

## Risk and Protective Factors for Substance Use

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<b>C O M M U N I T Y</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alcohol and other drugs readily available</li> <li>● Laws and ordinances are unclear or inconsistently enforced</li> <li>● Norms are unclear or encourage use</li> <li>● Residents feel little sense of “connection” to community</li> <li>● High unemployment</li> <li>● Residents at or below the poverty level</li> <li>● Lack of strong social institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities exist for community involvement</li> <li>● Laws and ordinances are consistently enforced</li> <li>● Policies and norms encourage non-use</li> <li>● Community service opportunities available for youth</li> <li>● Resources (housing, healthcare, childcare, jobs, recreation, etc.) are available</li> </ul>
<b>F A M I L Y</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Family member with history of alcohol or other drug abuse</li> <li>● Family members don’t spend much time together</li> <li>● Parents have trouble keeping track of teens, who they’re with and where they go</li> <li>● Lack of clear rules and consequences regarding alcohol and other drug use</li> <li>● Parents use drugs, involve youth in their use (“get me a beer, would you?”) or tolerate use by youth</li> <li>● Parents have trouble setting consistent expectations and limits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Close family relationships</li> <li>● Education is valued and encouraged, and parents are actively involved</li> <li>● Copes with stress in a positive way</li> <li>● Clear expectations and limits regarding alcohol and other drug use</li> <li>● Encourages supportive relationships with caring adults beyond the immediate family</li> <li>● Shares family responsibilities, including chores and decision-making</li> <li>● Family members are nurturing and support each other</li> </ul>
<b>S C H O O L</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of clear expectations, both academic and behavioral</li> <li>● Students lack commitment or sense of belonging at school</li> <li>● High number of students who fail academically at school</li> <li>● Parents and community members not actively involved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicates high academic and behavioral expectations</li> <li>● Encourages goal-setting, academic achievement, and positive social development</li> <li>● Provides leadership and decision-making opportunities for students</li> <li>● Fosters active involvement of students, parents and community members</li> <li>● Sponsors substance-free events</li> </ul>
<b>P E E R/ I N D.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thinks most friends use</li> <li>● Thinks alcohol and drug use is “cool”</li> <li>● Begins using at a young age</li> <li>● Certain physical, emotional or personality traits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Involved in substance-free activities</li> <li>● Views parents, teachers, doctors, law enforcement officers and other adults as allies</li> <li>● Has positive future plans</li> <li>● Friends disapprove of alcohol and other drug use</li> </ul>

The Risk and Protective Factor Model is based on the work of J. David Hawkins, Ph.D., Richard F. Catalano, Ph.D., and a team of researchers at the University of Washington in Seattle.

## Shared PROTECTIVE Factors Impacting Adolescent Behaviors

<p><b>Protective factors</b> are characteristics within the individual or conditions in the family, school or community that decrease the likelihood youth will engage in unhealthy behaviors. Protective factors help youth cope with life challenges and risk factors, and increase positive development. See criteria below.</p> <p>The <b>factors in bold</b> were selected as priority prevention indicators by SPF/SIG Epidemiological Influences Workgroup</p>		Unhealthy Behaviors			
		Depression, Suicidal thoughts & attempts	Substance Use	Violence	Unsafe Sexual Activity
<b>Comty. /Society</b>	<b>Positive connection to <i>other</i> positive adults</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Safe, supportive, friendly neighborhood/community	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Clinical care and therapeutic support services for those in need	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Public policies, practices and norms supporting health and safety	✓	✓	✓	✓
	A range of community-based out-of-school time programs and opportunities for meaningful youth involvement (see individual factors, below.)				
<b>School</b>	<b>Positive school climate</b> (safe, supportive and encouraging)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Student participation in extracurricular activities and governance		✓		✓
	Early intervention student services	✓	✓		✓
<b>Family</b>	<b>Connected to family</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Positive, warm parenting style	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Living in a two-parent family	✓	✓		✓
	Higher parent education		✓	✓	✓
	Higher parental expectations about school	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Peers</b>	Positive friends and peer role models		✓	✓	✓
<b>Indiv.</b>	<b>Engaged in out-of-school time programs &amp; positive meaningful activities</b>		✓	✓	✓
	<b>Social/emotional competence &amp; self-regulation skills</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<b>Cultural identity and connection</b>	✓	✓	✓	
	Positive temperament		✓	✓	✓
	Positive self concept	✓	✓		✓
	Feeling valued and mattering to others	✓	✓		
	High grade point average	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Religious or spiritual beliefs	✓	✓		✓

## **School–Related Protective Factors for Unhealthy Adolescent Behavior**

### **Positive school climate (safe, supportive and encouraging) - Priority Factor**

This protective factor reflects a student's connection and feelings about their school, that it is a caring, supportive and encouraging environment. A positive school climate is characterized by:

- 1) Focused efforts to build culturally responsive, supportive relationships with students and families;
- 2) high expectations for student academics, behavior and responsibility;
- 3) use of proactive classroom management strategies to maintain a positive atmosphere;
- 4) physical and emotional safety, fair and respectful treatment of all students;
- 5) consistent acknowledgement of all students and recognition for good work;
- 6) interactive teaching and cooperative learning strategies;
- 7) student voice in school activities and classroom management;
- 8) consistent professional learning for staff to build school climate and trauma-engaged whole-school practices.

Students feel “connected” (bonded) to their school based on their feelings about the people at school, both staff and other students. Connectedness is described as being treated fairly by teachers, feeling close to people at school, being safe and feeling like a part of the school. Positive school climates are linked to lower rates of absenteeism, delinquency, substance misuse, early sexual initiation and emotional disturbances as well as higher grades, test scores, graduation rates and social emotional competence. *A positive school setting is not only a protective factor in itself, but an environment that can nurture other protective factors as well.*

### **Student participation in extra-curricular activities and governance**

The school setting provides ample opportunities for student voice and leadership to help solve problems, provide new ideas and input to decisions that impact the student body. Examples of extra-curricular activities involve performing arts, debate, computer, service or 4-H clubs, student councils, tutoring, peer programs or service-learning projects. *Peer programs* include, peer teaching, peer helping, positive peer influence campaigns, and peer advisory councils. *Service-learning* projects typically focus on helping people or improving conditions in the community.

**Early intervention student services** - Student assistance programs, counseling support groups and school-linked health centers provide the learning supports critical to helping students stay in school. Student assistance programs provide prevention and intervention services to those students whose lives are impacted by stress trauma (alcohol and drug abuse, violence, suicide, divorce, abuse, neglect, depression). Services may include support or education in problem solving, self-esteem, social skills, and conflict resolution. Several studies have demonstrated that school-based health centers can play an important role in improving educational success through their impact on school attendance and retention. Students with access to comprehensive health services via school-based health centers report greater exposure to reproductive health education and counseling and greater use of hormonal contraception.