**Protective Factors**

**Protective Factors can help to balance out the risk and safety issues found in families, and should be considered BEFORE a child is removed from the home. Some examples of these include:**

Cognitive, Emotional, Behavioral

* Recognition of dangerous situations
* Ability to understand the child’s needs
* Parent(s) are in fact (or are most of the time) meeting the needs of their child(ren) such as securing medical care, getting them to school, having them on a routine, providing supervision, providing meals and appropriate clothing etc.
* Collaterals report that parents typically parent well and can give examples (again history of being protective).
* Limited CPS history particularly substantiations (history of being protective)
* The abuse/neglect incident was not severe considering the age the child or the effects to the child were minimal.
* Able to recognize threats to their child.
* Parent has no mental health, domestic violence or substance abuse issues
* Parent is remorseful and is able to articulate the negative effects of the incident on the children and/or has realistic expectations for the children based on their age and functioning level.
* Parenting is able to handle stress well or has a plan to manage it (heavy continuous child caring responsibilities, handle their own health problems, marital issues, etc.)
* Parent’s criminal history shows no charges involving substance abuse or violence.
* Perpetrator access is removed or limited.
* A non-offending parent in the home who is protective
* Parent has insight into their behaviors and has taken action steps or has a plan to rectify the abuse/neglect situation.
* Parents are motivated to change and see the risk factors present

Resources and Social Connections

* Parent has a job and is providing financially for the family
* Family has a good support system
* Asks for help when needed and actually utilizes these support persons when they are in crisis or need help
* Family receives support for community programs
* Family has safe and stable housing
* Family has access to medical care
* Family has adequate food