

What is prevention?

Prevention typically refers to activities that stop an action or behavior. It can also refer to activities that promote a positive action or behavior. **Research has found that successful child abuse prevention must reduce risk factors and promote protective factors.**



Prevention measures build safe, nurturing environments for children by:

- Normalizing parenting stress
- Providing support and education for parents before they get to crisis
- Minimizing the risk of abuse by addressing parenting habits, behaviors and situations
- Offering a break so parents can take care of themselves and connect with a support system
- Advocating for policies that protect children and invest in families
- Raising awareness to change the way communities think about prevention and the role they play in prevention efforts

Prevention programs and services build protective factors, which improve families' overall well-being, strengthen a child's environment and reduce the likelihood of abuse and neglect.

Protective factors include:

- **Nurturing and attachment** – developing a close bond helps parents relate, respond and communicate with their children
- **Parenting and child development knowledge** – understanding child development can be calming for parents and help them respond appropriately to a child's behavior



- **Resilience** – recognizing the signs of stress and enhancing problem-solving skills can improve parents' capacity to cope
- **Social connections** – Identifying a network of family, friends and neighbors provides parents support in times of need
- **Concrete supports** – offering parents access to financial, housing and medical support, along with other resources to help parents meet their basic needs and focus on their role as parents

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