



# **Focusing on Youth Well-Being: New Information about Applying a Protective and Promotive Factors Approach for Adolescents in Foster Care**

**Teleconference/Webinar  
Wednesday, February 20, 2013  
3:00-4:30 PM EST**

A stylized white silhouette of a family consisting of two adults and two children, set within a white outline of a house. The background is a solid purple color.

**NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER  
FOR PERMANENCY AND  
FAMILY CONNECTIONS  
at the Hunter College  
Silberman School of Social Work**

The logo features a blue silhouette of a child's head in profile, facing right, with a red and white striped American flag behind it.

a service of the Children's  
Bureau – ACF/DHHS and  
member of the T&TA Network

# Webinar Overview

- Welcome and Webinar Introduction
- Introduction to Center for the Study of Social Policy
- Overview of CSSP's Protective and Promotive Factors Framework
- The **YOUTH**RIVE Protective and Promotive Factors
- Implications and Opportunities for Child Welfare
- Questions and Answers
- Closing Remarks

# Focusing on Well-Being: Developing a Protective and Promotive Factors Framework for Youth in Foster Care

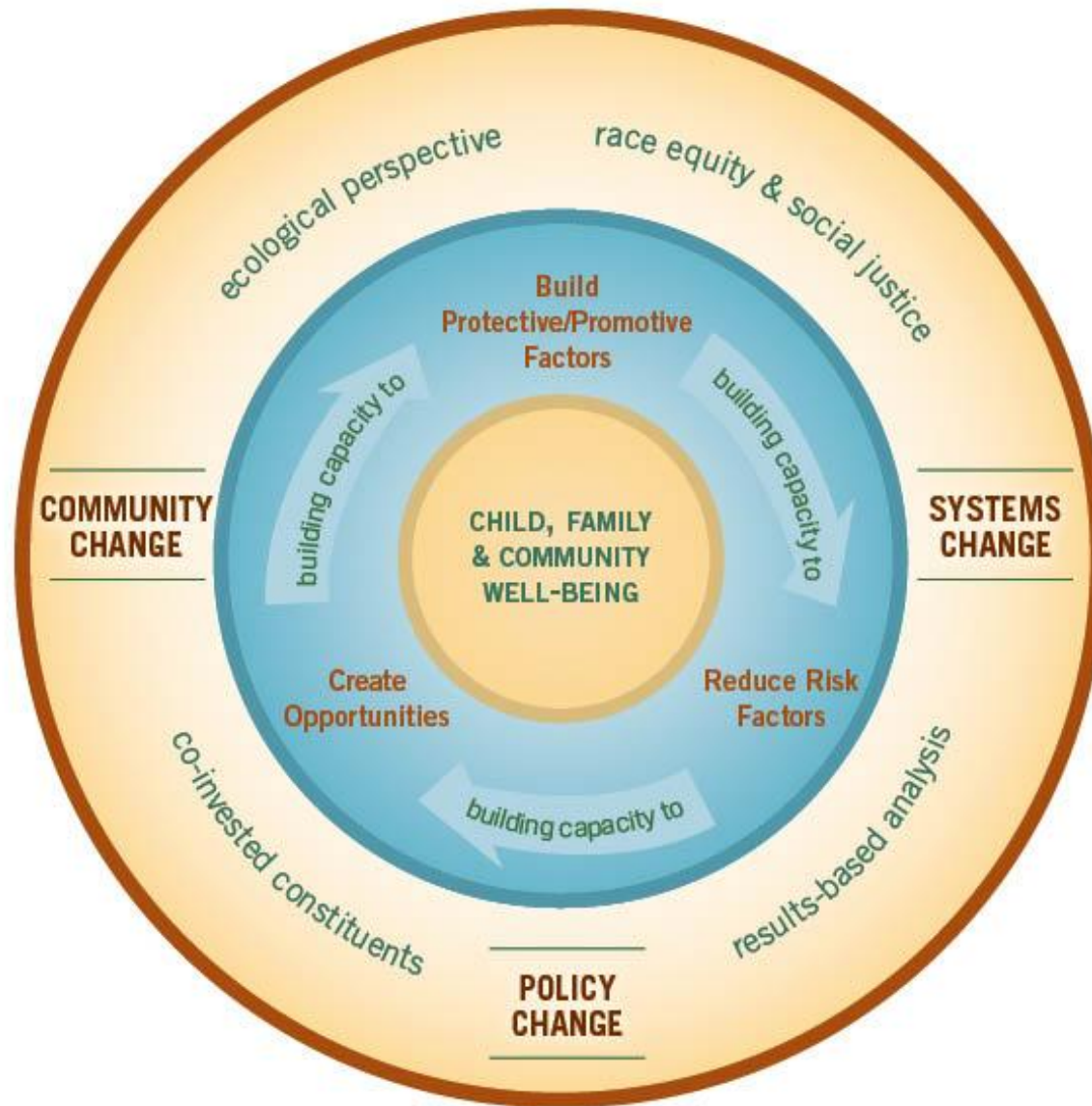
A Webinar for the  
National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections

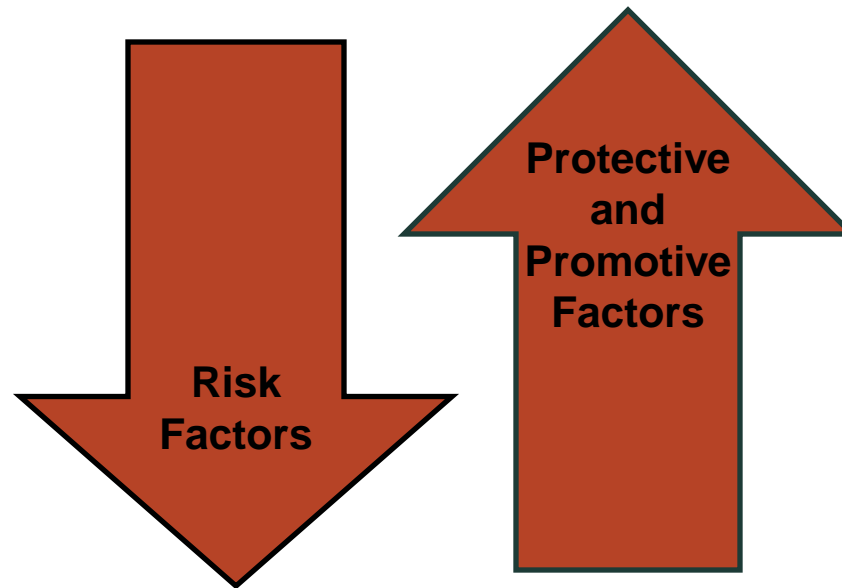
February 20, 2013

Presented by: Susan Notkin and Charlyn Harper Browne



# CSSP's Theory of Change





**Protective Factors:** conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that **mitigate or eliminate risk**

**Promotive Factors:** conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that **actively enhance well-being**

# Federal Mandate on Safety, Permanency and Well-Being

## Safety:

- Children/Youth are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect
- Children/Youth are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate

## Permanency:

- Children/Youth have permanency and stability in their living arrangements
- Continuity of family relationships and connections are preserved for children

## Well-Being:

- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children/Youth receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs
- Children/Youth receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs



# ACF

Administration  
for Children  
and Families

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families

1. Log No: ACYF-CB-IM-12-05    2. Issuance Date: May 14, 2012

3. Originating Office: Children's Bureau

4. Key Words: Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Projects

## Title IV-E Child Welfare Demonstration Projects

**TO:** State and Tribal Agencies Administering or Supervising Administration of IV-E of the Social Security Act

**SUBJECT:** Child Welfare Demonstration Projects for Fiscal Years (FYs) 2012- 2014

**LEGAL AND RELATED REFERENCES:** Title IV-B of the Social Security Act  
Title IV-E of the Social Security Act  
Section 1130 of the Social Security Act, as amended by Public Law (P.L.) 112-34, the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Appendix D)

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Information Memorandum (IM) is to announce the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Department) inviting title IV-E agencies to submit proposals for new child welfare waiver demonstration projects for consideration in FYs 2012 – 2014. This IM informs interested parties of: (1) the procedures the Department expects applicants to employ in involving the public in the development of proposed demonstration projects under Section 1130 of the Social Security Act (the Act); (2) the procedures the Department will follow in reviewing demonstration proposals; and (3) the principles and procedures the Department will follow in exercising its discretion in awarding demonstration projects under the authority in Section 1130(a) of the Act.

**Due Date:** For FY 2012 demonstrations, proposals are due by July 9, 2012. Proposals must be submitted electronically to the following address: [cwwaivers@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:cwwaivers@acf.hhs.gov)

It is the intent of the Department to make proposals available to the public. Therefore, to facilitate posting on the Department's website, proposals must be submitted in the format of a Microsoft Word document that was created in Word and then saved as a PDF (but not as a PDF).

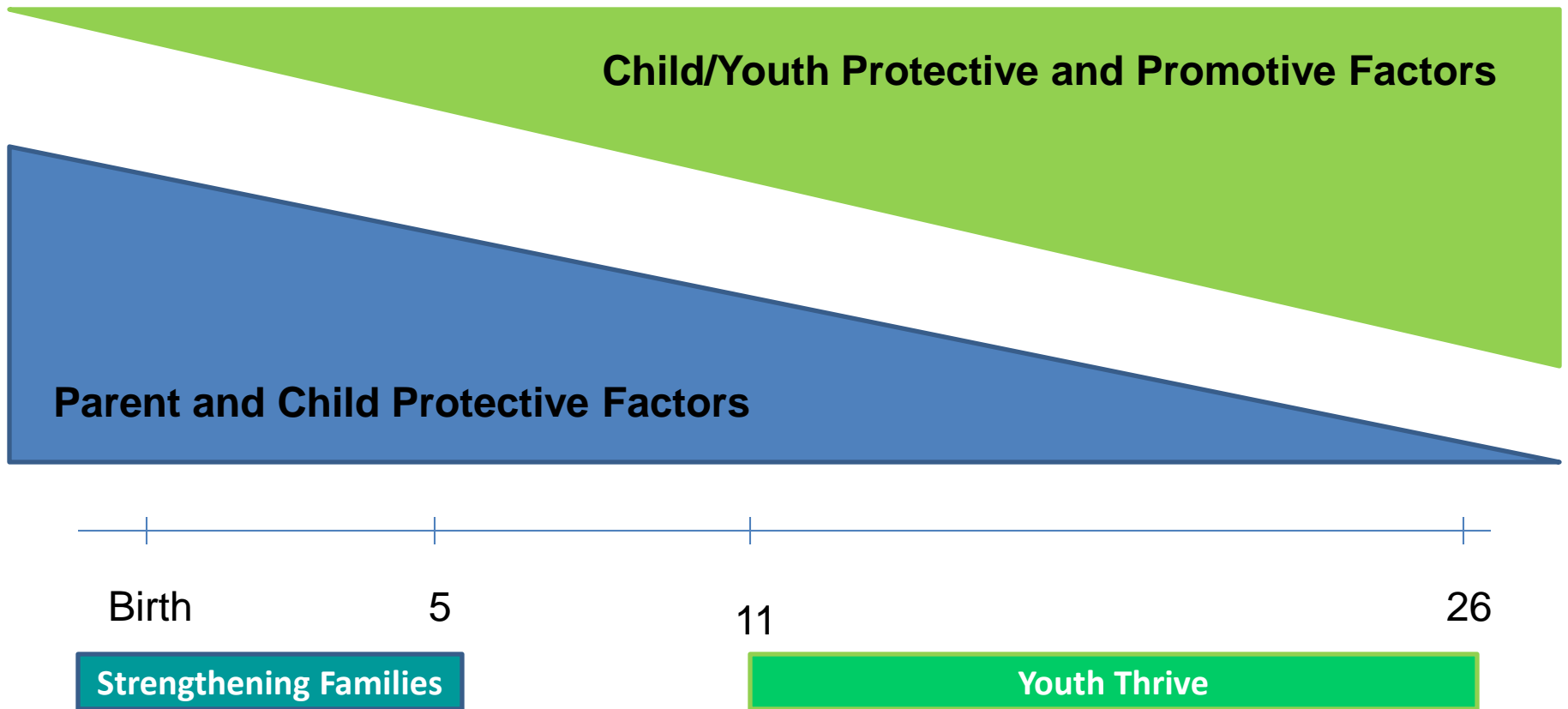
## Opportunity to Reframe Child Welfare Projects & Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Bryan Samuels, Commissioner  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families



# A Protective and Promotive Factors Frame Across Development





# Goal of **YOUTH**THRIVE

To examine how foster youth can be supported in ways that advance healthy development and well-being and reduce the impact of negative life experiences

# Getting Started

Scan the lifespan development research:

- What does healthy development and well-being look like across the lifespan?
- How is healthy development and well-being achieved across the lifespan?
- How can adolescents be supported to advance healthy development and well-being?

# Key Findings

- Adolescent Brain Development
- Trauma and Toxic Stress
  - Complex trauma
  - Ambiguous loss
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Resiliency
- Positive Youth Development
- Risk, Protective, and Promotive Factors

# YOUTH THRIVE™

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

## INCREASE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS

- Youth resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of adolescent development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Cognitive and social-emotional competence

## REDUCE RISK FACTORS

- Psychological stressors
- Inadequate or negative relationships with family members, adults outside youth's family and peers
- Insufficient or inadequate opportunities for positive growth and development
- Unsafe, unstable, inequitable environments

## DYNAMIC OUTCOMES HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT & WELL-BEING FOR YOUTH

- Physically and emotionally healthy
- Hopeful, optimistic, compassionate, curious, resilient identity
- Supportive family and social networks
- Ability to form and sustain caring, committed relationships
- Success in school and workplace
- Service to community or society

# Dynamic Outcomes

**YOUTH THRIVE**

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

- Physically and emotionally healthy
- Hopeful, optimistic, compassionate, curious, resilient identity
- Supportive family and social networks
- Ability to form and sustain caring, committed relationships
- Success in school and workplace
- Service to community or society

# Risk Factors

YOUTH THRIVE™

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

- Psychological stressors
- Inadequate or negative relationships with family members, adults outside youth's family and peers
- Insufficient or inadequate opportunities for positive growth and development
- Unsafe, unstable, inequitable environments

# Protective & Promotive Factors

**YOUTH THRIVE**

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

- Youth Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Adolescent Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competence



# YOUTH THRIVE™

## Major Premise

Healthy development and well-being cannot be explained simply as mitigating, coping with, or eliminating risk.

### **Protective + Promotive Factors:**

- Interdependent factors that both mitigate risk and contribute to healthy development and well-being for youth
- Increase the probability of positive, adaptive, and resilient outcomes, even in the face of risk and adversity.

# YOUTH RIVE Protective & Promotive Factors

## Youth Resilience



# Stressors & Stress

**Stressor:** real or perceived pressure; event or experience that causes stress

- Typical events and life changes
- Unexpected events
- Individual factors
- Social factors
- Community, societal, environmental conditions

**Stress:** feeling overwhelmed by an event or experience

# Youth & Stress

**How** youth respond to stressors is much more important than the stressor itself in determining their outcomes.

# Youth & Stress

- The extent to which stressful events have lasting adverse effects is determined by:
  - youth's response to the stressor
  - past experiences
  - availability of a supportive adult
- A youth's ability to cope with stress in the early years has consequences for physical and mental health throughout life.

# Youth Resilience

- **Resilience:** the process of managing stress and functioning well even when faced with challenges, adversity, and trauma.
- Does not always solve problems, remove adversity, or undo trauma

# Youth Who Demonstrate Resilience



- Call forth their inner strength to positively meet challenges, manage adversities, heal the effects of trauma, and thrive given their unique characteristics and circumstances.
- Have a trusting relationship with a caring and competent adult who provides positive guidance and promotes high expectations.



# Youth & Resilience

- Youth need some experience in managing stressful situations
- Not an invulnerability to stress and adversity
- The promotion of resilience in youth related to
  - changing attitudes of adults in their lives
  - various internal characteristics
  - various external characteristics of families, schools, and communities
  - deliberate policies, practices, and interventions (e.g., trauma-informed care)

# YOUTH THRIVE<sup>™</sup> Protective & Promotive Factors



# Social Connections

- The availability and quality of social connections are important considerations in the lives of youth.

# Youths' Social Connections

- Physically and emotionally safe, stable and supportive environments including equitable schools, communities and social institutions
- Healthy, supportive, caring relationships with family and other adults who provide positive advice; promote high expectations; and set developmentally appropriate limits, rules and monitoring
- Healthy, supportive, caring relationships with peers and close friends
- Opportunities for constructive engagement in family, school, community and social institutions

# Benefits

- **Emotional support**  
(e.g., affirming skills)
- **Informational support**  
(e.g., explaining puberal changes)
- **Instrumental support**  
(e.g., providing transportation)
- **Spiritual support**  
(e.g., providing hope and encouragement)

# High Levels of Social Support

## Associated with:

- Feelings of Security/Connectedness
- Self-Confidence
- Sense of Purpose
- Future Orientation
- Timely Help-Seeking
- Lower levels of anger, anxiety, depression
- Buffering youth from stress

# Social Isolation & Loneliness

## Associated with:

- Disengaged youth
- Depression
- Increased likelihood of psychopathology/sociopathy
- Antisocial activities

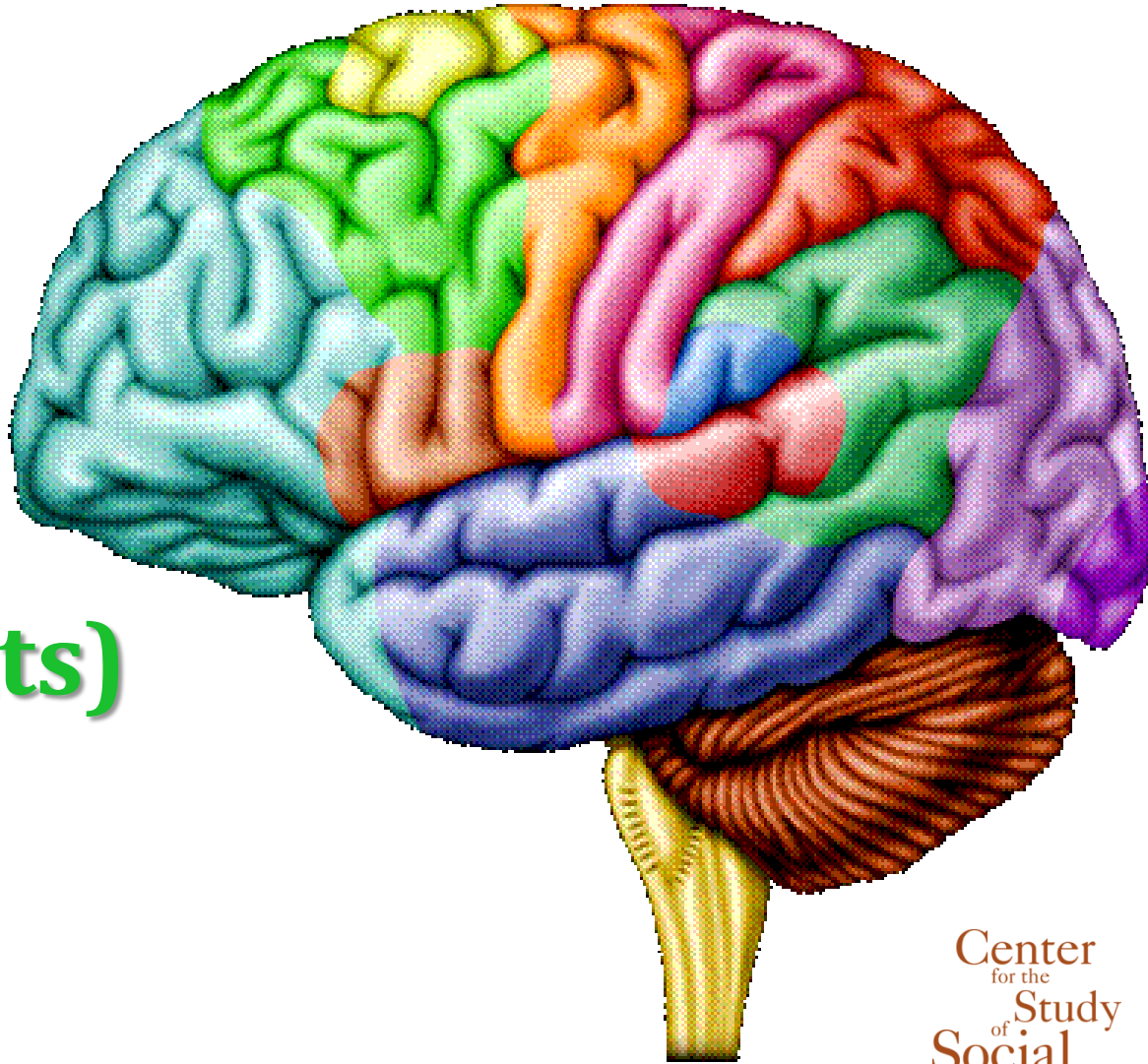


# Two Essential Elements

- Opportunities to create and strengthen sustainable, positive social connections
- Experiences that foster a sense of connectedness between the youth and *at least one other healthy adult* so meaningful discourse may occur

# YOUTH THRIVE™ Protective & Promotive Factors

**Knowledge  
of Adolescent  
Development  
(Youth & Adults)**



# Knowledge of Adolescent Development

## Youth and adults have accurate information:

- adolescent biopsychosocial development with particular attention to brain development
- ways to promote healthy development
- trauma and toxic stress
- preventing or mitigating negative outcomes
- developmentally appropriate ways of connecting with you
- **Recognize that all youth have strengths**

# Understanding Development

- Development involves several processes:  
biological, psychological, cognitive,  
social
- Development influenced by total ecology/  
life situation in multiple contexts:
  - \* family
  - \* school
  - \* cultural
  - \* gender
  - \* neighborhood
  - \* socioeconomic status
  - \* sociopolitical
  - \* cohort

# Understanding Development (cont.)

- The person within the context; how person “makes meaning” out of their experiences
- The resources a person needs to develop successfully vary by age/stage
- Critical life events: turning points in lifespan
- The study of development must include data and theories from numerous academic fields

# Developmental Neuroscience

A field that examines:

- Brain development across the lifespan
- Impact of environmental factors (e.g., toxic stress/trauma) on neurodevelopmental processes, physical health, and mental health

# Key Understandings in Developmental Neuroscience

- Much evidence points to the central importance of prenatal and early postnatal (birth-3) brain development
- Early experiences affect the quality of brain architecture
- Brain development is life-long
- Adolescence is a time of profound change in brain structure and function

# Adolescent Brain Development

- Increased **prefrontal cortex** maturation begins *gradually* and continues into adulthood
- Functions of the prefrontal cortex:
  - impulse control
  - setting priorities, organizing, and planning
  - decision making
  - sensitivity to feedback
  - self-control, self-regulation
  - initiating appropriate behavior
  - inhibiting inappropriate behavior



- *Rapid* changes in limbic system, related to
  - emotionality and mood state
  - reward/pleasure seeking
  - processing social information
- Gap in timing of gradual prefrontal cortex maturation and more rapidly developing limbic system
- Positive experiences with and guidance from caring adults and institutions are essential in building complex adaptive brains

# Trauma and Toxic Stress

- Strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity without adequate adult support
  - violence and exposure to violence
  - abuse, neglect, abandonment
  - accumulated burdens of economic hardship
  - betrayal of a trusted person or institution
- Disrupts brain development
- May induce hypersensitivity to stressors
- Increase risk for psychopathology and physical illness

# Impact of Trauma and Toxic Stress

- Problems with trust, autonomy, initiative
- Difficulty with independence, intimacy, and self-care
- Patterns of intense, unstable relationships and interactions
- Interferes with cognitive development
- Difficulty interpreting and identifying emotional responses

# Other Important Knowledge Areas

- Signs indicating a youth may have a trauma history and needs special help.
- Cultural factors that influence the perceptions of youth
- Factors that promote or inhibit healthy youth outcomes

# Youth Need Guidance About and Experiences that Enable them to:

- Adjust to and accept their changing body
- Make decisions about sexual behavior
- Engage in healthy behaviors such as exercising within one's physical means
- Engage in positive risk-taking and avoid negative risk-taking
- Build and sustain healthy relationships with peers and adults
- Develop abstract thinking and improved problem-solving skills
- Forge a personally satisfying identity

# Youth Need Guidance About and Experiences that Enable them to:

- Gain independence from parents and other adults while maintaining strong connections with them
- Engage in socially responsible behavior
- Identify interests, develop goals, and seek to excel
- Develop mature values and behavioral controls used to assess acceptable/unacceptable behaviors
- Understand one's personal developmental history
- Learn to manage stress, including learning from failure
- Learn essential life skills
- Deepen cultural knowledge
- Explore spirituality

# YOUTH RIVE™ Protective & Promotive Factors

Tutoring



Youth Programs



Counseling



Legal Services



Concrete Support in Times of Need

# Concrete Support in Times of Need

## **Purpose:**

To ensure youth receive the basic necessities everyone deserves in order to grow and thrive, as well as specialized academic, psychoeducational, health, mental health, social, legal, or employment services.



# Identifying and Finding Help

**Seeking Help = Self-Advocacy**

A Step Toward

Building Resilience

# Provision of Concrete Support

## Involves:

- Understanding a youth's needs
- Recognizing their own personal resources for meeting needs
- Knowing where and how to access services and goods
- Providing timely and relevant assistance
- Being treated with dignity

# Trauma-Informed Care

- Recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in a person's life
- Paradigm shift from:  
"What's wrong with you?"  
to  
"What has happened to you?"

# Using a Positive Youth Development Approach

- Youth must be understood in their own terms
- All youth have strengths
- Although challenges and adversities exist, youth development is more than overcoming deficits and risk
- Youth can overcome adversity and thrive, but they must have protective factors embedded in social institutions

# Youths' Concrete Support

- Opportunities for additional skill building (e.g., tutoring, counseling)
- Crisis assistance (e.g., mental health, substance abuse, intimate partner violence, health, housing, workforce development, legal, recreation, respite)
- Psychoeducational assistance (e.g., cognitive, behavioral and academic assessment and services)

# YOUTH RIVE™ Protective & Promotive Factors

## Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competence

Exercise



Healthy relationships



Self-regulation



Positive emotions



Productive habits/goals

# Youths' Developmental Competencies

## Preparation for developmental transitions influenced by:

- Earlier developmental histories
- Nature of current relationships and contexts

## To navigate developmental transitions, youth need:

- Nurturing adult support
- Wholesome experiences

# Cognitive & Social-Emotional Competence

Cognitive competence and social-emotional competence are essential developmental tasks in adolescence because they lay the foundation for forming an independent identity and having a productive, responsible, and satisfying adulthood.



# Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competencies

- **Executive functioning**
  - Cognitive flexibility
  - Future orientation
  - Cognitive self-regulation
  - Emotional self-regulation
  - Behavioral self-regulation
  - Planning
  - Working memory
- **Personal Agency**

# Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competencies (cont.)

## • Sense of Self

- Self-awareness
- Self-concept
- Self-esteem
- Self-efficacy
- Self-improvement and mastery
- Self-compassion

## • Character Strengths

## • Positive Emotions

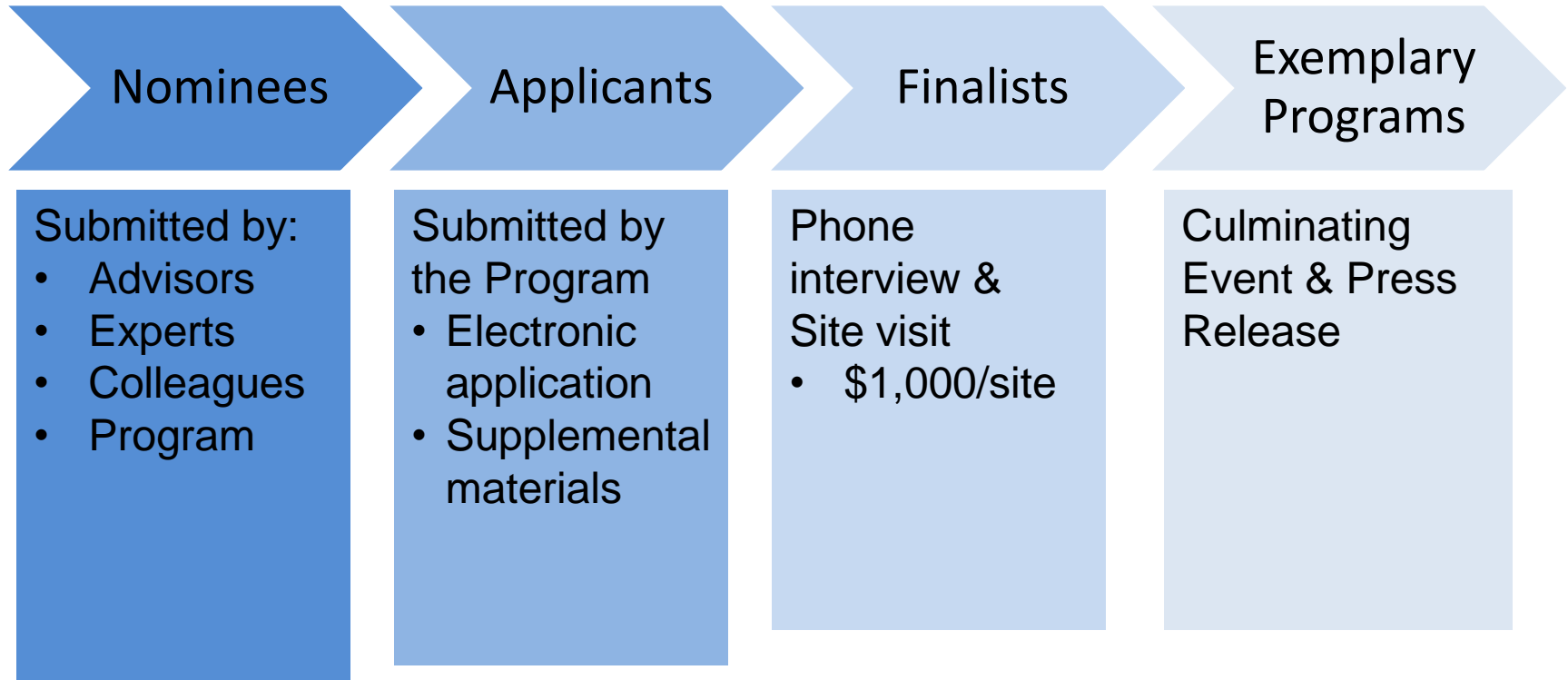
We believe the **YOUTH THRIVE** framework

Will contribute to an understanding of how all youth, in general, and foster youth, in particular, can be supported in ways that advance healthy development and well-being and reduce the impact of negative life experiences.

# Advancing the Work

- A national scan for exemplary programs
- Youth Thrive Menu
- Jurisdiction Implementation: New Jersey Department of Children and Families

# Youth Thrive Exemplary Program Selection Process



# YOUTH THRIVE™

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

## Using a Protective and Promotive Factors Approach in Child Welfare Practice

Prevention and Diversion

Intake and Investigations

Youth In-Home

**Youth Out of Home**

Post-Placement

Key Opportunities for Out-of-Home Child Protective Services	Examples of Building Protective and Promotive Factors
<p><b>Risk Management</b></p>	<p><i>Revise policies and practices that directly or indirectly impede healthy youth development, including those that aim to eliminate developmentally appropriate risk-taking behaviors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow youth, including young parents, on a case by case basis and without background checks to participate in over-night stays, school dances, sports-related or religious trips</li> <li>• Allow youth on a case by case basis to utilize multiple forms of transportation including public transportation, self-transportation and car rides with peers or adults</li> <li>• Eliminate contact and visitation lists and replace with agreed upon no-contact and visitation list based on safety concerns, if appropriate</li> <li>• Prohibit locks on refrigerators</li> <li>• Allow youth to date and to participate in outings with developmentally appropriate limits, rules and monitoring</li> </ul> <p><i>Ensure that systemic responses (i.e. privileges and penalties) to youth exhibiting developmentally appropriate risk-taking behaviors are based on an understanding of adolescent brain development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redefine what constitutes critical incidents and consequences to reflect developmentally appropriate risk-taking behaviors in adolescents (e.g. curfew violations, smoking, drinking, running away, cutting classes)</li> <li>• Prohibit the withdrawal of family visits and other contact</li> <li>• View “incidents” and “crises” as opportunities to assess and address the underlying needs of the youth</li> </ul>

# New Jersey Department of Children and Families' Task Force on Helping Youth Thrive in Placement

The screenshot shows the website for the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. At the top, there is a search bar and a navigation menu with tabs for DCF Home, Families, Adolescents, Women, Providers & Stakeholders, and Advocacy. The main content area is titled "Task Force on Helping Youth Thrive in Placement" and includes a breadcrumb trail: Home > Providers & Stakeholders > Public Notices > DCF NonProfit Information Center > Task Force on Helping Youth Thrive in Placement. The page features a left sidebar with a table of contents, a main text area with two paragraphs, a "Related Regulations" section with a list of N.J.A.C. codes and links, and a "Youth Thrive Framework" section with a diagram and two links.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Search All of NJ Submit

DCF Home Families Adolescents Women Providers & Stakeholders Advocacy

Contracting Information  
Children's System of Care Services Providers  
Licensing  
Public Notices  
DCF NonProfit Information Center  
Listing of Previously Issued RFPs  
Public Boards/Task Force  
Community Resources

Home > Providers & Stakeholders > Public Notices > DCF NonProfit Information Center > Task Force on Helping Youth Thrive in Placement

### Task Force on Helping Youth Thrive in Placement

DCF is committed to ensuring that children and youth have the opportunity to maximize connections with the important people in their lives and to fully participate in their schools, neighborhoods and communities – even when they are in out of home placement. In essence, DCF wants children and youth involved with us to have the most normal childhood and adolescence possible.

DCF is convening a Task Force on Helping Youth Thrive in Placement (HYTIP) which will be charged with studying these opportunities and making recommendations for change. HYTIP will utilize the Youth Thrive™ protective and promotive factors for healthy development and wellbeing as the framework for this change effort. This will include engaging in a broad discussion that identifies the specific areas (i.e. licensing regulations, contracting, service models, training, resource availability, etc.) where work will be required to achieve our goals. The Task Force will also develop recommendations in an interim report to be reviewed by the DCF Commissioner. Priorities will be identified and workgroups will be established to begin work towards infusing the Youth Thrive™ framework into our practice. Jessica Trombetta, Director of the DCF Office of Adolescent Services, and Tony Conover, a member of the Statewide Youth Advisory Board, will co-chair this task force.

Key regulations have been written and enforced to ensure that all children and youth residing in foster care, treatment programs, and transitional housing have their safety, well-being, and case/treatment goals met. These regulations promote contact with family and friends and access to the community for recreation, education, and employment. DCF recognizes, however, that opportunities exist to enhance and update these regulations, and our practice overall, in order to best serve our children and youth residing in an out of home care setting. Thus, DCF will need to embark on a significant change effort that is focused on reviewing and strengthening our practice culture, regulatory, and contracting processes.

#### Related Regulations

N.J.A.C. 10.128	<a href="#">Manual of Requirements for Children's Group Homes</a>
N.J.A.C. 10.127	<a href="#">Manual of Requirement for Residential Child Care Facilities</a>
N.J.A.C. 10.122C	<a href="#">Manual of Requirements for Resource Family Parents</a>
N.J.A.C. 10.122B	<a href="#">Resource Care</a>
N.J.A.C. 10.122D	<a href="#">Services for Children in Out-of-Home Placement</a>

#### Youth Thrive Framework

[Youth Thrive Overview](#)

[Youth Thrive Protective and Promotive Factors](#)

# For Additional Information

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# Questions ?????????

*Press \*1  
on your phone to ask a question  
or type a question using the  
chat function on your  
computer.*

# After the Event

- A feedback survey will be emailed to all participants. We appreciate your feedback!

- Materials for this event are currently posted on the NRCPFC website at:  
<http://www.nrcpfc.org/teleconferences/2013-02-20.html>

- The event will be archived on Wednesday 2/27/13 at:  
<http://www.nrcpfc.org/teleconferences/archives.html>

- Sign up for Weekly Update, NRCPFC's weekly e-newsletter, to receive updates and announcements about future events.

- [www.nrcpfc.org](http://www.nrcpfc.org)



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