



ARIZONA

strengthening families™

A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

ARIZONA STRENGTHENING FAMILIES: STATE PROFILE

Infrastructure

Arizona Strengthening Families is led by [Prevent Child Abuse Arizona](#), a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening families and protecting children through collaboration, education, and advocacy. The [Arizona Strengthening Families](#) project coordinates trainings delivered by certified Strengthening Families Protective Factors trainers statewide, and connects and supports certified trainers. Through funding and collaboration with the Arizona Department of Health Services – [Strong Families AZ](#) and the Arizona [Department of Child Safety Office of Prevention](#), there are over 70 Strengthening Families certified trainers in Arizona.

Parent Partnerships

Several Strengthening Families certified trainers are parents, and some of these parents work as peer supporters and mentors. Strengthening Families certified trainers are able to access coaching support and participate in a community of practice through the Arizona Strengthening Families project of Prevent Child Abuse Arizona, funded by the Department of Child Safety Office of Prevention. Through community of practice discussions and coaching, certified trainers are provided support to adapt their trainings to parent audiences. Parent input was also incorporated into the creation of other projects founded upon the protective factors framework in Arizona, including Lean On Me AZ and Flourishing Families (described below).

Deepening Knowledge and Understanding

[Lean On Me AZ](#) is a project that shares and promotes community-generated tips, tools, and messages to help people create a culture of parent support by building protective factors in everyday ways. The project grew out of the work of *Collective Impact for Child Safety and Well-Being*, a group dedicated to the vision that all children and families throughout Arizona are safe, stable, and flourishing. Lean On Me AZ shares and promotes community-generated tips, tools, and messages on how to create a culture of parent support by strengthening protective factors in everyday ways.

[Flourishing Families](#) is an activity-based curriculum that helps those who work with families teach parents about the five Strengthening Families Protective Factors and how to build them. The curriculum was designed by five Strengthening Families certified trainers, and reviewed/edited by more than twenty Arizona parents. Flourishing Families is centered on engaging parents in self-reflection. Practitioners use the curriculum to help parents recognize their thoughts, feelings, perceptions, values, and behaviors so that they can intentionally build their strengths to be the kind of parent that they wish to be.

[Prescott Woman Magazine](#), a quarterly local magazine, features a column based on the protective factors in every publication.

Strengthening Families

Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors:

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

Using the Strengthening Families framework, more than 30 states are shifting policy and practice to help programs working with children and families focus on protective factors. States apply the Strengthening Families approach in early childhood, child welfare, child abuse prevention and other child and family serving systems.

Nationally, the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) coordinates Strengthening Families and works with more than a dozen national partner organizations and federal partners to create a new vision in which communities, families, institutions, service systems and organizations:

- Focus on protective and promotive factors
- Recognize and support parents as decision-makers and leaders
- Value the culture and unique assets of each family
- Are mutually responsible for better outcomes for children, youth and families



Implementation Checklist

Strengthening Families is used in state or local early childhood systems planning efforts	✓
Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) efforts include a focus on protective factors	✓
Strengthening Families is integrated in a Quality Rating and Improvement System for early care and education	✓
Strengthening Families is included in the state's Home Visiting Plan	✓
Strengthening Families is being implemented in the child welfare system	✓
Strengthening Families efforts are linked to work to advance equity, anti-racism, and social justice	✓
The state's work around Adverse Childhood Experiences includes a focus on protective factors and positive childhood experiences	✓

Learn More

www.pcaaz.org/strengtheningfamilies

State Contact

Claire Louge
Executive Director
Prevent Child Abuse Arizona
claire@pcaaz.org
(928) 445-5038

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Shifting Practice, Policies and Systems

The Protective Factors Framework was used as a guide for designing the work of *Collective Impact for Child Safety and Well-Being*, including a 'passport' project designed to help families navigate and organize the resources they access, and the 'chat bot' project, a text-message based resource referral network. The messages designed through the Lean On Me AZ project, which was based on the Protective Factors Framework, are also being used to inform and drive Arizona's participation in Thriving Families, Safer Children, a national initiative striving to create robust child well-being systems throughout the United States.

Ensuring Accountability

Trainings offered on the protective factors framework through Arizona Strengthening Families have a common participant feedback survey to gauge the effectiveness and relevance of trainings, and to help trainers improve their delivery. Lean On Me AZ and Flourishing Families, two projects founded upon the Protective Factors Framework, have been informed or reviewed by a diverse group of parents to ensure inclusive language and broad cultural application.

Evolving Work

The Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework is an approach used by Prevent Child Abuse Arizona and its partners to effectively articulate the role and meaning of prevention, especially primary and secondary prevention. Protective Factors are a way to help individuals and organizations identify how they currently work to prevent child abuse, and strategize how to strengthen their prevention efforts.

In the future, the Protective Factors Framework will continue to guide the work of Thriving Families, Safer Children, an initiative seeking to create a robust, just, and equitable prevention system in Arizona and throughout the United States. The framework will also continue to inform the evolution of the work of the Collective Impact for Child Safety and Well-Being, as well as other statewide initiatives focused on the primary prevention of child abuse.