

Shared Risk and Protective Factors Model

What it is and how to utilize it in community prevention work in Wyoming

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Overview

Risk and protective factors are circumstances that may increase or decrease the likelihood of an individual engaging in substance use. Understanding risk and protective factors can provide valuable insights into how to most effectively allocate resources and efforts in prevention.



Risk Factors

A risk factor is a characteristic at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precedes and is associated with a higher likelihood of problem outcomes.¹



Protective Factors

A protective factor is a characteristic associated with a lower likelihood of problem outcomes or that reduces the negative impact of a risk factor on problem outcomes.¹

In addition to individual risk and protective factors, the shared risk and protective factor model examines the convergence of numerous factors and their influence on various social and health consequences. Identifying shared risk and protective factors across the areas of the Community Prevention Grant (CPG) work allows community partners to ground their efforts in a common framework.

Using a shared risk and protective model helps build more efficient and relevant work in your community by breaking down the silos between prevention partners, avoiding duplication of services in your community, simultaneously addressing multiple behaviors and promoting cost-effective investments.¹ The Shared Risk and Protective Factors (SRPF) Model can be used in CPG work to address numerous focus areas including alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and suicide with multi-level strategies to achieve the greatest impact.



Youth Substance Use

Substance use among young people is a significant concern. Check out the following resources for more information on risk and protective factors and evidence-based practices for this population.

[² Substance Misuse Prevention for Young Adults](#)

[³ Risk and Protective Factors Across the Lifecycle](#)

[⁴ Preventing Substance Abuse in Adolescents: A Review of High-Impact Strategies](#)

There are three defining characteristics to the Shared Risk and Protective Factors approach⁵:

1. Improving multiple population-level outcomes
2. Impacting the social determinants of health in ways that are positive and equitable
3. Engaging partners across multiple disciplines and sectors.

Shared Risk and Protective Factors

The Shared Risk and Protective Factors Model considers the intersection of risk and protective factors and how to address more than one health or quality of life outcome at the same time.⁵ An SRPF approach also requires working across disciplines and sectors and can include interventions across the socio-ecological framework.



Shared Risk & Protective Factors Model Use Examples

- ✓ Instead of implementing a program to only reduce teen suicide, an SRPF approach would include implementing an intervention that addresses teen suicide and at least one other outcome, such as substance use among teens⁵.
- ✓ SRPF approaches can include working with the department of transportation on reducing teen substance use as part of an effort to also reduce motor vehicle crashes involving teens².

Socio-Ecological Framework

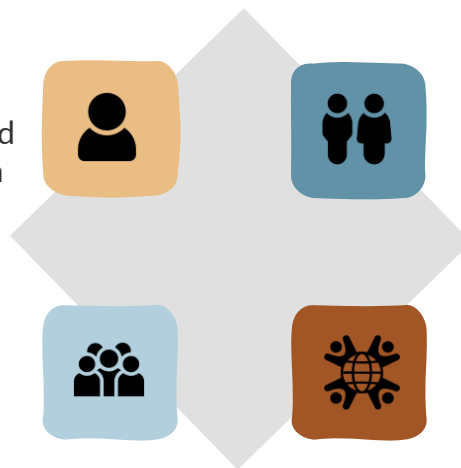
The social-ecological model allows us to consider the different contexts in which risk and protective factors exist and how they interact to choose multi-level strategies to achieve the greatest impact.⁶ The four levels of the model include individual, relational, community, and societal. People have relationships within their communities and larger society, so each person's biological and psychological characteristics exist in multiple contexts.⁷ Risk and protective factors within one context, such as family, may also influence or be influenced by factors in another context. For example, children whose parents divorce are more likely to have mood or substance use disorders and adolescents who feel more connected to their school are less likely to use alcohol and develop anxiety disorders. It is important to address all contexts of a person's risk or protective factors.⁷ The SRPF approach includes interventions across the social-ecological model to influence social determinants at many levels.

Individual

Factors specific to the individual, such as age, education, income, health, and psychosocial problems, which may correspond with substance use.⁶

Community

The settings in which social relationships occur, such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods. These factors can have both negative and positive associations with substance use.⁶



Relational

An individual's closest social circle – family members, peers, teachers, and other close relationships – that contribute to their range of experience and may influence their behavior.⁶

Societal

Broad societal factors, such as social and cultural norms. Other significant factors operating at this level include the health, economic, educational, and social policies that contribute to economic and/or social inequalities between populations.⁶

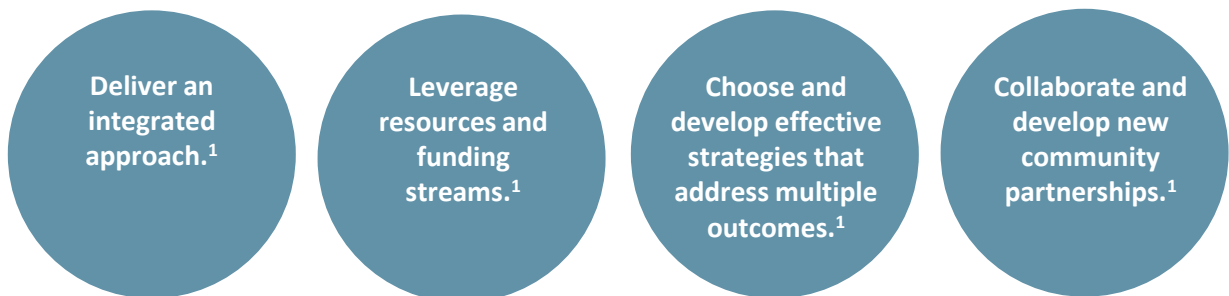
Shared Risk & Protective Factors Table and Strategies

The table^{1,8} below provides a visual of shared risk and protective factors that contribute to the focus areas of the CPG work. Understanding the shared risk and protective factors can help guide your work. For example, if you select an intervention like *Sources of Strength* that addresses youth mental health and suicide, it can also impact outcomes for substance use, bullying, and violence. This gives you the opportunity to influence many outcomes at once and may facilitate community partnerships with organizations who are interested in impacting some of the same areas.

Risk Factors	Alcohol	Tobacco	Marijuana	Other Drugs	Suicide	Protective Factors
High Alcohol Outlet Density	X				X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of resources and services among community agencies. • Community support and connectedness. • Opportunities for prosocial involvement in the community. • Recognition for prosocial involvement.
Extreme Economic Deprivation	X	X	X	X	X	
Low Neighborhood Attachment	X	X	X	X	X	
Friends who Engage in Problem Behaviors	X	X	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family support and bonding. • Connection to a caring adult. • Association with pro-social peers.
Family Conflict	X	X	X	X	X	
Substance Use	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonding and attachment to school. • Increase in social skills. • Emotional self-regulation
Low Educational Achievement	X	X	X	X	X	
Lack of Commitment to School	X	X	X	X		

Using the Shared Risk and Protective Factors Model

The shared risk and protective factors model provides many benefits to community prevention work. Some key approaches to implementing this model with current and future prevention efforts are shown below.



References

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