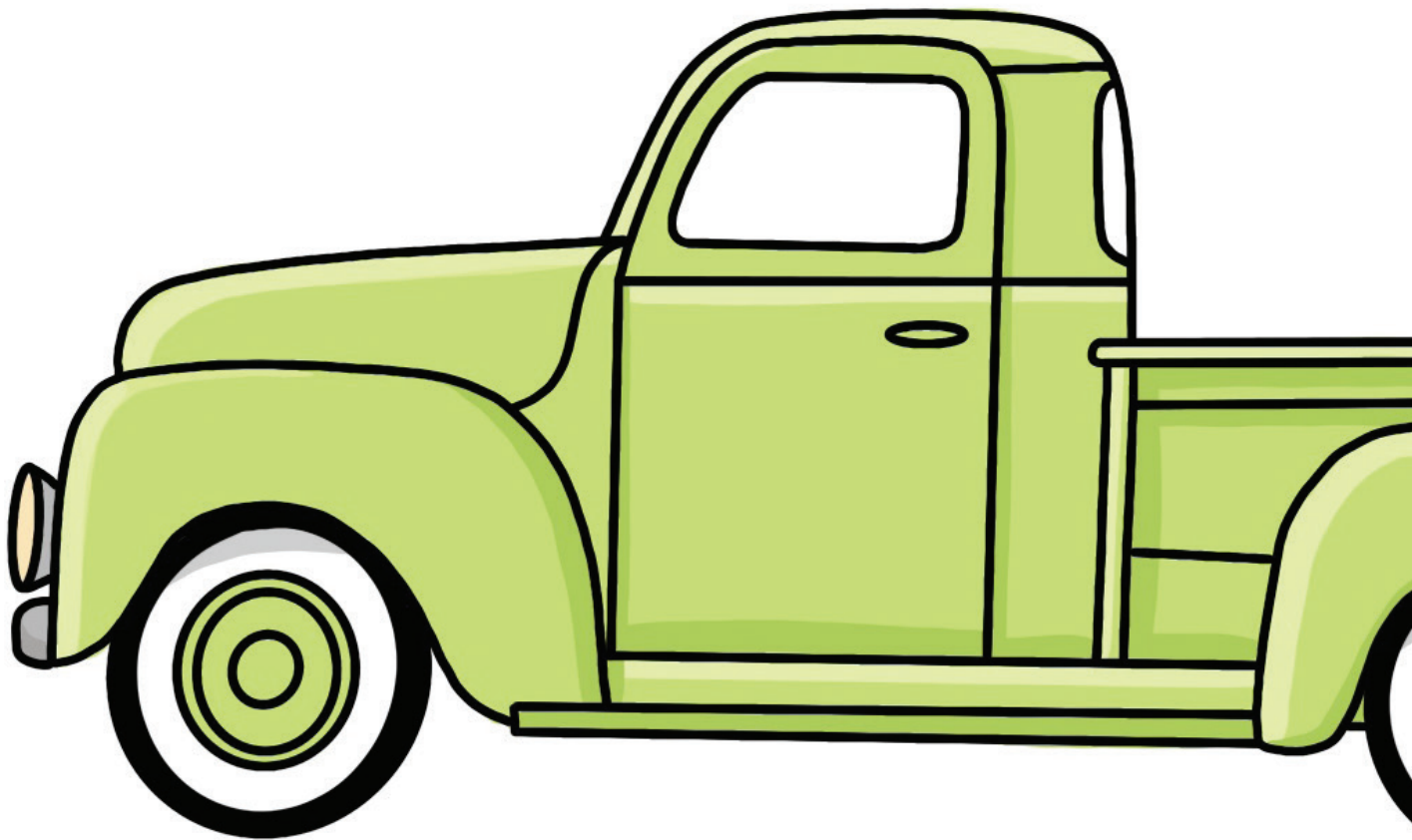


A FAMILY TRIP

AN OVERVIEW OF THE
FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS



*By Barbara L. Leavitt
& Janae G. Moss*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Let's Begin	3
Meet Eddy.....	4
How To Use This Course.....	5
Why We Created A Family Trip	6
Week 1	8
Introduction to the Five Protective Factors	
Week 2	24
Parental Resilience	
Week 3	39
Concrete Support	
Week 4	55
Positive Social Connections	
Week 5	72
Social and Emotional Competence of Children	
Week 6	85
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development	

LET'S BEGIN

We're Barbara Leavitt and Janae Moss, and we're so glad you're here!

A Family Trip is a six-week course with parent-friendly, bite-sized lessons to help you:

- Understand your strengths as a parent.
- Learn skills to support yourself, your children, and your family through good times and challenging times.
- Teach your children.
- Build social connections.
- Look more intentionally at your journey as a parent and a person.



We do this by learning about a framework defining characteristics of families called the Five Protective Factors. These characteristics have been shown to strengthen families, improve the development of children, and keep kids safe.

To my parents, who taught me the joy of parenting by modeling a life I wanted to follow. To Boyd, the love of my life and the inspiration to all my goodness. To my four daughters, bravely creating their own families and parenting the next generation. To Janae, who has shown me the power and passion of parent leaders. And to all the parents doing the most critical, courageous work in the world: creating and raising families,

THANK YOU.

-Barbara L. Leavitt

MEET EDDY, THE BANJO-PLAYING GOAT

When we created this curriculum, we knew that no training for families would be complete without resources that enable parents to teach and share these concepts with the entire family!

Thus, we created Eddy B. Steady, a children's picture book companion to A Family Trip. By reading it, you and your child/children can learn about Protective Factors together.

In the book, Eddy the mountain goat and his grandma go on a road trip to bake a special cake for Eddy's birthday party. Along the way, they learn about the Protective Factors with the help of friendly, funny animals.

Birthdays are important to both Eddy and this course. Why? Because they celebrate the growth and journey of one child at a time. Every child has their path, just as every parent does. This training will help each parent learn more about how to meet their children's and family's needs.



HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

A Family Trip is made of six modules that each contain several short lessons.

We designed the modules to be completed one week at a time or all together, depending on your time frame.

The lessons are snack sized. They can be done in short sessions or all in a row, as you prefer. Each lesson includes reading, videos, and short writing or voice memo activities.

For this course, you will need:

- A copy of Eddy B. Steady
- A copy of the companion Children's Workbook, which includes stickers, activities, and more
- A way to print lesson worksheets
- A notebook for writing activities or a way to record voice memos
- A piece of posterboard, Post-its, a pair of scissors, and markers

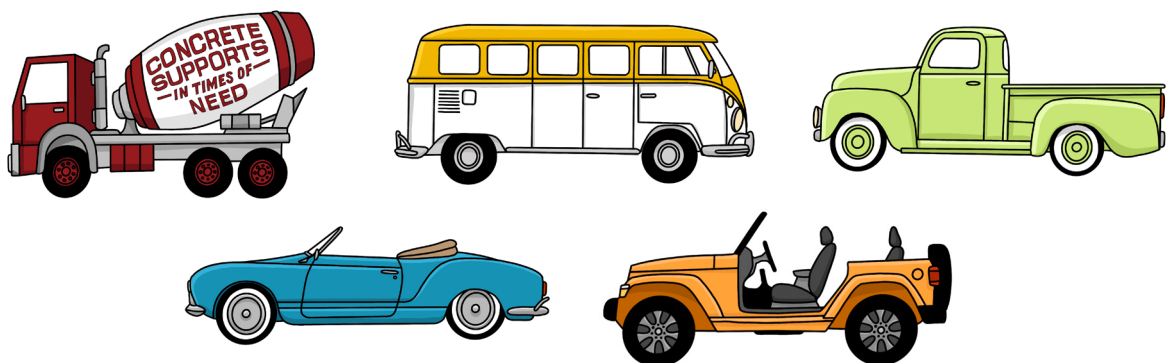
WHY WE CREATED A FAMILY TRIP

The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) developed the Protective Factors in 2003. In 2024, CSSP enhanced the factors with expanded research and ideas for implementation. CSSP works with multiple states to help communities support parents with these factors, which are proven to strengthen families, improve the optimal development of children, and keep kids safe.

We, Barbara and Janae, are both parents and have been parent advocates in Utah. Long ago, we were introduced to the Protective Factors. This information changed the trajectory of our parenting. We wanted to share this essential information with families, and we wrote the Five Protective Factors curriculum specifically for parents in a way that

would engage them, meet the restraints of their busy lives, and encourage parents to teach the Five Protective Factors to their children. We knew our curriculum needed to be interactive and personable, using a clear metaphor to explain complex ideas.

Early one morning, before speaking at a national conference, Janae was inspired to discuss families using a vehicle analogy. She emphasized the pivotal role of parents, likening them to the key to a car, noting that neither the vehicle nor the family can function effectively without the key.



Building on this metaphor, we likened each family to a vehicle embarking on a road trip. This imagery helped parents visualize how families can learn, grow, and adapt as they incorporate the Five Protective Factors into their lives. We got right to work with a team of parents. Six were trained to be trainers in the “Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work” program from the Children’s Trust Fund Alliance (CTFalliance.org). Parents shared what would help them learn and use their strengths, what metaphors could work for them, and where they might find barriers. We shaped A Family Trip curriculum based on that feedback so it works with whole families, individual parents, groups, and professional support. We also sought input from parents and early childhood systems nationwide through our work with the Children’s Trust Fund Alliance.

We are excited to share this important curriculum with you!



WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Welcome to the Five Protective Factors Training for Parents! We hope you'll gain some new skills and feel comfortable sharing your experiences and individual strengths with the group. The more open and invested you are in the outcome of this work, the more transformational our time together will be. You are the magic that makes this training valuable!

Through this course, you will be able to:

- Recognize your own strengths as parents.
- Learn the Protective Factors and how they can strengthen parenting.
- Look more intentionally at your own individual journey.
- Teach your children.
- Build social connections.

As you learn more about the Five Protective Factors, you'll also gain the confidence to apply these skills at home. Implementing the factors in your daily life with will help strengthen your family.



ACTIVITY:

FAVORITE MEMORIES

Welcome to our first activity—packing some favorite family memories to accompany us on our Protective Factors road trip! When we’re working on our parenting skills, it’s helpful to remember the “why” behind our efforts—and that the “why” is often simple.

Sometimes it feels like we must create huge activities for our children, like elaborate birthday parties or big events. Or we need to be the best parents in the world, and anything less is falling short. But it is often the simplest things our children cherish the most. Children want to be seen and heard. They want us to be present and connect with them.

Although everyday moments may seem insignificant, they are the most important parts of our journey. All it takes is a decision to connect meaningfully in everyday life.

INSTRUCTIONS

Take a minute or two to identify one of your favorite memories with your child or a specific time that you felt close to one of your children. Try to remember the details of this memory, such as where you were, how it smelled, and what you were doing. In your course notebook or voice memo app, respond to these questions.

- Why did you choose this memory with your child?
- Why did you enjoy that experience?
- How do you think your child would have described that experience?



VIDEO

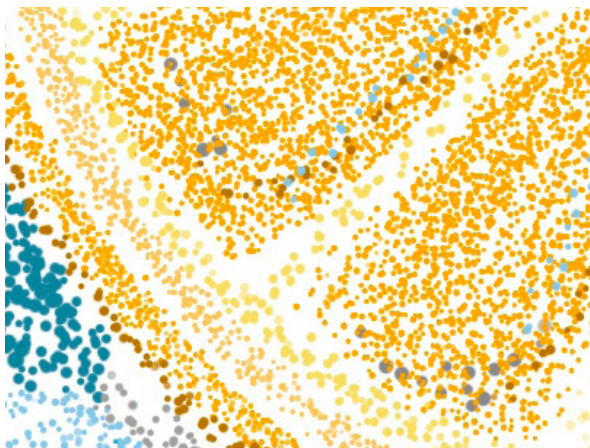
Watch Video #1 in our online video library at www.parentsdrivingchange.com/videos

SEEING THE BIG PICTURE

Here's another way to stay connected to "why" we work on our parenting skills.

The magic in normal moments as a parent is a lot like a pointillist painting, which is created by millions of tiny dots placed close together.

Up close, the painting may not look like much, but with space and distance, this masterpiece is breathtaking. Likewise, our "normal day" moments may seem insignificant or irrelevant. But when you take a moment to step back, you see that you are creating, day by day, a beautiful painting of your life.



It's also important in relationships to understand each other's perspectives. Understanding that our child's perspective of a moment might differ greatly from ours can open our minds and help us see new opportunities to connect with them more deeply.

ACTIVITY: PERSPECTIVE

Think of an experience you had with your child where you each perceived it differently. In a notebook or voice memo app, reflect on these questions:

- Why might your perspective of the experience differ significantly from your child's?
- Reflecting on the experience, do you now see its beauty that you couldn't appreciate then?

You can do this exercise with anyone. For example, you can ask your siblings to share some experiences from childhood. Perhaps it will help you understand their perspectives as you compare them to your own. It's so important in relationships to understand each other's perspectives.

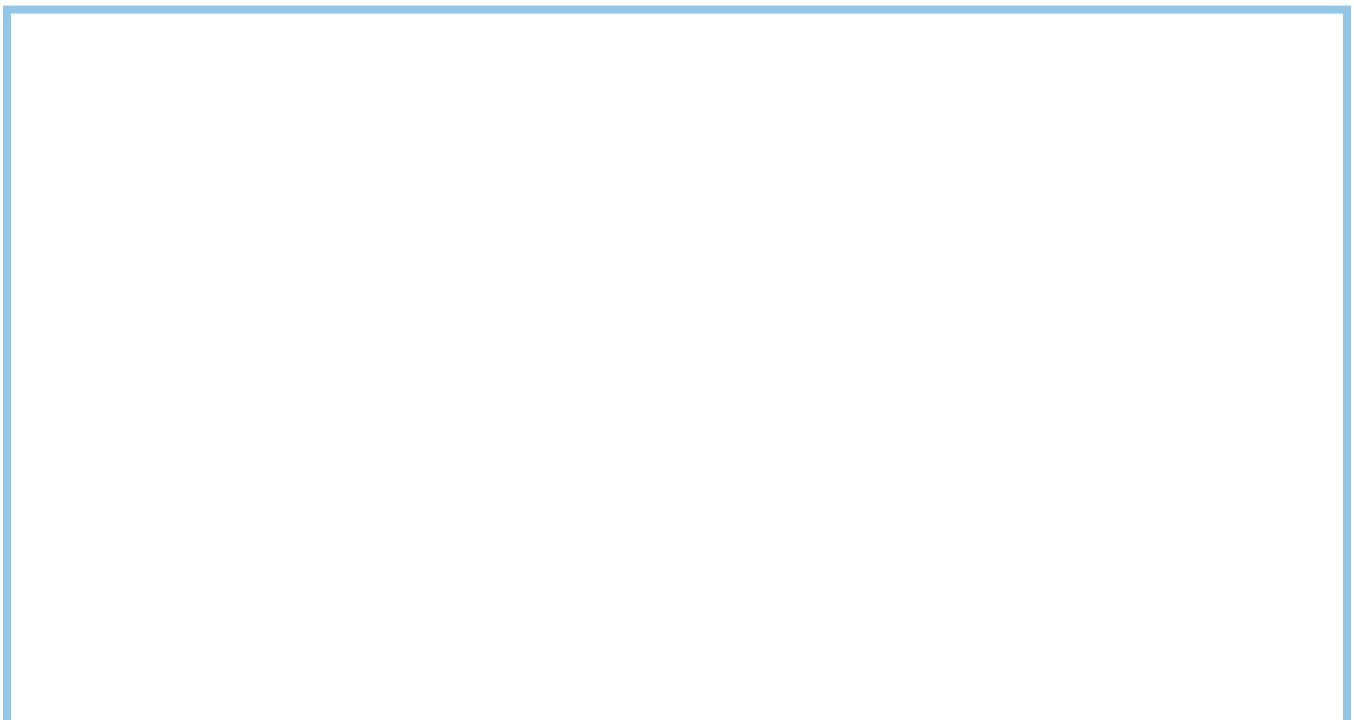
THE FAMILY CAR

This curriculum teaches the Five Protective Factors using a family road trip metaphor, similar to Eddy B. Steady's. And what does every road trip need? A car!

Let's think about how different cars can be. There are many kinds of cars on any given highway—some fast, some towing something, some meant to carry many people. There are many different colors, engine sizes, models, ages, and features. One may have GPS or run on electricity. They can be large or small, old or new, full of gas or running on empty, messy or newly washed, with leather or vinyl seats. Every single vehicle is different.

Families are like vehicles. Each family is very different. They operate differently. They vary in size, appearance, function, features, speed, and more.

Not only are families different, but communities are, too. Think of individual cars driving through different towns. They're just like families in communities! Each community provides different resources and supports, and these communities need to develop and strengthen, just as families do.



ACTIVITY: CHOOSING A CAR

Look at the cars on the next page. Choose one or draw your own to represent your family. Now add details to make it uniquely yours.

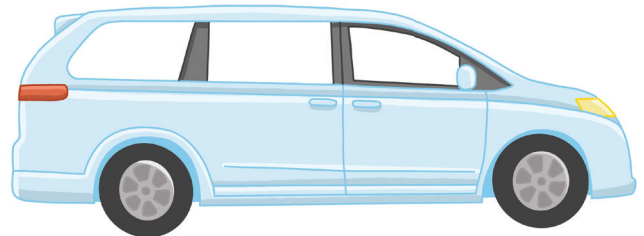
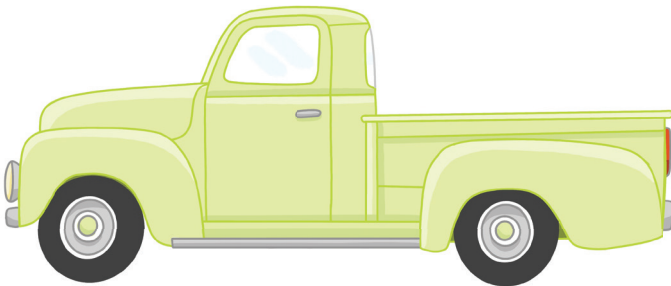
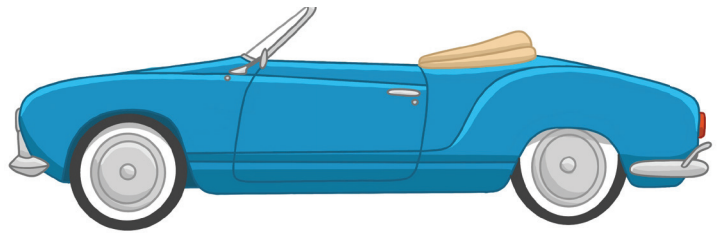
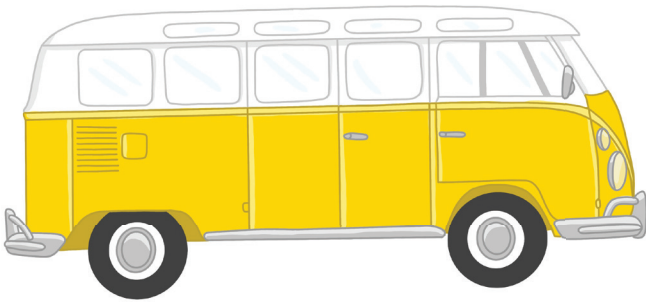
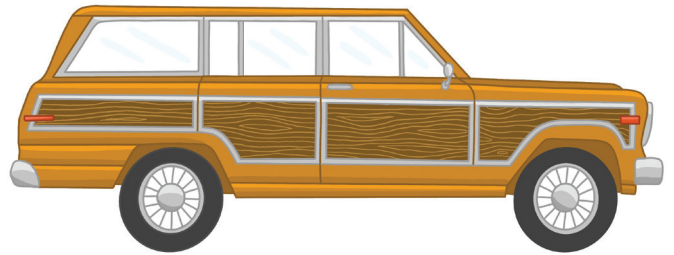
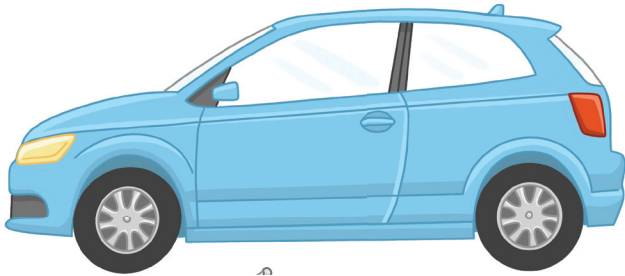
- What color do you choose?
- What does the interior look like?
- How many bumps and scrapes?
- Is it clean, or does it need a wash?
- Is the fuel tank full or nearly empty?
- How many passengers can it carry?
- Does it have any special features?

Reflect on why you chose the car you did and why you added the details to your car. How does your family resemble this car?



DISCUSS

Why did you choose this car? How does your family resemble this car?



PARENTS ARE THE KEY

As we get closer to the first Protective Factor, we want to acknowledge how important you are to your family. In each family, different people have different roles. One family member may naturally fuel the others with energy, while another may help everyone feel comfortable, like comfy cushioned seats in a car.



Parents play a very special role. You are the key. Nothing starts without you. You have the power to improve your family's outcome. Recognizing these roles, and your role in particular, can help you understand your family and decide how your "family car" runs.

ACTIVITY: YOU ARE THE KEY

Parents are in the driver's seat. You have a lot to offer your family. You are THE KEY and you have the power to improve your family's results. Write down the things you can do that no one else can. What personal qualities do you have that help encourage your family?

LEARN THE FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS

We hope the previous activities showed you how important you are as a parent and how much your family needs your unique strengths.

Now, we're ready to start our trip through the Five Protective Factors. These factors are characteristics that can strengthen families, improve outcomes for children, and keep children safe. The funny thing is, they work a lot like important parts of real cars!

A helpful way to understand the Protective Factors is through 'Eddy B. Steady,' our companion children's book. In it, Eddy meets various animals that represent and shed light on each protective factor.

Below is the complete list of the Protective Factors. And it's quite a list! Don't worry about completely understanding them all right now. In the following lessons, we'll go through them together one by one. (Just like Eddy does on his road trip.)



Parental Resilience (Headlights)



Concrete Support (Truck)



Positive Social Connections (Passenger/Radio)



Social & Emotional Competence of Children (Seat Belt)



Knowledge of Parenting and
Child Development (Dashboard & Manuals)

WHAT CAN I DO TODAY?

Here are some actions you can take TODAY to start recognizing and implementing practices that support the Five Protective Factors.

Read Eddy B. Steady with your child. Have your child color in the cars. Ask your child the question you were asked, “Which car looks most like our family, and why?” Eddy B. Steady is a lighthearted story, but it holds profound meaning in how we can live to strengthen our families. Here are some ways to use the book:

- Read with different voices for each of the animals.
- Ask your children to answer the questions within the book.
- Ask your children how they can relate to Eddy and what things they can do to be brave and try new things.

Reinforce the idea that we are always learning and growing through our experiences. The more we can put words to this, the more we see how much we have grown and how much we can do.

Reflect in your notebook or a voice memo about how you already use Protective Factors in your life. Here’s one example, with many more below! I invite my neighbors over for Friday night dinner. We always have fun, and we’re building social connections. And remember, your work is planting seeds right now that will help your community grow, just like Eddy’s journey ends with a community party where everyone celebrates.

Parental Resilience

- I can tell someone close to me how frustrated I am when I have a hard day.
- When I’m tired, I can take time out for a few minutes to do something I enjoy.

Positive Social Connections

- I can sit by a new parent at my school during meetings.
- I can say hi to others and smile when I am at a meeting with parents.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

- I can use a developmental screener to help me understand my child's development.
- I can try new parenting techniques for difficult behaviors and share the outcome with a friend.

Concrete Support

- I can ask my child's teacher for a math tutor.
- I can ask my neighbor to help me with carpooling.

Social Emotional Competence in Children (AKA Supporting Resilience in Children)

- I can set aside time after school for my child to talk while I sit and listen.
- I can help my child tell me how they feel and try to honor their emotions.

Community Reflection

When you think about the community your family lives in, is there anything that makes it harder or easier to help build your children's Social & Emotional Competence? What might need to change in your community?

For example, does your child's school library need more books or movies that reflect your child's culture and experience? On the other hand, maybe your child's daycare has a regular newsletter that gives you ideas for social-emotional activities.

PARENT PERSPECTIVES

Here are some of the insights parents have shared after taking this course:

- I love the practice of Stop, Yield, Go with each new concept. It really made the connection from learning to doing.
- There was a video that specifically touched on my own child's struggle. I know it will help me teach him resiliency.
- I am excited to share these concepts and exercises with my children.
- Everything was presented in a way that was understandable, relatable and "real".
- I love that they taught that it's ok to ask for and receive help.
- It was great to be reminded that there is no such thing as a perfect parent.
- I liked all the ideas to help me have confidence in myself first so I can then help my child.
- This course helped me be kinder to myself and realize that it's ok not knowing what to do sometimes.
- Everything was taught in such a simple way but at the same time it opened my eyes to do things differently.
- This course was a good reminder to get out of my comfort zone. There is no growth in the comfort zone and no comfort in the growth zone.
- This helped me be able to see and understand the importance of the social connections I have.
- The info from this course would be helpful for every parent.
- I learned that being able to move through challenges protects you and those in your circle of influence.
- I love that the course focused on what we can do as parents and not what we need to fix about the kids.

SELF-CHECK

Consider the following questions to reflect on what we learned today:

- Do you feel more qualified in your role as a father/mother?
- Think about your role as parents. What are the moments that give you joy?
How can you increase the joy in raising your children?
- What protective factors do you do well with?
- Do you feel more prepared for the real world of raising children? Do you feel like you are the best resource as a leader and decision maker for your family?
- As you contemplate your individual parenting journey. Which strengths do you have?
- Do you feel more supported as you meet other parents?

Write your thoughts below.

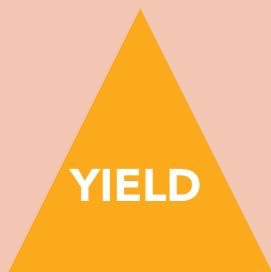
STOP, YIELD, GO

We know life is hectic at home. And we know that information is only useful when applied. We recommend the “Stop, Yield, Go” practice at the end of every section. It helps you take a few minutes to reflect on what you have learned so you can better understand what you want to accomplish.

To strengthen the Protective Factors in your family, what’s one thing you can stop doing? What’s one thing you will think about implementing? And one thing you will start doing? Focus on attainable goals in each area. You know your family best. As you review the following questions, consider what will work best for your unique situation. Write down your reflections in a notebook or a voice memo, or use the blocks below.



STOP Write something you will stop today.



YIELD Write something you want to be more cautious or think deeply about:



GO Write something new that you will start doing today:

APPLY-AT-HOME

Choose one thing you can do during the week to strengthen one of the Five Protective Factors. For ideas, review the ideas in the What Can I Do TODAY section. Once you do it, ask yourself, how did this action strengthen my family?

For the rest of the week observe what happens as you try what you committed to do in Stop, Yield, Go. What did you find was most powerful with your family?

Go through activities with your child using the children's workbook. What do you notice as you did these activities with your child? What did you learn about your child's viewpoint?

Celebrate Your Actions! Name one thing you did this week to implement a protective factor. Did you notice any progress through your persistence? Remember, progress comes from continuing to try.

Notes: