PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE...

A foundational understanding of:
- Strengthening Families approach
- Why promoting protective factors is a key prevention strategy
- How California’s Strengthening Families efforts fit into national trends and themes

Increased understanding of how to use the approach
Generated ideas about how to use three levers of change
CURRENT LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT

1. Just putting my toes in the water
2. Wading
3. Recreational swimming
4. Swimming laps
5. Getting ready for the Olympics
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES – OVERVIEW

- History/How and Why developed
- Evidence-base
- Relationship to Child Abuse and Neglect

Funded by Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES – A NEW APPROACH

_Began as a search for a new approach to child abuse prevention that:_

- Is systematic
- Is national
- Reaches millions of children
- Has impact long before abuse or neglect occur
- Promotes optimal development for all children
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES –
WHAT WE KNOW

Families thrive when protective factors are robust in their lives and communities.

The 5 protective factors:
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES – GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All families have strengths

All families need support

Focus on protective factors that all families need
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES – THE HEART OF THE APPROACH

Universally available

Focused on what’s strong, not what’s wrong

Delivered through partnerships with families
SMALL, BUT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

- Everyday actions you’re taking with families
- Part of existing programs, strategies, systems, and community opportunities
- Grounded in research, practice, and implementation knowledge
A FUNNY THING HAPPENED...

- More than 30 state teams formed
- Parent leaders emerged
- Public and private grant makers adopted the approach
- Strategic planning occurred at organizational, community, county, and state levels
- Place-based and home visiting programs integrated the approach
CALIFORNIA HIGHLIGHTS

- California Strengthening Families Round Table
- Infused into Federal Home Visiting Programs
- Included in more than 20 First 5 Plans
- Embedded in New Standards for Family Strengthening and Support
- Shaping Planning by Child Abuse Prevention Councils
The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework Logic Model

Core Functions:
- State, system, agency, program and community leaders work across systems to:
  - Build parent partnerships
  - Deepen knowledge and understanding
  - Shift practice, policy and systems
  - Ensure accountability

Program Practice:
- Programs that serve children and families:
  - Shift organization culture to value and build upon families' strengths
  - Make policy changes to support changes in worker practice
  - Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

Worker Practice:
- Individual workers:
  - Have knowledge of protective factors and skills to help families build them
  - Change their approach to relationships with parents
  - Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

Protective Factors:
- Families are supported to build:
  - Parental resilience
  - Social connections
  - Knowledge of parenting and child development
  - Concrete support in times of need
  - Social and emotional competence of children

Results:
- Strengthened families
- Optimal child development
- Reduced likelihood of child abuse and neglect

Graphics by Norma McReynolds for the National...
5 PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children
DISCUSS IN PAIRS

One of the Protective Factors that was present or lacking in your childhood

How it had an impact on you
WHAT PROGRAMS CAN DO...

PARENTAL RESILIENCE

Show parents:
They are valued
Staff has genuine concern for them
Help is available
Trust through relationship building
Extra support for those who need it
WHAT PROGRAMS CAN DO...

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

- Potluck dinners
- Sports activities for parents
- Parent education
- Help parents connect with resources
- Special outreach and activities for extended family members
WHAT PROGRAMS CAN DO...

KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Informal daily parent-staff interactions
Parent education
Lending library
WHAT PROGRAMS CAN DO...
CONCRETE SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED

Clothes closet
Food pantry
Resource board
Link to appropriate services and supports
  - Domestic violence services
  - Mental health providers
  - Substance abuse treatment
Housing assistance
Health insurance and health care
WHAT PROGRAMS CAN DO...

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

Teach children social and emotional skills

Work with parents, children and professionals to address challenging behaviors

Help parents appreciate their child’s strengths

Offer arts programs
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR WORK?

The approach aligns with what you are already doing.

Use new shared language to describe what you do:

• Intentionally build protective factors
• Partner with families
• Tools and resources are available
NEXT STEPS

What is your small, but significant change? (What’s one thing you will commit to do?)
THANK YOU