

## Highlight Protective Factors in Reports and Assessments

When these skills are present within a family, it is important to note them in your provider reports to document Protective Factors that exist for the family:

- Child has the cognitive, physical and emotional capacity to participate in safety interventions.
- Caregiver has the cognitive, physical and emotional capacity to participate in safety interventions.
- Caregiver has a willingness to recognize problems and threats placing the child in imminent danger.
- Caregiver has the ability to access resources to provide necessary safety interventions.
- Caregiver has supportive relationships with one or more persons who may be willing to participate in safety planning, AND caregiver is willing to accept assistance.
- At least one caregiver in the home is willing and able to take action to protect the child, including asking offending caregiver to leave.
- Caregiver is willing to accept temporary responses offered by FCM and/or other community agencies, including cooperation with continuing assessment.
- There is evidence of a healthy relationship between caregiver and child.
- Caregiver is aware and committed to meeting the needs of the child.
- Caregiver has a history of effective problem solving.

To facilitate child safety beyond case closure and avoid re-involvement with DCS, it is critical to explore with parents ways to increase or enhance existing protective factors. To initiate that discussion, you can:

- Prep the parents by discussing the factors that you have observed or have been identified by the parent and/or others.
- Engage the parent in a conversation about the areas he/she may wish to develop or enhance.
- Work with the parent(s) to identify activities that could reasonably be expected to increase the parent's protective factors.
- Keep in mind that the goal of all services is to increase the parent's ability to keep children safe; it is not to create the "perfect parent."
- When planning services, keep the goals clear, measurable, and achievable.