

What are Strengths?

- What people have learned about themselves, others and their world
- Personal qualities, traits and virtues
- What people know about the world around them
- The talents people have
- Cultural and personal stories and lore
- Pride
- The community

Types of Strengths

Mitigating Strengths: strengths that serve to protect children from threats to safety. They can be persons, environmental factors, or other interventions that serve as a protective barrier between a safety threat and the child.

Risk Reducing Strengths: strengths that serve to reduce the likelihood of maltreatment in the future. They can include a client's positive experience in treatment in the past; personal qualities, attitudes or values; family and community resources that have a positive impact on the resolution of problems.

Well-being related Strengths: strengths that are neither mitigating nor risk reducing, but serve to enhance or support the family's overall quality of life. They include employment; health and access to health care; housing; transportation; etc.

Neutral Strengths: positive qualities or conditions in the family that do not directly act to mitigate safety threats, reduce risk or enhance well-being.

Why Adopt a Strength-based Approach to Casework Practice?

- Consistent with professional social work values; CFSR goal of a stronger collaborative relationship with clients; and the Pennsylvania Standards for Child Welfare Practice
- Greater use of inherent family strengths and less reliance on outside resources
- Improved outcomes for children and families
- Increased worker satisfaction from use of skills and development of a helping relationship with clients
- Increased client satisfaction