

## FACTORS AFFECTING THE SAFETY AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT OF ALL CHILDREN IN THE PANHANDLE

**Behavioral Factors:** The specific actions that result in a dangerous our harmful environment for a child.

**Physical Violence:** acts resulting in harm to a child.

Examples include peer bullying, sexual abuse/assault, physical contact by parent or adult, withholding basic needs for an extended period of time, community crime, gang activities

**Emotional and Mental Abuse:** acts that demean children, impact self-esteem, and reduce resiliency.

Examples include bullying, withholding basic needs, cyber bullying, parents, adults and communities minimizing children, isolation from the community

**Neglect:** failure to provide for basic physical and emotional needs.

Examples include all those that put children at undue risk – whether or not it resulted in injury, especially when the child doesn't feel safe to correct the situation. Could include riding in a car with a drunk driver, even though no accident occurs.

**Contributing Factors:** The circumstances that exist that lead to or encourage the behavior. If these circumstances did not exist, the behavior would not have occurred or would be less likely to occur.

### **Basic Needs Not Being Met**

Inadequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, poor housing (no heat, refrigerators, plumbing, mold), homelessness

### **Parenting and Demands on Parents**

Parents working multiple jobs, decreased supervision or children at home alone, low knowledge and skills around child abuse and neglect, low knowledge and skills around parent child interactions, stress, perceived willingness to parent, quality of supervision after school

### **Adult Behaviors in the Community**

Poor positive role models, inappropriate sexual activity between adults, drug abuse, alcohol misuse, selling illegal drugs, children as passengers in vehicles while DUI

### **Youth Behaviors**

Engage in risky behaviors, poor peer influence, alcohol and drug use, inappropriate sexual behavior, disrespect of adults

### **Youth Development Approaches**

No shared view of youth development in communities, limited interest in community service learning, lack goals, confusion in roles

### **Social Supports**

Missing link between generations, limited social supports/maternal supports low, transplanted families lack supports, technology lowers direct interaction and supports

### **Undiagnosed/Untreated Mental Illness**

Parents, children, limited access to professionals, payment and policies, community understanding of mental illness, depression

### **DHHS**

Life becomes worse for children/families reported for child abuse/neglect, risk of abuse/neglect increases when in DHHS, disconnect with DHHS

### **Media Messages – Local/National**

**Root/Community Causes:** The larger community decisions, specific norms, or formal or informal practices which impact the contributing factors. If these were addressed, the contributing factors would not exist.

**Poverty**

Increased poverty as related to economy (jobs, living wages, etc), middle class shift to poverty level

**Cycles of Generational Poverty**

Poverty thinking, sense of entitlement, enabling

**Economy**

Increased unemployment rates, people working more than one job – sometimes 2 or 3

**Unemployment/Underemployment**

Lack of job skills, quality of available work force (work ethic), cost of training staff

**Rural Reality**

Geography (density similar to Alaska), lack of available services (population/ cost benefit, access), decreasing leadership capacity (youth leave for college and don't return), out migration

**Community Norms**

No common community norms/values, competing cultural norms (violence is acceptable to gangs), communities don't acknowledge children

**Lack of Consistent Law Enforcement**

Legal systems change moral code (shifting definitions or applications of laws as society changes), rules change so peoples values change, lack of community support for law enforcement

**Prejudice, Discrimination, Racism**

Not acknowledged and affirmed

**Community Disorganization**

Low sense of community pride, vacant/dilapidated buildings, apathy, miscommunication, blame game, community doesn't acknowledge problem, community doesn't acknowledge children, alcohol outlet density

**System Failure (DHHS)**

Poor policy/application of policy, children/families have increased fear and decreased trust

**Access to Health Care**

Medicaid conditions, low birth weight babies, unable to access prenatal care leads to larger issues for child and community

**Access/Acceptance of Health Promotion**

Contraceptives not available/taught, untreated chronic disease (diabetes, etc)