

RISK FACTORS

What puts children at risk for drug use?

Society/Community Risk Factors:

- Alcohol, tobacco, and drugs are easily available
- It is socially acceptable to use drugs
- Laws are not enforced consistently
- There are not good jobs or healthy activities available (extracurricular activities)
- The community lacks clear expectations of academics and acceptable behavior
- High numbers of students don't attend school or fail academically

Peer Risk Factors:

- A child is rejected by their peers
 - A child doesn't have friends
 - A child's friends are using drugs
- **Peers/other people are one of the main reasons children choose to drink alcohol or use other drugs.**

Family Risk Factors:

- Family history of substance abuse
- Family tolerates drug use
- Poor family management (lack of consistent discipline, lack of communication, etc.)

Individual Risk Factors:

- Consistent problem behavior from young childhood
- Withdrawal from peers
- Rebellious
- Academic failure (not based on ability)

PROTECTIVE FACTORS ADDRESSED IN THE SCFP LESSONS

What protects children from drug use?

Society/Community Protective Factors:

- Access to drugs is limited.
- Laws against drugs are enforced.
- Housing, healthcare, childcare, jobs, and recreation are available.
- Concerned adults, relatives, or neighbors (who provide support, comfort, and counsel in times of transition and crisis) are involved in children's lives.
- The community has high academic and behavioral expectations for children.
- Schools are responsive to student's needs.

Peer Protective Factors

- Child is involved in substance-free activities (sports, music, church, etc.).
- Child's friends disapprove of drugs.

Family Protective Factors:

- Close family relationships (parent/child attachment, bonding, love)
- Consistent, predictable parenting
- Parental monitoring and discipline
- Parent's communication of values and expectations, including avoiding high-risk behaviors
- Children given chance to be helpful, includes assigned chores and responsibilities
- Family (or other important adult) has religious beliefs that provide a sense of meaning for the child's life

- **Family factors outweigh risk factors (spends time together as a family, children feel valued by parents, parents are interested in children).**

Individual Protective Factors:

- **Family bonding**
- **Relationships:** ability to be a friend, ability to form positive relationships, caring and empathetic
- **Self-worth:** feelings of self-worth, self-confidence in ability to succeed
- **Service:** gives of self in service to others and/or a cause
- **Life skills:** uses life skills, including good decision-making, assertiveness, and self-control
- **School bonding:** interest/connection to learning
- **Independence:** avoids unhealthy people and situations, peer refusal skills
- **Healthy decision-making skills**

PROTECTIVE FACTORS ADDRESSED IN THE SCFP LESSONS

- **Positive view of personal future:** optimistic; has direction, mission, and purpose in life
- **Spirituality:** personal faith in God
- **Perseverance:** keeps on despite difficulty, doesn't give up