

# A Frame for Child Welfare's Future

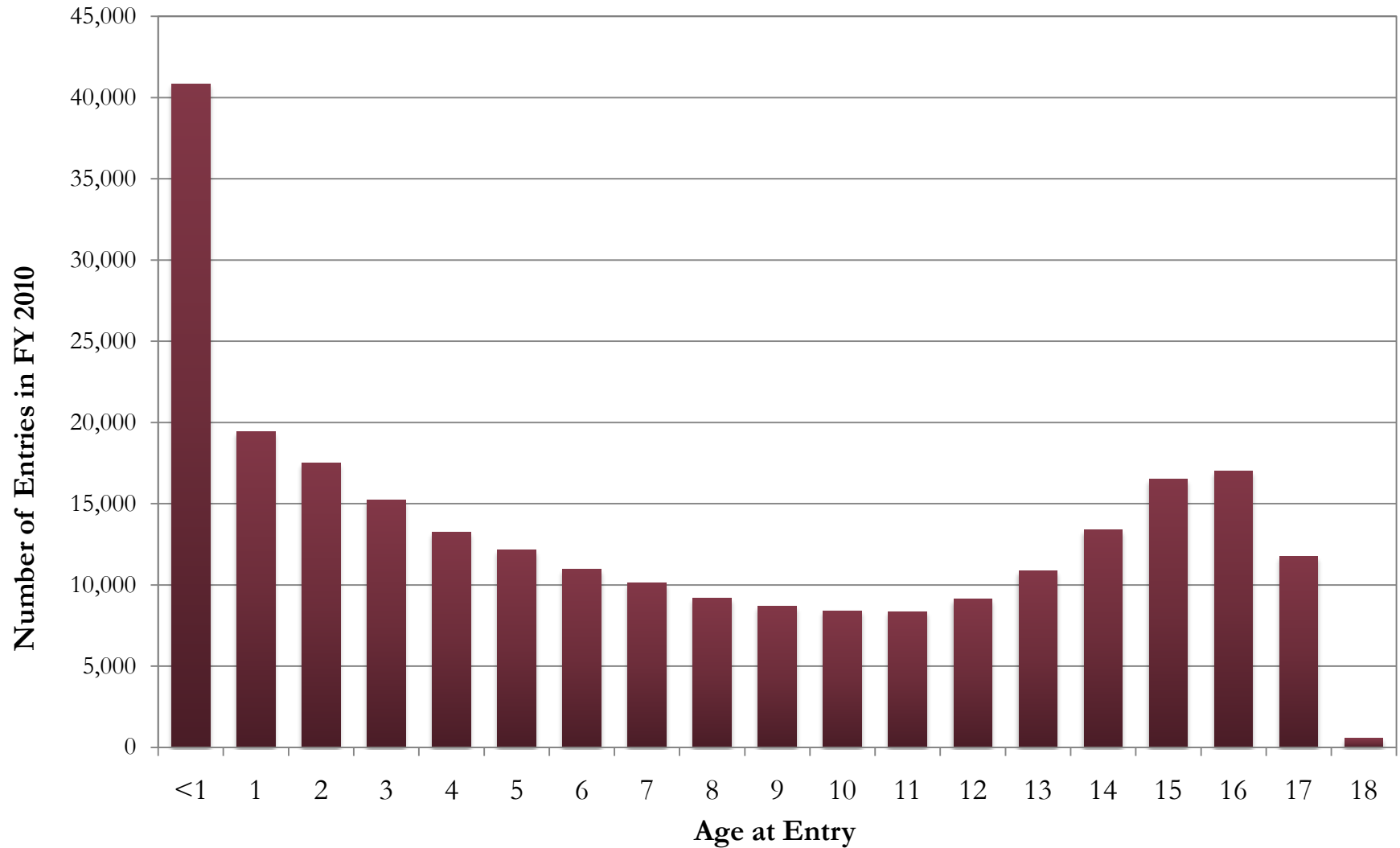
## PROMOTING SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELL BEING TO FACILITATE HEALING AND RECOVERY

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families



# Distribution of Entries into Foster Care by Age: Developmental Implications



Source: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, US Department of Health and Human Services, Includes data submissions received by June 1, 2011.

# How are Children Impacted by Adverse Experiences?

## Understanding Experiences

How children make sense of what happens to them; develop perceptions of fairness and opportunity; and create concepts of normalcy

## Developmental Tasks

Can be impacted by adverse experiences that cause delays, distortions, or regressions in acquiring regular competencies

## Coping Strategies

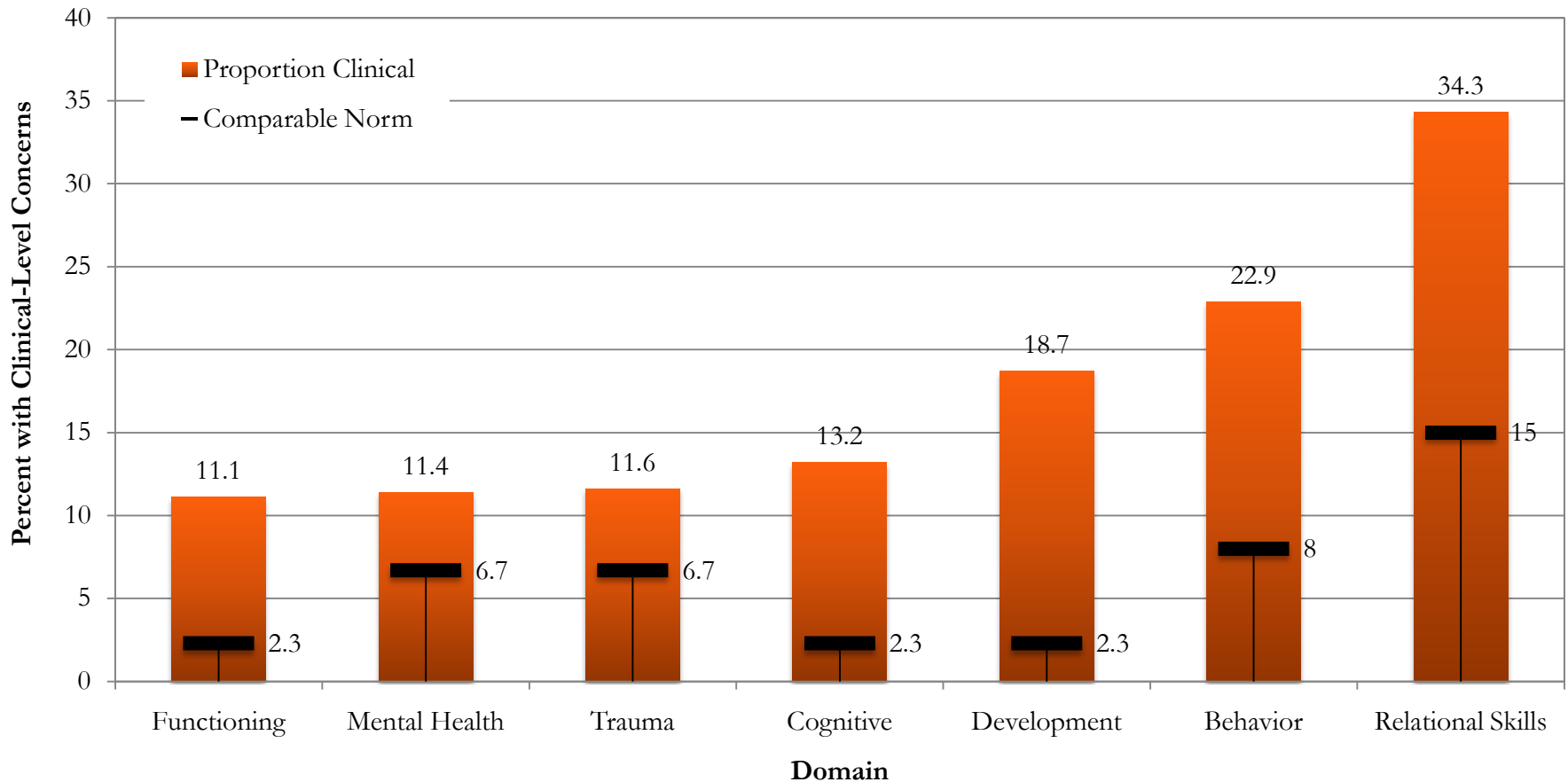
The array of strategies available to a child to respond to adverse experiences both in the short-term and the long-term

## Environmental Buffers

Social and familial contexts that alter how adverse experiences will impact children

# Children Known to Child Welfare Face Challenges in Social-Emotional Domains

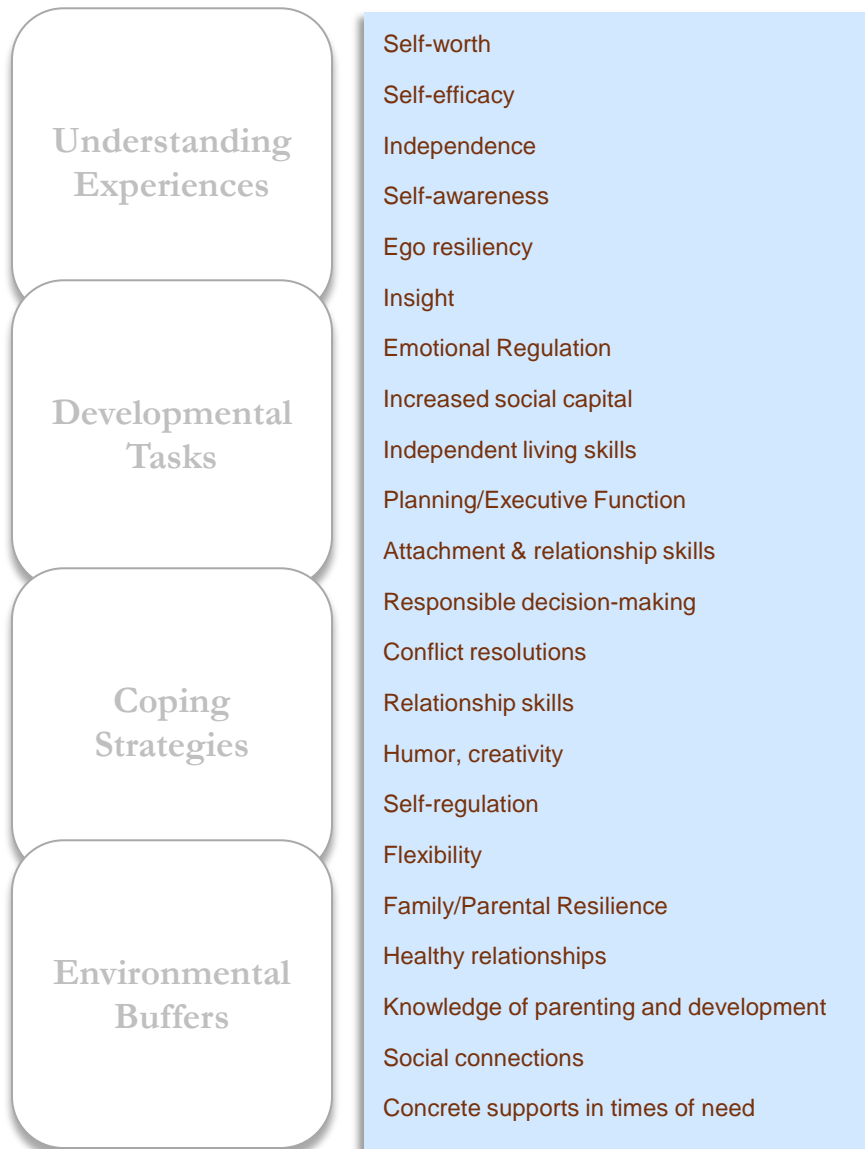
Clinical-Level Concerns across Domains for Children Reported to CPS, General Population Comparison, 0-17



Source: National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being II, US Department of Health and Human Services

Functioning: Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale (VABS; Screener Daily Living Skills Domain), 0-17 years; Mental Health: Children’s Depression Inventory (CDI; depression), 7-17 years; Trauma: Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (TSCC; post traumatic subscale), 8-17 years; Cognitive: Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT; cognitive composite), 4-17 years; Development: Battelle Developmental Inventory, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (BDI-2; cognitive developmental quotient), 0-47 months; Behavior: Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; problem behaviors total), 1.5-17 years; Relational Skills: Social Skills Rating System (SRSS; social skills), 3-17 years;

# The Role of Protective Mechanisms



Resilience research suggests: *“Protection from adversity does not reside in the psychological chemistry of the moment but rather in the ways in which people deal with life changes and in what they do about their stressful or disadvantaging circumstances”* (Rutter, 1993).

Protective mechanisms and protective factors function at multiple levels, and don’t necessarily apply to only one domain – i.e., building relationship skills is a developmental task, but can also result in greater environmental buffering when adverse experiences occur.

# Getting Children Back on Track

Understanding  
Experiences

Developmental  
Tasks

Coping  
Strategies

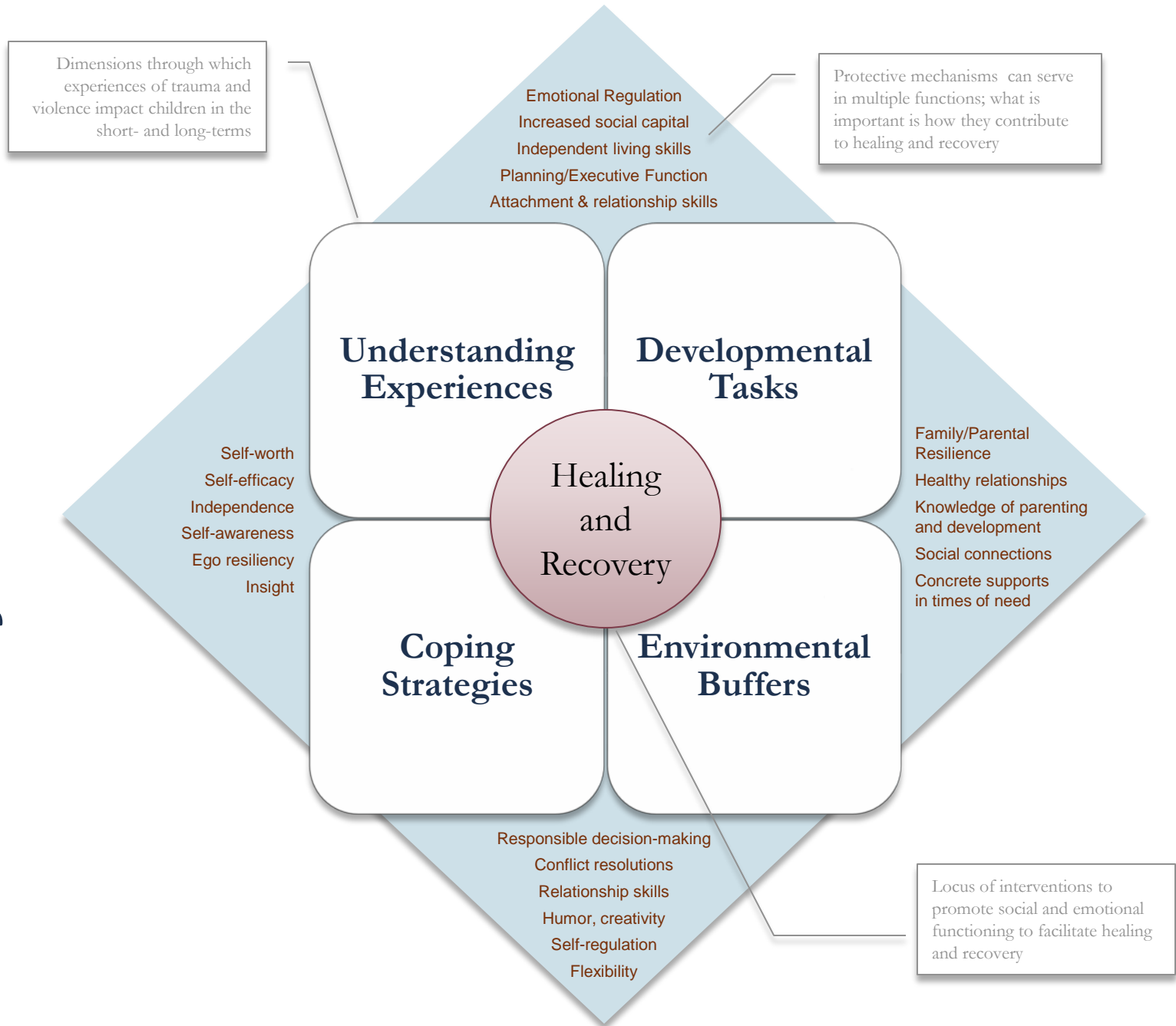
Environmental  
Buffers

Self-worth  
 Self-efficacy  
 Independence  
 Self-awareness  
 Ego resiliency  
 Insight  
 Emotional Regulation  
 Increased social capital  
 Independent living skills  
 Planning/Executive Function  
 Attachment & relationship skills  
 Responsible decision-making  
 Conflict resolutions  
 Relationship skills  
 Humor, creativity  
 Self-regulation  
 Flexibility  
 Family/Parental Resilience  
 Healthy relationships  
 Knowledge of parenting and development  
 Social connections  
 Concrete supports in times of need

**Healing  
and  
Recovery**

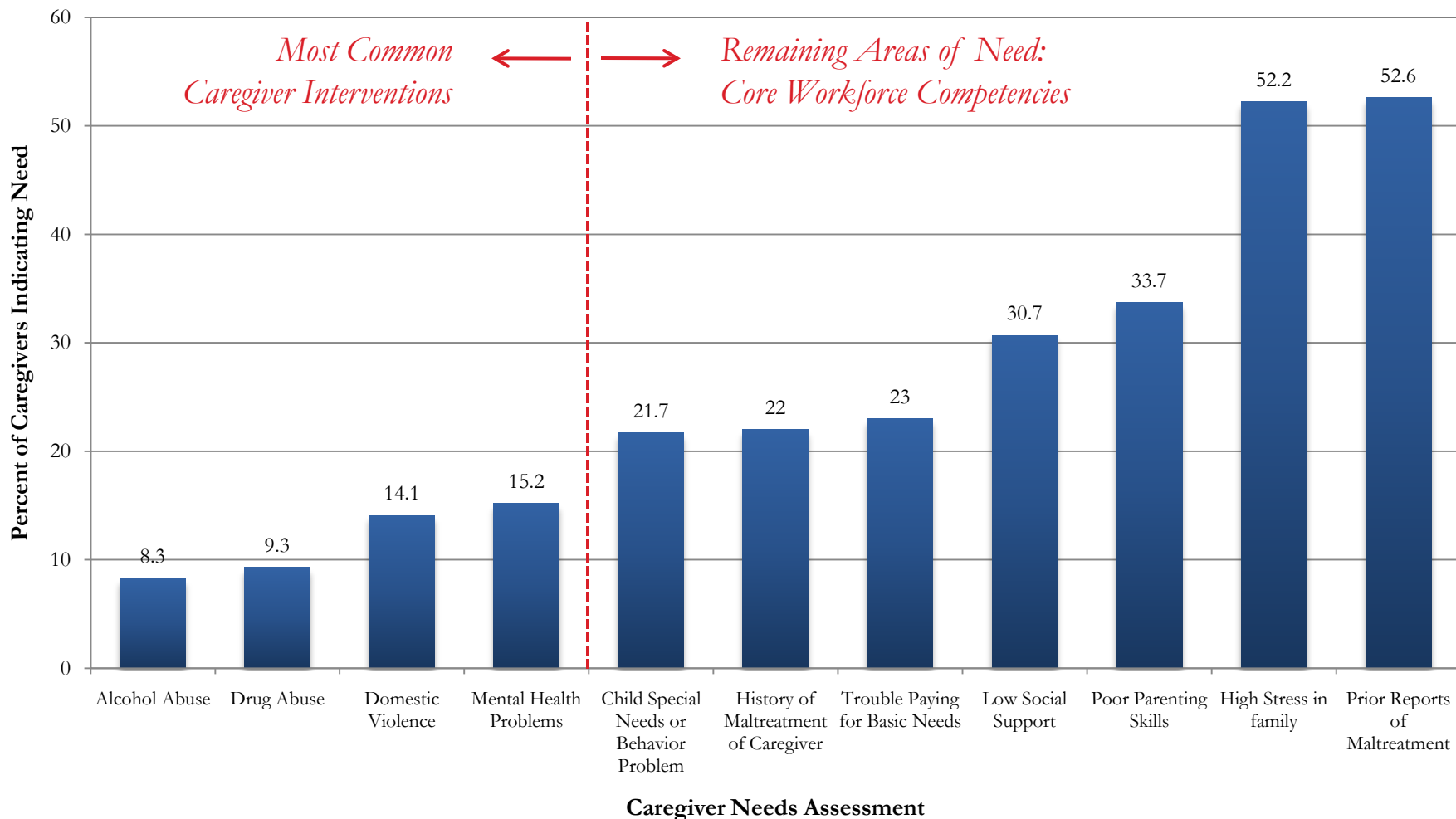
When adverse experiences do occur, child- and family-serving systems can facilitate healing and recovery with approaches that build protective mechanisms with children and their families to get children back on track

# Promoting Social and Emotional Well-Being to Facilitate Healing and Recovery



# Caregiver Needs and Intervention Areas

Needs Reported by Caregivers with Maltreatment Report, 0-14



Source: National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being, US Department of Health and Human Services. Analysis courtesy of C. Simmel, Rutgers University School of Social Work

# ACYF Priority: Promoting Social and Emotional Well-Being

- ACYF's priority is to promote social and emotional well-being of children to facilitate healing and recovery by helping children and youth integrate their experiences, addressing risk factors and building the skills, capacities, and mechanisms for healthy, normal functioning.
  - Incorporate children's social and emotional well-being – including domains of development, relational skills, and behavioral health – into assessments and service strategies
  - Build workforce competencies around common constellation of family-level issues and children's social and emotional needs
    - Assessment
    - Evidence-based response, including de-escalation, psychological first aid, etc.
    - Referral to evidence-based practices, such as CBT, and monitoring of progress

# Effective Approaches to Promoting Social and Emotional Well-Being

| Essential Considerations                | Activity  |
|---|---|
| <i>Elements of Healing and Recovery</i> |   |
| Understanding Experiences               | Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions<br>Teach Identification of Controllable and Uncontrollable Circumstances                             |
| Developmental Tasks                     | Developmental Screening<br>Developmental Intervention<br>Provide Meaningful Responsibilities to Promote Mastery and Accomplishment      |
| Coping Strategies                       | Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions<br>Relaxation and Self-Control Strategies<br>Encourage Expression of Feelings, Positive and Negative |
| Environmental Buffers                   | Protective Factors Assessment<br>Promotion of Protective Factors<br>Parenting Interventions   |
| <i>Clinical Considerations</i>          |   |
| Trauma                                  | Screening<br>De-escalation<br>Psychological First-Aid<br>Trauma-focused Interventions   |
| Behavioral Health                       | Screening<br>Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions   |
| Mental Health                           | Screening<br>Psychological First Aid<br>Mental Health Interventions   |

# Evidence-Based Interventions

| Diagnosis/Concern/Activity   | Evidence-Based Interventions  |
|--|---|
| <b><i>Screening Activities</i></b>   |   |
| Identification of Mental Health and Behavioral Health Issues                       | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; padding-right: 5px;">SCREENING TOOLS</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire</li> <li>Pediatric Symptom Checklist</li> <li>Child Behavior Checklist Behavior Assessment for Children</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul> </div> |
| <b><i>Most Common Mental Health Diagnoses for Children in Foster Care</i></b>      |   |
| Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's Summer Treatment Program</li> </ul>   |
| Posttraumatic Stress Disorder  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS)</li> <li>Combined Parent-Child Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Families at Risk for Child Physical Abuse</li> <li>Prolonged Exposure Therapy</li> <li>Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)</li> </ul>   |
| Major Depression   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adolescents Coping with Depression</li> <li>Alternative for Families-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT, formerly known as Abuse-Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy)</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul>  |
| Conduct Disorder/Oppositional Defiant Disorder                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)</li> <li>Familias Unidas</li> <li>Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)</li> <li>Strengthening Families Program (SFP)</li> </ul>   |
| <b><i>Behavioral Concerns</i></b>  |   |
| Internalizing/Externalizing Behaviors: Behavioral Problems and Relational Concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief Strategic Family Therapy</li> <li>Child Parent Psychotherapy</li> <li>Functional Family Therapy</li> <li>Nurturing Parenting Programs (NPP)</li> <li>Parenting Wisely</li> <li>Triple P</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul>   |