

Protective Factors for Child Abuse and Neglect

Protective factors may lessen the likelihood of children being abused or neglected. Identifying and understanding protective factors are equally as important as researching risk factors.

Individual Protective Factors

- Caregivers who create safe, positive relationships with children
- Caregivers who practice nurturing parenting skills and provide emotional support
- Caregivers who can meet basic needs of food, shelter, education, and health services
- Caregivers who have a college degree or higher and have steady employment

Family Protective Factors

- Families with strong social support networks and stable, positive relationships with the people around them
- Families where caregivers are present and interested in the child
- Families where caregivers enforce household rules and engage in child monitoring
- Families with caring adults outside the family who can serve as role models or mentors

Community Protective Factors

- Communities with access to safe, stable housing
- Communities where families have access to high-quality preschool
- Communities where families have access to nurturing and safe childcare
- Communities where families have access to safe, engaging after school programs and activities
- Communities where families have access to medical care and mental health services
- Communities where families have access to economic and financial help
- Communities where adults have work opportunities with family-friendly policies

Content source: [National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention](#)