

FACT SHEET

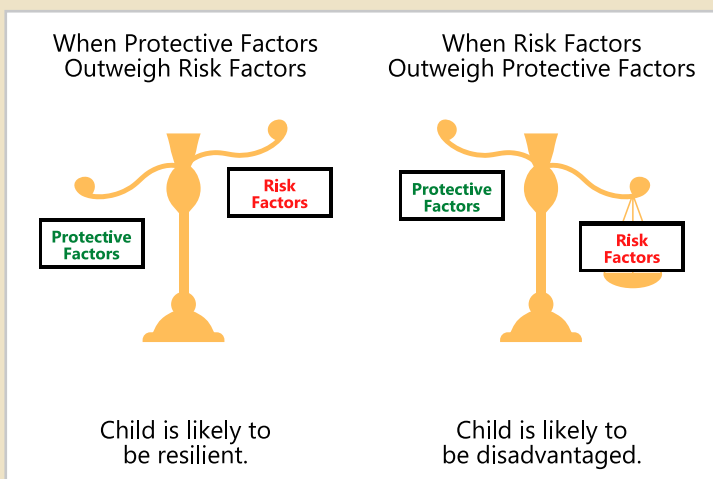
Risk and Protective Factors on the Healthy Youth Survey

Researchers at the University of Washington (UW) developed a public health model for the prevention of youth substance use and other behaviors, by identifying risk and protective factors.¹

- **Risk Factor** - something that may attribute to a problem.
- **Protective Factor** - something that helps to prevent a problem.

Taking a close look at youth risk and protective factors can help providers select appropriate programming and interventions.

Effective prevention focuses on reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors. Comprehensive prevention efforts aim to ensure that protective factors outweigh risk factors at the individual, peer, family, school and community level.



Peer-Individual Risk Factors	Substance Use	Delinquency	Teen Pregnancy	School Dropout	Violence	Depression & Anxiety
Friends Who Use Drugs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Favorable Attitudes Towards Drug Use	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Early Initiation of Drug Use	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Perceived Risk of Drug Use	✓	✓				
Family Risk Factors						
Poor Family Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parental Favorable Attitude Towards Drug Use	✓	✓			✓	
School Risk Factors						
Academic Failure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Low Commitment to School	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Community Risk Factors						
Perceived Availability of Drugs	✓				✓	
Perceived Availability of Handguns		✓			✓	
Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use	✓	✓			✓	
Low Neighborhood Attachment	✓	✓			✓	

✓ = Risk Factor associated with increased likelihood of health risk behavior.

Family, School, and Community Protective Factors	Substance Use	Delinquency	Risky Sexual Behavior	School Dropout	Violence	Depression & Anxiety
Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement	✓	✓				
Rewards for Prosocial Involvement	✓	✓			✓	✓

✓ = Protective Factor has a positive influence against the health risk behavior

- Each Risk and Protective factor in the Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) is measured with two or more survey questions to include multiple dimensions of the factor.
- The Fact Sheets on Risk and Protective factors for the Healthy Youth Survey (<https://www.askhys.net/FactSheets>), refer to the “percent of students at risk,” which is defined as the percent of students whose risk scores were above a certain number as determined by UW researchers.
- Data shows that youth who are not doing well academically, or who don’t believe that school is important, are likely to feel less connected and committed to school.²
- Data also shows that these same youth are likely to be those who are trying drugs or experiencing depression.³
- Researchers have identified best practice, evidence and research- based programs that can decrease risk factors and promote healthy family bonding, family management, strong social supports and positive school cultures. ⁴

Providing youth with multiple opportunities to learn and grow while teaching them life skills, recognizing them for who they are, teaching and promoting positive relationships in all aspects of their life, and setting clear standards can help encourage them to achieve healthy behaviors.⁵

For More Information:

- Resources for parents on how to connect with their youth: <https://starttalkingnow.org/>
- Resources for schools: <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/mental-social-behavioral-health>
- Resources about mental health; National Alliance on Mental Health: <https://www.nami.org/Home>
- To find out about prevention coalitions in your area and how to get involved, go to: https://www.theathenaforum.org/community_prevention_and_wellness_initiative_cpwi

References:

1. J. David Hawkins, 1992
2. Coie and Jacobs, 1993; Coie et al., 1993; Hawkins et al., 1988; Rumberger, 1983, 1995; Yoshikawa, 1994
3. Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group [CPPRG], 1999; Grossman et al., 1997; Hawkins et al., 1999; Hawkins, Guo, Hill, Battin-Pearson, & Abbott, 2001
4. (<https://depts.washington.edu/sdrg/research/>)
5. (<https://www.communitiesthatcare.net/prevention-science/>)

These are the risk and protective factor questions that were asked on the 2021 survey (<https://www.askhys.net/Survey>).

Risk Factors

Peer-Individual Risk Factors

Friends Use Drugs

A peer-individual risk factor scale composed of four HYS questions.

- Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have:
 - Smoked cigarettes?
 - Tried beer, wine, or hard liquor when their parent(s) didn't know about it?
 - Used marijuana?
 - Used LSD, cocaine, amphetamines, or other illegal drugs?

Favorable Attitudes Towards Drug Use

A peer-individual risk factor scale composed of four HYS questions.

- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to:
 - Drink beer, wine, or hard liquor regularly?
 - Smoke cigarettes?
 - Smoke marijuana?
 - Use LSD, cocaine, amphetamines, or another illegal drug?

Perceived Risk of Drug Use

A peer-individual risk factor scale composed of four HYS questions.

- How much do you think people risk harming themselves if they:
 - Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day?
 - Try marijuana once or twice?
 - Smoke marijuana regularly (at least once or twice a week)?
 - Take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?

Early Initiation of Drug Use

A peer-individual risk factor scale composed of three HYS questions.

- How old were you the first time you:
 - Used marijuana?
 - Smoked a cigarette, even just a puff?
 - Had more than a sip or two of beer, wine, or hard liquor?

Family Risk Factors

Poor Family Management

A family protective scale composed of eight HYS questions.

- My parent(s) ask if I've gotten my homework done.
- Would your parent(s) know if you did not come home on time?
- When I am not at home, one of my parent(s) knows where I am and who I am with.
- The rules in my family are clear.
- My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.
- In you drank some beer, wine, or liquor without your parent(s)'s permission, would you be caught by them?
- If you carried a handgun without your parent(s)'s permission, would you be caught by them?
- If you skipped school, would you be caught by your parent(s)'s?

Parental Attitudes Favorable Towards Drug Use

A family risk factor scale composed of three HYS questions.

- How wrong do your parent(s) feel it would be for you to:
 - Drink beer, wine, or hard liquor regularly (at least once or twice a month)?
 - Smoke cigarettes?
 - Use marijuana?

School Risk Factors

Academic Failure

A school risk factor scale composed of two HYS questions.

- Putting them all together, what were your grades like last year?
- Are your school grades better than the grades of most students in your class?

Low Commitment to School

A school risk factor scale composed of seven HYS questions.

- How often do you feel the schoolwork you are assigned is meaningful and important?
- How interesting are most of your courses to you?
- How important do you think the things you are learning in school are going to be for you later in life?
- Think back over the past year in school. How often did you: Enjoy school?
- Think back over the past year in school. How often did you: Dislike school?
- Think back over the past year in school. How often did you: Try to do your best work in school?
- During the LAST 4 WEEKS, how many whole days of school have you missed because you skipped or "cut"?

Community Risk Factors

Perceived Availability of Drugs

A community risk factor scale composed of four HYS questions.

- If you wanted to get some beer, wine, or hard liquor, how easy would it be for you to get some?
- If you wanted to get some cigarettes, how easy would it be for you to get some?
- If you wanted to get some marijuana, how easy would it be for you to get some?
- If you wanted to get a drug like cocaine, LSD, or amphetamines, how easy would it be for you to get some?

Perceived Availability of Handguns

- If you wanted to get a handgun, how easy would it be for you to get one?

Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use

A community risk factor scale composed of six HYS questions.

- How wrong would most adults in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age:
 - To use marijuana?
 - To drink alcohol?
 - To smoke cigarettes?
- If a kid drank some beer, wine, or hard liquor in your neighborhood or community, would they be caught by the police?
- If a kid carried a handgun in your neighborhood would they be caught by the police?
- If a kid used marijuana in your neighborhood or community, would they be caught by the police?

Low Neighborhood Attachment

A community risk factor scale composed of three HYS questions:

- I'd like to get out of my neighborhood or community.
- If I had to move, I would miss the neighborhood or community I now live in.
- I like my neighborhood / community.

Protective Factors

Family Protective Factors

Opportunities for Prosocial Family Involvement

A family protective scale composed of three HYS questions.

- If I had a personal problem, I could ask parent(s) for help.
- My parent(s) give me lots of chances to do fun things with them.
- My parent(s) ask me what I think before most family decisions affecting me are made.

Rewards for Prosocial Family Involvement

A family protective scale composed of four HYS questions only asked to 6th graders on Form C (https://www.askhys.net/Docs/HYS%202021%20Form%20C%20e-survey%20_Final.pdf).

- My parent(s) notice when I am doing a good job and let me know about it.
- How often do your parent(s) tell you they're proud of you for something you've done?
- Do you enjoy spending time with your mom(s)?
- Do you enjoy spending time with your dad(s)?

School Protective Factors

Opportunities for Prosocial School Involvement

A school protective factor scale composed of five HYS questions:

- In my school, students have lots of chances to help decide things like class activities and rules.
- There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk with a teacher one-on-one.
- Teachers ask me to work on special classroom projects.
- There are lots of chances for students in my school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.
- I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities.

Rewards for Prosocial School Involvement

A school protective factor scale composed of four HYS questions:

- My teacher(s) notices when I am doing a good job and lets me know about it.
- The school lets my parent(s) know when I have done something well.
- I feel safe at my school.
- My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.

Community- Protective Factors

Opportunities for Prosocial Community Involvement

A community protective factor scale that includes four HYS questions.

- There are adults in my neighborhood or community I could talk to about something important.
- Which of the following activities for people your age are available in your neighborhood or community?
 - Sports teams and recreation
 - Scouts, Camp Fire, 4-H Clubs, or other service clubs
 - Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, or other activity clubs

Rewards for Prosocial Community Involvement

A community protective factor scale that includes three HYS questions; only asked to 6th graders on Form C (https://www.askhys.net/Docs/HYS%202021%20Form%20C%20e-survey%20_Final.pdf).

- My neighbors notice when I am doing a good job and let me know.
- There are people in my neighborhood or community who encourage me to do my best.
- There are people in my neighborhood or community who are proud of me when I do something well.