Respite: A Strategy for Building Protective Factors

ARCH National Respite Network & Resource Center
Overview

• Elder Abuse as ACL Priority
• Risk and Protective Factors
• Framing the benefits of respite through the protective factors
Top Five Priorities

1. Awareness: Increase public awareness of elder abuse
2. Brain Health: Conduct research and enhance focus on cognitive (in)capacity and mental health
3. Caregiving: Provide support and training for paid and unpaid caregivers who play a critical role in preventing elder abuse.
4. Economics: Quantify the costs of elder abuse
5. Resources: Strategically invest more resources in services, education, research, and knowledge
There is no single, identifiable cause of maltreatment; it occurs as a result of an interaction of multiple forces.
Individual Risk Factors

Caregivers
Individual Risk Factors

Caregiver

Care Recipient
Caregiver

Relationships

Care Recipient
By supporting family caregivers, we can increase the safety and well-being of all individuals who receive care.
Conditions that can protect families and promote resilience

Serve as a buffer against adversity—when present in families, likelihood of maltreatment goes down

A Protective Factors framework focuses on building strengths rather than focusing exclusively on risks and deficits.
CDC Protective Factors for Elder Abuse Prevention

**Relationship Level**

- Having numerous, strong relationships with people of varying social status

**Community Level**

- Coordination of resources and services among community agencies and organizations that serve the elderly population and their caregivers.
- Higher levels of community cohesion and a strong sense of community or community identity
- Higher levels of community functionality and greater collective efficacy
Protective Factors

Knowledge of Developmental Needs & Appropriate Strategies for Meeting them

Pro Social Communication Skills

Nurturing and Attachment

Concrete Supports

Social Connections

Resilience
Knowledge of Developmental Needs & Appropriate Strategies for Meeting them

Understanding Developmental Stages—Strengths and Limitations—and Preparing for them and Responding to them Appropriately
How can Respite help?

Knowledge of Developmental Needs & Appropriate Strategies for Meeting them
The ability to regulate emotions, engage with others, and communicate in positive ways to get needs met.

Pro Social Communication Skills
How can Respite help?
Nurturing and Attachment

The emotional tie along with a pattern of positive interaction between the caregiver and care recipient.
Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships (SSNRs) are essential to prevent child maltreatment (CM) and to assure that children reach their full potential.

CDC, Essentials for Childhood
http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childmaltreatment/essentials/

Caregivers who had positive relationships with patients in the past report lower levels of stress even when the demands of caregiving are extremely high.

Preventing Elder Abuse by Family Caregivers, National Center on Elder Abuse
Washington, D.C. March 2002
www.ncea.aoa.gov/Resources/Publication/docs/caregiver.pdf
How can Respite help?
Concrete Supports

Access to tangible goods and services to help families cope with stress, particularly in times of crisis or intensified need.
Concrete Supports

How can Respite help?
Social Connections

It’s not the number of relationships, but their quality and whether or not we perceive to be supported. Caregivers and care recipients alike need social networks with: *Positive emotional support *Positive behavioral norms *Resource sharing and mutual help
How can Respite help?
Resilience

Having adaptive skills and strategies to persevere in times of crisis. Family’s ability to openly share positive and negative experiences and mobilize to accept, solve, and manage problems.
How can Respite help?
“Respite—the greatest preventative money can buy.”
Casandra Firman

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