

Risk and Protective Factors Information for Parents

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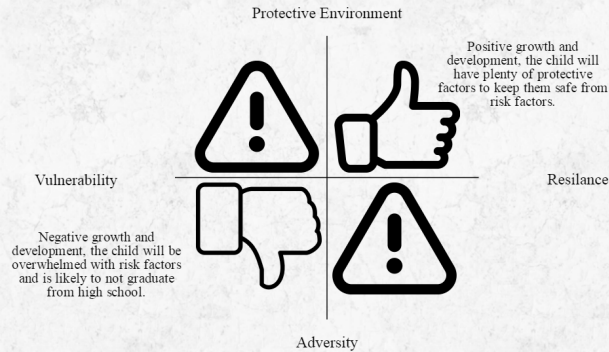
What are Risk Factors?

Risk factors are those parts of a student's environment (be it home, school, or social) that increase the possibility of negative events/development to happen. These factors can range from personal characteristics and internal influences like a low self-esteem and view of self performance to external influences like parental behavior and the friends a student has.

What are Protective Factors?

Protective factors are those parts of a student's environment and life that insulate them from the impacts of risk factors and negative events and influences. When a child has numerous protective factors, they can keep them from succumbing to risk factors. These range from internal factors like a feeling of safety to external influences like a stable home life and a good friend group.

Risk Factor Matrix



Generally students in the upper right corner of the matrix are the most well equipped to deal with crisis in their life and can handle most tasks, while children in the bottom left corner of the matrix will be put at a serious disadvantage when they face crisis and difficulty in their life. While it is impossible to completely provide a child a perfect protected childhood and early development, there are a number of things that can be done by parents to give their child protective factors.

Sources: Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board Resilience Matrix
Resilience: Concept, Factors and Models for Practice (Fiona Mitchell)

How to Boost Protective Factors



Build a strong and secure base for your child, where they feel they belong and are secure in order to give them a foundation to grow from. This will allow them to grow independently and feel safe at home.



Help your child build a solid self-esteem, which is vital in their development. If they feel positive about themselves they can make positive decisions for their life.



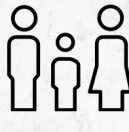
Encourage your child to read and be engaged in academic activities from a young age. Activities like reading to them, reading books together, and going to museums can lead them to be highly involved in academics later in life and gives them a head start on literacy.



Teach your child about your morals and ideals, so that they can begin to build their own set of values and morals. By discussing morals with your child you will help guide their moral development and establish a foundation for future growth and will influence their later decisions.



Establish a set of rules and guidelines for proper behavior for your child, and actively enforce and explain them. This will help prepare your child for school life and following societal rules.



Model healthy and secure relationships for your child, and help them understand what a positive relationship looks like. If your child knows what a good relationship is like, they will be likely to make strong and positive connections that will give them a base of support from others in their life.



Talk with your child and be open with them; if you actively discuss their life and experiences with them and share your own then they can learn from your stories and you can better understand their development and life outside of home.



Promote a positive outlook on life and on academics. If your child has a positive view of the world and their education they will be more likely to resist negative influences and to persevere through challenges and struggles.