In Strengthening Families™, all families are included because all families need some support in building the following protective factors:

Parental Resilience - Managing stress and functioning well in response to current or past challenges, adversity, or trauma. The ability to recover from difficult life experiences and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.

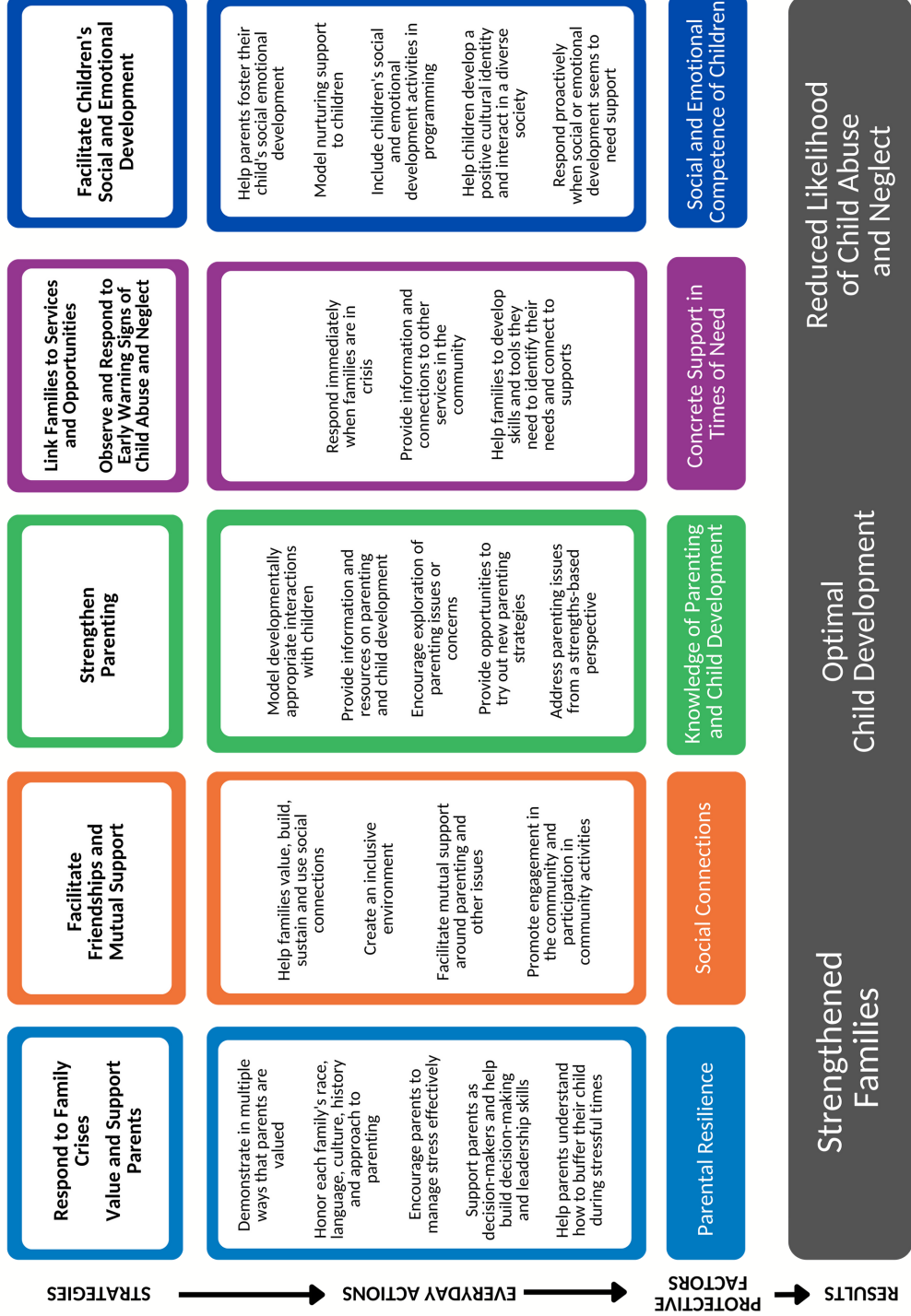
Social Connections - The ability and opportunity to develop positive relationships that lessen stress and isolation and help to build a supportive network. A positive social connection is someone that is there for you, treats you well, and helps you be the best person you can be!

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development - Understanding the science of parenting practices and child development. Knowledge of parenting means parents understand their role in their children's lives. Knowledge of child development means parents have basic knowledge about their children's physical, cognitive and social emotional development.

Concrete Support in Times of Need - Identifying, seeking, accessing, advocating for, and receiving needed supports and services. Concrete support means that families have access to whatever they need to handle the challenges they face and to be successful.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children - Experiencing environments, opportunities, and activities that enable children to form secure relationships, regulate behavior and emotions, and develop early relational health.

Strategies and Everyday Actions that Help Build Protective Factors



Culture and Family Strengths

Working across cultures can sometimes make it difficult to appreciate another family's strengths. We are often not even aware of the way culture influences our beliefs about children and their care. It is important to come face to face with our own perspectives about families. Consider looking at a family's strengths from the child's point of view. When you do this, does your perspective change?

The Cultural Iceberg

Surface Culture

Food, Flags, Festivals, Fashion, Holidays
Music, Performances, Dances, Games
Arts and Crafts, Literature, Language

Deep Culture

Communications Styles and Rules:
Facial Expressions, Gestures, Eye Contact
Personal Space, Touching, Body Language
Conversational Patterns in Different Social Situations
Handling and Displaying of Emotion
Tone of Voice

Notions of:
Courtesy and Manners
Friendship, Leadership
Cleanliness, Modesty
Beauty

Concepts of:
Self, Time, Past and Future
Fairness and Justice
Roles related to Age, Sex,
Class, Family, etc.

Attitudes toward:
Elders, Adolescents, Dependents
Rule, Expectations, Work, Authority
Cooperation vs. Competition
Relationships with Animals
Age, Sin, Death

Approaches to:
Religion, Courtship, Marriage
Raising Children, Decision-Making
Problem Solving

Culture and Family Strengths

As we consider **each** protective factor, ask yourself these three questions:

- How does culture impact families as they seek to build protective factors?
- How does your own culture shape how you feel, think and behave?
- How do differences in culture impact helping others build protective factors?

Cultural Awareness - Understanding there are differences between yourself and people from other backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values.

Cultural Sensitivity - Awareness and acceptance of cultural differences and withholding judgment of cross-cultural practices, and that you work effectively with these differences.

Cultural Humility - Commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique. I am recognizing power dynamics and imbalances with a desire to fix those power imbalances by developing partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others.

Cultural Safety - An environment that is socially and emotionally safe, and physically safe for people. A space where there is no denial of their identity, who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together.

Understanding and Putting Aside Bias

Bias is an inclination, prejudice, preference or tendency towards or against a person, group, thing, idea or belief. Biases are usually unfair or prejudicial and are often based on stereotypes rather than knowledge or experience.

One of the challenges in using a strength-based approach to families is that it forces us to come face-to-face with our own perspectives about families. Sometimes, our own experiences and values may keep us from recognizing and appreciating genuine strengths in families that are different from ours.

It can be almost impossible to be completely unbiased. It is a natural human instinct to make judgments based on first impressions and pre-conceived ideas or knowledge. However, by being aware of these judgments and ensuring biases are not unconscious, we can avoid the harmful stereotyping and discriminatory practices that often result from biases.

**NAME it,
CLAIM it,
TAME IT!**



“It is not a question of whether you have a bias or not, it’s what biases do you have, how many, how bad, and how deep? But this reality is not a reason not to have courageous conversations. So, expect to make mistakes, acknowledge them but be open to what you can learn from them.” – Brene Brown