

CALL TO ACTION: USE INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE IN POVERTY, EMPATHY, AND DATA/KNOWLEDGE FROM POVERTY SIMULATION EXPERIENCE TO TAKE ADDITIONAL STEPS IN LOCAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION.

AS OF 2021, LEE COUNTY IS RANKED 1ST IN THE STATE IN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK (PREVENT CHILD ABUSE IOWA):

We believe that a strengths-based approach focusing on the well-being of families is the most effective way to support kids. Prevent Child Abuse Iowa also recognizes the important role legislation plays in the future of Iowa's children. We support policies that promote child and family well-being.

Resilience

The resilience of an individual depends, to a great extent, on their relationships and community. The more we learn about resilience, the more we recognize that it is the systems around us—family, school, neighborhood, church, friends, workplace and community—that influence the ability of both children and adults to be resilient.

Concrete Supports

Stable housing, access to health care, transportation and steady employment are the concrete supports that make families stronger. Community resources and services help parents meet these basic needs so they can focus on their role as parents.

Social Connections

The ability and opportunity to develop positive relationships help to build a supportive network for parents and families. Identifying a network of family, friends and neighbors provides encouragement and support in times of need.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Understanding child development helps parents respond appropriately to a child's behavior—supporting physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional well-being.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Developing a close bond helps parents relate, respond and communicate with their child. Interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotion, and establish and maintain relationships are essential to healthy child development.

Advocacy Goal: Ensure access to family supports that have been shown to reduce child maltreatment.

Child maltreatment is a community problem, with community solutions. Families who experience financial hardships and stress such as job loss, hunger, unstable housing, and lack of childcare or medical care are much **more likely** to become involved with the child welfare system.

Children in families with adequate concrete supports are less likely to experience abuse or neglect. These supports include home visiting, quality child care, housing and food access, Medicaid coverage, and tax relief such as Child Tax Credits for low- and middle-income families.

Preventing child maltreatment supports healthy lifetimes. **We can build better childhoods through programs and services that connect communities, empower parents, and help children thrive.**

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