Community Support Strengthens Families

Child Abuse Prevention Month
April 2023

Preventing child abuse and neglect by educating and engaging the community

About CAPC

Purpose

- Raise awareness

- Provide resources

- Educate service providers

- Support community agencies

- Engage parents as leaders

Roles

- Catalyst for prevention

- Convener of cross-system partners

- Coordinator of countywide prevention activities

Imagine the possibilities
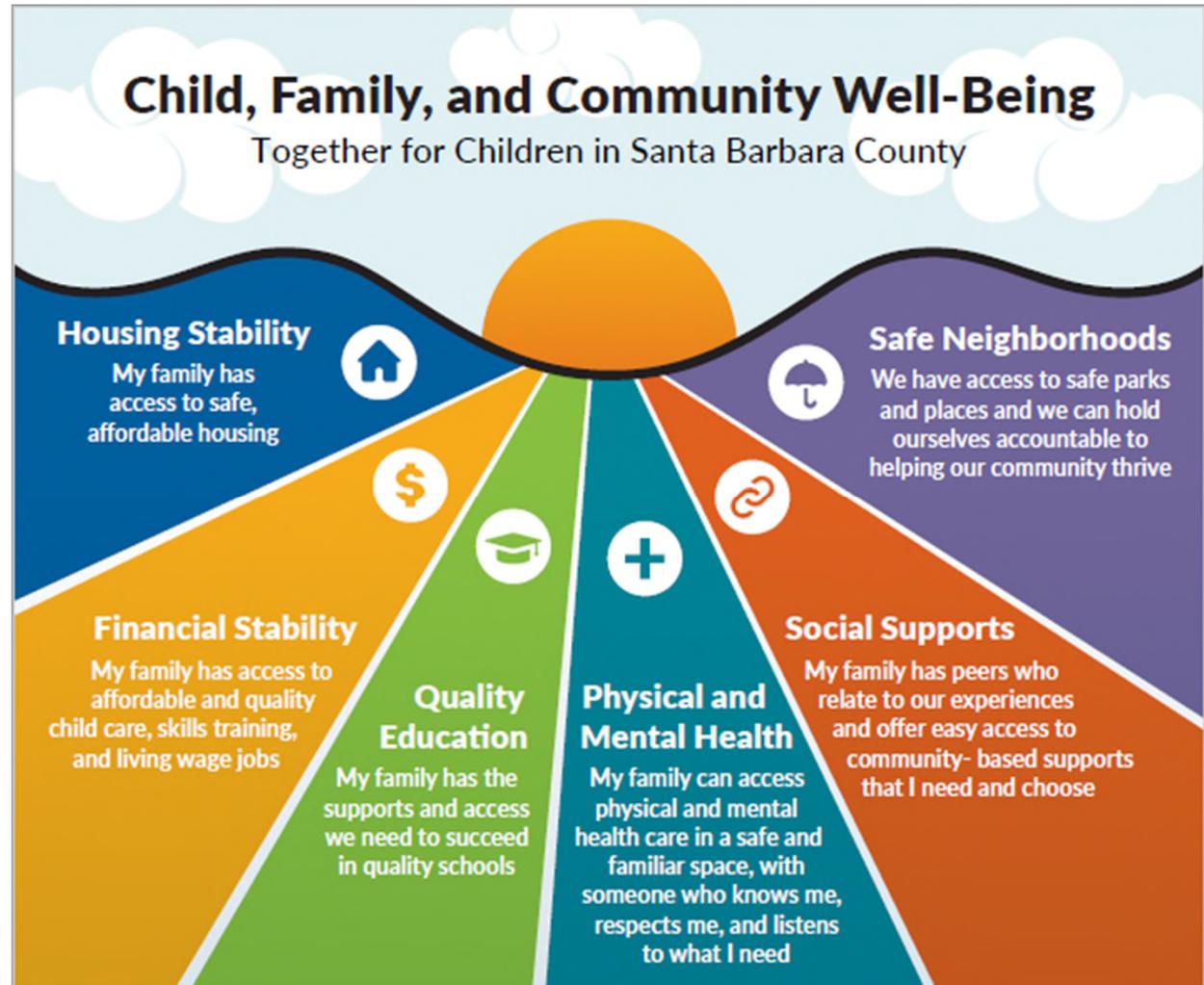

2021 Statistics (SB County)

- 5,695 abuse reports

- 457 verified survivors and 3 fatalities from child maltreatment

- Cumulative lifetime financial impact = $184 million

What if we could:

- Be proactive, not reactive: *prevent* abuse and entries into foster care

- *Reinvest* that funding into education, setting children up for success

- $184 million could send 15,500 children to preschool

Source: Safe & Sound (safeandsound.org)

Making Prevention the New Norm

Child, Family, and Community Well-Being
Together for Children in Santa Barbara County

Housing Stability
My family has access to safe, affordable housing

Safe Neighborhoods
We have access to safe parks and places and we can hold ourselves accountable to helping our community thrive

Financial Stability
My family has access to affordable and quality child care, skills training, and living wage jobs

Quality Education
My family has the supports and access we need to succeed in quality schools

Physical and Mental Health
My family can access physical and mental health care in a safe and familiar space, with someone who knows me, respects me, and listens to what I need

Social Supports
My family has peers who relate to our experiences and offer easy access to community- based supports that I need and choose

Focus on Well-Being and Community Support

- Only 8% of reports to SB County CWS were substantiated in 2021
- The majority of reports are consistently related to neglect
- Child and family well-being demands a different approach
- Separate willful neglect from symptoms of poverty
- Recognize the need for support and promote family strengthening

What causes family stress?

Being a parent/caregiver can be stressful

- Managing schedules

- Disrupted routines

- Lack of resources

- Trying to balance needs of all family members

- Isolation

- No time or energy socializing or self-care

- Feeling overwhelmed by responsibilities

- Judging yourself or feeling judged by others

How can a supportive community help?

- Understanding and compassion

- Social connections

- Sense of belonging

- Access to information and resources

- Trusted sources of support

- Wellness skills

- Opportunities to learn, grow, give back

How support can address **parent/ caregiver** risk factors

RISK FACTOR	COMMUNITY SUPPORT
Limited parenting skills	Parenting classes & home visitation
History of maltreatment	ACEs screening & education
Lack of healthy coping skills	Education & support
Substance abuse	Treatment & 12-step programs
Postpartum depression	Home visitation & mental health support
Mental illness	Therapy & mental health services
Teen parenthood	Teen parenting programs
Incarceration	Re-entry programs
Limited social support	Parent Cafes, faith-based support
Domestic violence	Shelters, counseling & support
Household challenges	Buffering supports for children

How support can address **child** risk factors

RISK FACTOR	COMMUNITY SUPPORT
Premature birth	• Well-child visits with pediatrician • Online support groups
Developmental delays Physical disabilities	• Tri-Counties Regional Center • Organizations that support parents of children with disabilities
Difficult temperament	• Home visitation • Parent/child interaction therapy
Sensory/regulatory difficulties	• Developmental screening • Quality preschool
Child younger than 4 years old	• Quality, affordable childcare/preschool • Parenting classes focused on early childhood
Adolescent	• Parenting classes focused on adolescence • Youth-centered programs

Family Risk Factors…

What might families need?

- Homelessness or housing instability

- Single-parent household

- Social isolation

- Large number of dependent children

- Persistent stressors – financial, legal, health, food insecurity

- Family disorganization, dissolution or violence

- Poor parent-child relationships or negative interactions

- Immigration status and fear of deportation

Community risk factors…

How do we activate community change?

Community conditions

- Socioeconomic inequality & poverty

- Lack of adequate & affordable housing

- Lack of child care

- Crime, substance abuse & community violence

- Racism, discrimination & marginalization

- Wildfires & natural disasters

Community support

- Deep cross-sector collaboration

- Authentic community engagement

- Commitment to equity and healing

- Targeted investments in communities

Dedicated to Community Support