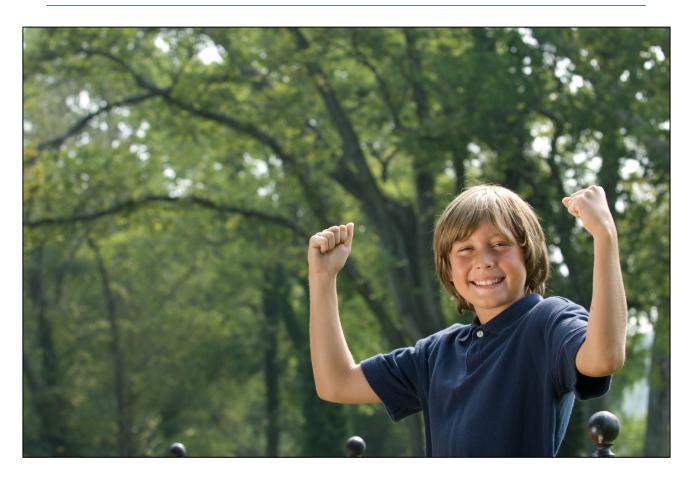THE PROTECTIVE FACTORS
AN E-BOOK SERIES FOR SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAMS

An Introduction to the Six Protective Factors

From The Clearinghouse on Supervised Visitation

The Institute for Family Violence Studies
College of Social Work
Florida State University
http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu

About the Clearinghouse on Supervised Visitation

The Clearinghouse on Supervised Visitation (Clearinghouse) is a project of the Institute for Family Violence Studies (IFVS) at Florida State University's College of Social Work. The work of the IFVS increases the knowledge base on effective interventions for family violence and child maltreatment. The IFVS also provides technical assistance and training for family time/visitation service providers and serves as a resource for professionals and for the general public. The Clearinghouse is funded by the Florida Department of Children and Families.

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INTRODUCTION

The core goal of the Florida Department of Children and Families is the prevention of child abuse and maltreatment. Many different factors may increase a family's risk for child abuse and maltreatment. These factors are known as *risk factors*. In order to effectively prevent child abuse and maltreatment, it is important to understand the risk factors present within a family that could lead to abuse.

These risk factors can include:

- Poverty and lack of resources
- Stress
- Lack of support
- History of abuse
- Lack of parenting education
- Substance abuse
- A parent or child having any physical, cognitive, or emotional disabilities

There are *six protective factors* that have been identified that reduce the likelihood that violence will occur within a family. These protective factors can make the difference between a resilient family and one that copes with problems poorly. The protective factors help to create strong families. Families that practice these six factors can experience less stress over time and cope better with stress when it is unavoidable. Individuals who work with children and families are in a unique position to teach parents about the six protective factors and how to use them to create resilient and strong families.

These protective factors include:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of child developmental stages
- Parental resilience
- Supportive social connections
- Access to concrete community support
- Social and emotional competence of children

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Objectives

This training contains six E-Books. There is one E-Book for each protective factor. After completing the trainings, social service providers and supervised visitation personnel should:

- Know what the six protective factors found in healthy families are
- Be able to recognize when a protective factor is present in a family
- Understand how supervised visitation personnel can use their unique position to help families develop and/or strengthen each of the six protective factors
- Learn how children benefit from the presence of each of the protective factors
- Be able to work with families to develop strategies that promote the protective factors
- Understand how to incorporate culturally competent strategies when assisting families in developing the protective factors

Content

Each E-Book will focus on <u>one</u> of the protective factors. In every E-Book, there will be similar sections, including:

- An introduction to the protective factor

- Information on the importance of the protective factor

- Strategies for helping families develop and/or strengthen the specific protective factor

- Case examples with questions and answers to help illustrate the protective factor in a realistic setting (i.e., what it "looks like")

- Information specific to supervised visitation staff and how staff can help families develop and/or strengthen the specific protective factor

- Notes on cultural competency

A Note on Cultural Competency…

No two families are exactly alike. Keep in mind that **cultural diversity exists in many forms**, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical and mental abilities, level of acculturation to the dominant culture, and immigration status. **Each of these groups contains subgroups or subcultures.**

Throughout the E-Books in the Protective Factors series, we will refer to what social service providers can do when working with *parents*. However, we also acknowledge that social service providers work with many types of caregivers; thus, these trainings apply to work with caregivers as well.

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Next Step

Read about *Nurturing and Attachment*, the first protective factor in the E-Book Series for Supervised Visitation Programs.