



# The Protective Factors & the PFS (Protective Factors Survey)

## **FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention**

*A service of the Children's Bureau and a member of the T/TA network*

Welcome: Candace Novak

Presenters: Casandra Firman and Alicia Luckie

**To join the call, dial 1-978-964-0031, pass code: 2549108#**

**Your phone will be on mute until the lines are opened for questions.**



# Overview

- Risk/Protective Factors
- The Protective Factors Survey (PFS)
  - Development
  - Administration
- The PFS Database
- Q & A



# Protective/Risk Factors

- There is no single cause of child maltreatment
- many risk factors are commonly associated with maltreatment
- a number of protective factors to reduce the occurrence of child maltreatment



# Risk Factors

- Four Categories of Risk Factors
  - Parent Factors
  - Family Factors
  - Child Factors
  - Environmental Factors



# Parent or Caregiver Factors

- Lack of Parenting Skills
  - (Immaturity, absence of nurturing and effective parenting skills, limited knowledge of child development)
- Alcohol and Substance Abuse
  - Approximately 40% of confirmed cases of child maltreatment involve the use of alcohol or drugs
- Mental Health Issues
  - including depression, poor impulse control, aggressiveness, & anxiety)



# Family Factors

- Family Structure
- Domestic Violence
- Stressful Events
  - loss of a job, physical illness, marital problems, or the death of a family member



# High Risk Children

- Age  
(Children under three)
- Temperament
- Special Needs  
(prematurity, developmental disabilities,  
medical conditions)





# Environmental Factors

- Economic Difficulties or Challenges. (Poverty, unemployment, homelessness, financial pressures, poor housing conditions, loss of job, inability to provide for family needs)
- Social Isolation  
(poor ties with family or neighbors, small or unhealthy social networks, negative or no interactions with helping agencies)
- Community Violence



# Understanding the Risk Factors

- Even though certain factors are often present where maltreatment occurs, this does not mean that the presence of these factors will always result in child abuse and neglect.
- Most people living in poverty do not harm their children.
- Most parents who were maltreated as children do not maltreat their own children.



# Protective Factors

- Factors that can protect families and promote resilience.
- A Protective Factors framework focuses on prevention strategies based on building strengths with families rather than focusing exclusively on risks and deficits.



# The Five Protective Factors

- Nurturing and Attachment
- Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development
- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Concrete Supports for Parents

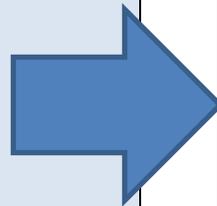
**Nurturing and Attachment**

**Knowledge of Parenting & of Child & Youth Development**

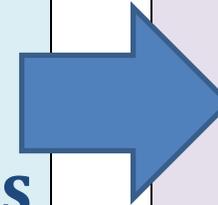
**Parental Resilience**

**Social Connections**

**Concrete Supports for Parents**



**Healthy Families & Communities**

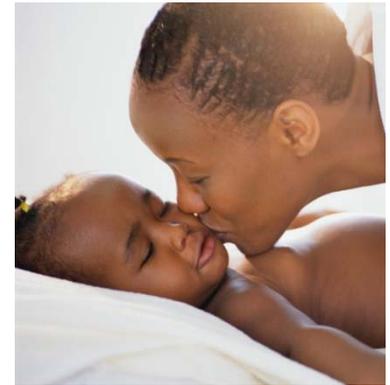


**Reduction in Child Abuse & Neglect**



# Nurturing and Attachment

- Attachment: An emotional bond and a pattern of positive interactions between a parent and child that develops over time.



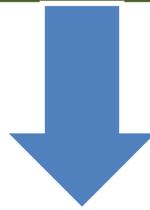
**Nurturing:** A caregiver's ability to:

- feed and protect a child
- support and encourage a child during the child's development
- to socialize and educate a child.



# Nurturing and Attachment

Parents and children have strong, warm feelings for one another.



Children develop trust that their parents will provide what they need to thrive, including love, acceptance, positive guidance, and protection.



# Knowledge of Parenting/Child and Youth Development

- Understanding and using effective child management techniques and having age-appropriate expectations for a child's abilities.
- Parents know their children best—their behaviors, interests, & abilities.
- Parents cannot be expected to be experts on all aspects of development or effective ways to support a child at each stage. Most parents need some degree of support in this area.



# Knowledge of Parenting/Child and Youth Development (cont.)

- The vast majority of parents want to provide the best possible care for their children
- They want their child to thrive and meet their developmental potential



# Parental Resilience

- Adaptive skills & strategies to persevere in times of crises. Ability to openly share positive & negative experiences & mobilize to accept, solve, & manage problems. Some characteristics:
  - Faith
  - Humor
  - Communication skills
  - Flexibility
  - Problem solving skills



# Social Connections

- Perceived informal supports (from family, friends, and neighbors) that help provide emotional support, assistance, and guidance. Formal connections, such as child-care providers, physicians, public support systems, and service providers can assist parents in seeking additional help when needed.



# Concrete Supports for Parents

- It's common sense, but controversial
- Basic resources and concrete supports such as food, clothing, housing, transportation, and access to essential services that address family-specific needs (such as childcare, health care, and mental health care)



# The Protective Factors Suirvey

- Building Protective Factors—  
How do we measure it?



# Motivation behind the PFS

- 2003- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) for Prevention unveiled. OMB measure:
  - decrease in number of 1st time victims
  
- Field-generated and OMB approved measure:
  - increase in evidence-based and informed programs and practices
  
- The Protective Factors Survey provides an additional measure of effectiveness.



# Early Stages of Development

- Work group of researchers, CBCAP State Leads and FRIENDS staff and partners
- Texas CBCAP evaluation tool was starting point
- Literature review/construction definitions
- Review of existing validated and reliable tools
- Contract with The Institute for Educational Research & Public Service at the University of Kansas



# The PFS...

- Designed for use in child abuse prevention programs
- Provides feedback for continuous improvement and evaluation purposes
- Provides agencies with the following information:
  - A snapshot of the families they serve
  - Changes in protective factors
  - Where to focus services
  - The PFS is not intended for individual assessment, placement, or diagnostic purposes

## CSSP Protective Factors

## PFS Protective Factors

Parental Resilience

Family Functioning/Resiliency

Social Connections

Social Emotional Support

Knowledge of Parenting

Knowledge of Parenting/Child  
Development

Concrete Support in Time of  
Need

Concrete Support

Social/Emotional Competence  
of Children

Nurturing and Attachment



# Testing the PFS with other measures

- All four subscales of the PFS were:
  - significantly negatively correlated with child abuse potential and stress
  - significantly positively related to optimism and the adaptive coping strategy of positive reframing
- All of the PFS subscales except Concrete Support were significantly negatively related to depression and positively related to positive affect



# PFS validity testing

- All PFS subscales were negatively related to stress and depression
- All PFS subscales were positively related to all six subscales of the Rand Health Survey
- Full reports on the testing of the PFS can be found on the FRIENDS website ([www.friendsnrc.org](http://www.friendsnrc.org))



# Instruments used in validation studies

- Brief Child Abuse Potential Inventory. (BCAPI; Ondersma, Chaffin, Simpson, & LeBreton, 2005)
- Brief Cope. (Carver, 1997)
- PRIME-MD Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ). (Spitzer, Kroenke, & Williams, 1999)
- Perceived Stress Scale. (PSS; Cohen, Karmarck, & Mermelstein, 1983)
- Physical Health and Functioning. (Hays, Sherbourne, & Mazel, 1993).



# The Survey

- [Link to Survey](#)



# Survey Administration (Preparation)

- Identify participants who may have literacy barriers and need assistance with reading
- Assign ID #s. Keep ID Key in secure location
- Staff complete “program information” on the PFS
- Create survey packets for the respondents including
  - Informed consent form
  - demographic form and the PFS (clearly marked with client ID)



# Survey Administration, Continued

- Provide alternative arrangements for non-participants
- Hand out survey packets with Client IDs clearly marked
- Introduce Survey (an introductory statement is in the Manual)
- Review instructions (using the manual text)
- Start Survey, answer questions as needed (use manual to help with paraphrasing)
- Upon completion, collect surveys



# Data Management

- Enter data
- Store raw data in secure location
- Destroy surveys within prescribed time frames

[PFS Database](#)



# Other States use of the PFS

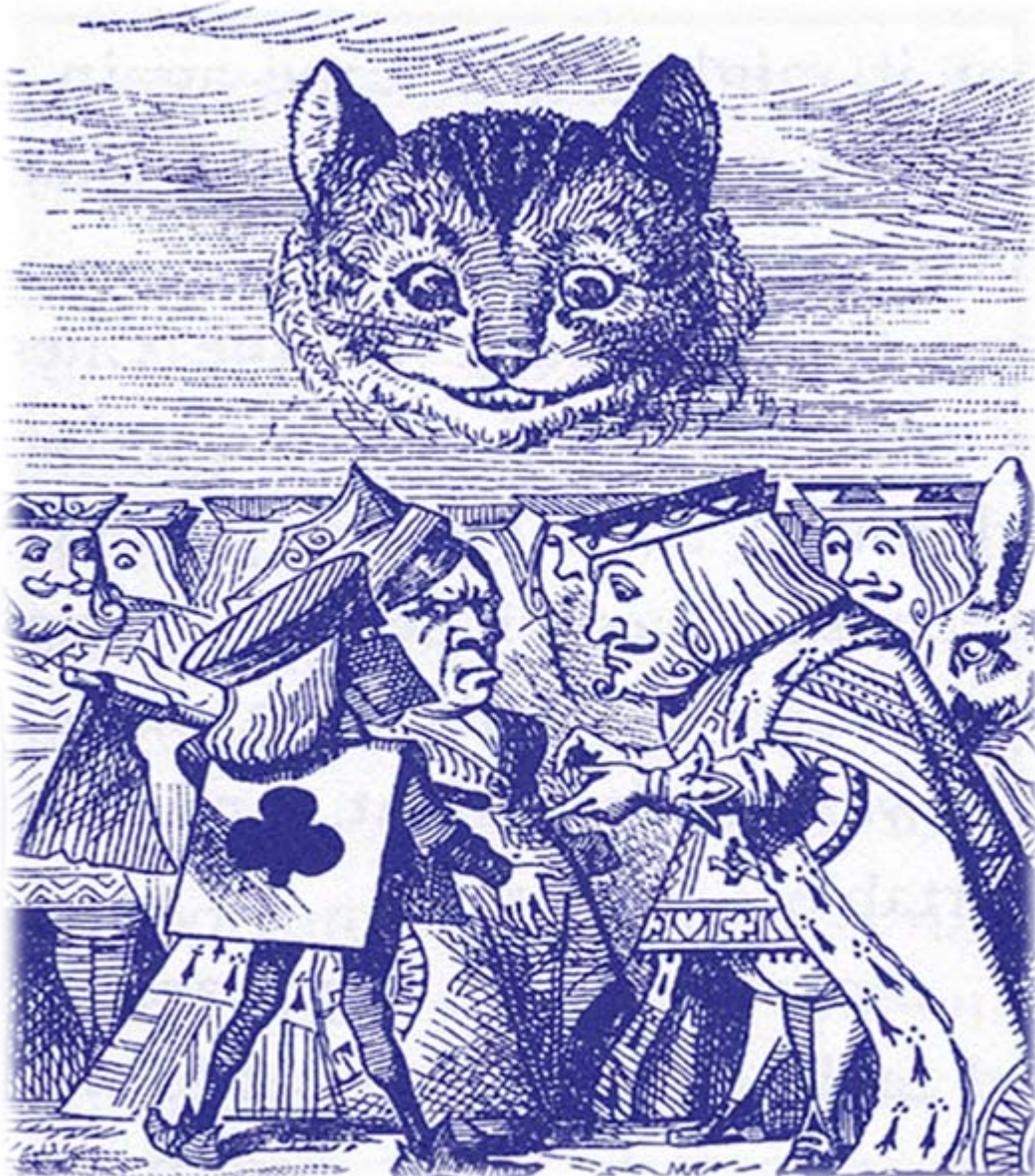
- States requiring all or most of their CBCAP programs to use the PFS (when appropriate)
- Nevada
- Washington
- Texas
- New York
- New Jersey
- New Hampshire



# The Rest of the Story

- Surveys (including the PFS) tell only part of the story.
- Use more than one evaluation measure
- Gather qualitative data.
- Collect implementation data.
- Practice CQI.

# Document your practices



“The horror of that moment,” the King went on, “I shall never, NEVER forget!”

“You will, though,” the Queen said, “if you don’t make a memorandum of it.”

Lewis Carroll,  
*Through the Looking  
Glass*



# Resources

- Training manual, PFS technical information handout, survey, reports all available at <http://www.friendsnrc.org/outcome/pfs.htm>
- FRIENDS Evaluation Toolkit, and Logic Model Builder  
<http://www.friendsnrc.org/outcome/toolkit/annot.htm>
- FRIENDS on-line courses  
<http://www.friendsnrc.org/resources/onlinelearning.htm>



# FAQ

- Why did you choose a 7-point scale?
- What is the cost of the PFS?
- Which items are appropriate for first time parents in a prenatal program?
- Are there cutoff scores?
- Is there a Spanish version of the PFS?
- Is there a retrospective version of the PFS?
- And. . . your questions



# Contact Information

## **FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention**

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[www.friendsnrc.org](http://www.friendsnrc.org)

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