

Substance Abuse

OVERVIEW:

Youth today face many risks, but drugs abuse remains near the top of the list. Drug abuse has serious consequences in our homes, schools, and communities. Risk and protective factors for drug abuse are plentiful; sorting out the multitude factors that influence drug abuse is important in order to understand the problem and develop solutions.

GOAL:

Organize a broad set risk and protective factors and outcomes in a visual tool that will help demonstrate the scope of the drug abuse and the many antecedents and connections between factors that influence the problem.

ROLE:

You! As a team of high school health science students, you have a tremendous opportunity to promote understanding and positive choices in your community!

OBJECTIVE:

Obj. 3.12: Identify connections between risk & protective factors and outcomes associated with a health problem (this includes the behaviors and antecedents leading to the health problem).

DELIVERABLES:

- 1) Factor-Outcome Web
- 2) Proposal for a SMART intervention

ASSESSMENT:

Your visual map will be evaluated on a rubric based on the organization, depth of thinking, and rigor of thinking. The intervention will be graded for effort, quality, and effectiveness.



Case Introduction:

Risk & Protective Factors

Read Chapter 1: Risk and Protective Factors of the National Institute on Drug Abuse's report entitled, "Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents." Answer the questions on the following page before, during and after reading.

Chapter 1: Risk Factors and Protective Factors

This chapter discusses how risk and protective factors influence drug abuse behaviors. The early signs of risk, transition to high-risk periods, and general patterns of drug abuse among children and adolescents. A major focus is how prevention programs can strengthen protection or intervene to reduce risks.

What are risk factors and protective factors?

Risks are the factors that increase the likelihood of developing the problem. Protective factors are those that decrease the risk of developing the problem. Protective factors can be thought of as "buffers" that reduce the impact of risks. Protective factors can be thought of as "buffers" that reduce the impact of risks. Protective factors can be thought of as "buffers" that reduce the impact of risks.

| Risk Factor | Domain | Protective Factor |
|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| Child Maltreatment | Individual | Temperament |
| Family of Parental Supervision | Family | Parental Monitoring |
| Substance Abuse | Peer | Academic Competence |
| Drug Availability | School | Acquiring Life Skills |
| Poverty | Community | Strong Neighborhood Attachment |

Chapter 1 Principles

Risk Factors and Protective Factors

Prevention programs should address protective factors as well as risk factors. The risk of becoming a drug abuser includes the influence of the number and kind of factors that affect attitudes and behaviors and protective factors that are available.

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Gender may also determine how an individual responds to risk factors. Research in relationships within the family shows that adolescents girls respond differently to parental support and discipline, while adolescents boys consistently respond negatively. Research on early risk behaviors in the school setting shows that aggressive behavior in boys and learning difficulties in girls are the primary signs of poor protective factors.

What are the early signs of risk that may predict later drug abuse?

Some signs of risk can be seen as early as infancy. Children's personality traits or temperament can place them at increased risk for later drug abuse. Children's personality traits or temperament can place them at increased risk for later drug abuse. Children's personality traits or temperament can place them at increased risk for later drug abuse.

Outside the Family

Other risk factors include the quality of children's relationships in settings outside the family, such as in other schools, with their peers, teachers, and in the community. Difficulties in these settings can be crucial to a child's emotional, cognitive, and social development. Some of these risk factors are:

- Inappropriate classroom behavior, such as aggression and inactivity;
- academic failures;
- poor social coping skills;
- association with peers with problem behaviors, including drug abuse; and
- misperceptions of the extent and acceptability of drug-abusing behaviors in school, peer, and community environments.

Association with drug-abusing peers is often the most immediate risk for exposing adolescents to drug abuse and delinquent behavior. Research has shown, however, that addressing such behaviors in intervention can be challenging. For example, a recent study (Dishion et al. 2003) found that being high-achieving in a peer group intervention resulted in positive outcomes. Current research is exploring the role that adults and positive peers can play in helping to avoid such outcomes in future interventions.

Other factors—such as drug availability, drug trafficking patterns, and beliefs that drug abuse is generally inoffensive—can also play a role in influencing young people to use or abuse drugs.

When they enter high school, young people face additional psychological and behavioral challenges. At the same time, they may be exposed to a greater availability of drugs, drug dealers, and social environments involving drugs. These challenges can increase the risk that they will abuse alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

A particularly challenging situation is an adolescent who moves away from home for the first time without parental supervision, perhaps to attend college or other education. Substance abuse, particularly of alcohol, remains a major public health problem for college populations.

When young adults enter the workforce or marry, they again confront new challenges and stresses that may place them at risk for alcohol and other drug abuse in their adult environment. But these challenges can also be protective when they present opportunities for young people to grow and mature. Career and family success. Research has shown that those who do not marry are at greater risk for drug abuse in the new life because more opportunities than being married with drug.

Risks appear at every transition from early childhood through young adulthood, therefore, prevention programs need to consider their target audience and implement programs that provide support opportunities for each developmental stage. They may need to consider how the protective factors needed in those transitions can be strengthened.

Different patterns of drug initiation have been identified based on gender, race or ethnicity, and geographic location. For example, research has found that the environment in which young people are raised can also be influenced by where they are raised. For example, young people who are raised in urban areas are more likely to use drugs than those who are raised in rural areas. Additionally, drugs may be used by different people differently, for example, cigarettes, alcohol, or even pain.

While more youth do not progress beyond initial use, a small percentage typically escalate their substance abuse. Researchers have found that those youth are the most likely to have experienced a combination of high levels of risk factors with low levels of protective factors. These adolescents were characterized by high stress, low parental support, and low academic competence.

However, there are protective factors that can reduce the escalation to substance abuse. These factors include self-control, which tends to inhibit problem behavior and often increases naturally as children mature during adolescence. In addition, protective family structure, individual personality, and environmental variables can reduce the impact of various risks of drug abuse. Prevention interventions can provide skills and support to high-risk youth to enhance levels of protective factors and prevent escalation to drug abuse.

COMMUNITY ACTION BOX

- Parents can use information on risk and protective factors to help identify their child's problem areas.
- Educators can strengthen training and bonding to school by addressing aggressive behaviors and poor concentration—risks associated with later onset of drug abuse and related problems.
- Community leaders can address community risk and protective factors associated with drug problems in their target population.

Source: Robertson, EB, David, SL, and Rao, SA. Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents (In Brief), Second Edition. National Institute on Drug Abuse. <http://www.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/preventingdruguse_2.pdf>

Explore the Problem:

1. Before Reading:

Consider your own life. Think about home, school, the community, organizations or activities you are part of, your family, friends, the media, and anything else that has an influence on you or occupies your time. What factors, in your experience, have influenced your choice to use or not use drugs. List as many as you can!

2. During Reading:

Examine the five domains (or settings) on page 6 (first page of Ch. 1). Which domain (individual, family, peer, school, or community) do you think plays the **biggest role** in your decision to use or not use drugs? Which plays the **smallest role**? Explain.

3. After Reading:

What was most surprising or interesting to you about this issue? List at least one new and useful thing you learned from this reading.

Background Research:

1. Choose the specific drug you will focus on and circle your choice below:

- a. Anabolic steroids
- b. Bath salts
- c. Cocaine
- d. Heroin
- e. Inhalants
- f. Marijuana
- g. MDMA (Ecstasy)
- h. Methamphetamine (Meth)
- i. Prescription Drugs
- j. Tobacco
- k. Alcohol

2. Conduct background research. Begin at the following website:

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts>

Note: For teams choosing ALCOHOL, the website above does not have information. Instead, begin at: www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/alcoholdrug/

3. Find additional credible sources (ex: CDC, NIH, WebMD, etc.) to gather additional background information.

4. Record important information and your source citation information in the table on the following page:

| | Information |
|--|-------------|
| <p>Description of drug (include routes of administration)</p> | |
| <p>How many teens abuse it? (include any other important data or statistics you find)</p> | |
| <p>What are the short and long-term effects?</p> | |
| <p>How does it affect the brain?</p> | |
| <p>SOURCES: (Record your source in this box. Number them so you can footnote the information you list above.)</p> | |

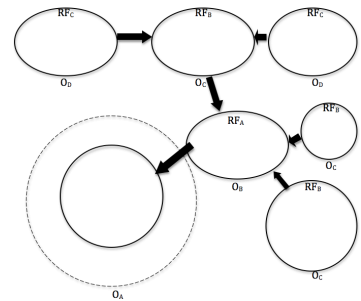
Identifying Risk & Protective Factors:

Using the reading, the web sources from your background research, and any other sources, list risk and protective factors for abuse of your assigned drug in the table below.

| Risk Factors | Protective Factors |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| | |
| <p>SOURCES:</p> | |

Factor-Outcome Web:

Using your lists in the table above, create a Factor-Outcome web that encompasses all of the variables you have. As you create your web, you will likely add more variables as you go, because the connections you begin to see will give you new ideas. This is the benefit of creating a visual map of our thinking!



Identify Solutions:

Review your Factor-Outcome web. Choose one factor-outcome pair (two connected variables) and write them below:

Risk or Protective Factor:

Outcome:

Now you will propose a simple, yet SMART intervention aimed at reducing the negative risk factor you selected in order to improve the outcome OR promoting the positive protective factor to improve the outcome. Use the space below to brainstorm your intervention, then fill out the Intervention Proposal on the next page.

BRAINSTORM SPACE:

Intervention Proposal:

Drug:

Name of Intervention:

Factor/Outcome:

Description:

How is this intervention SMART?

Specific:

Measurable:

Achievable (yet Ambitious!):

Relevant:

Time-bound:

How would your intervention be evaluated in order to determine how it worked and whether it was successful or not?

Rubric:

Your final Factor-Effect web and your Intervention Proposal will be graded using the rubric below.

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| | Needs Improvement | Emerging Mastery | Partial Mastery | Mastery |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Factor-Effect Web | <p>Organization: Web is very confusing</p> <p>Depth: Includes less than 10 variables</p> <p>Rigor: Variables are too simplified or unclear</p> | <p>Organization: Web is confusing or inaccessible</p> <p>Depth: Includes at least 10 variables</p> <p>Rigor: Variables are somewhat unclear</p> | <p>Organization: Web is visually accessible</p> <p>Depth: Includes at least 15 variables</p> <p>Rigor: Variables are mostly clear and detailed</p> | <p>Organization: Web is visually pleasing</p> <p>Depth: Includes at least 20 variables</p> <p>Rigor: Variables are clear and detailed</p> |
| Intervention Proposal | <p>Effort: Idea is incomplete</p> <p>Quality: Description incomplete or confusing.</p> <p>Effectiveness: Missing or incomplete SMART criteria and evaluation plan</p> | <p>Effort: Idea lacks originality</p> <p>Quality: Description somewhat unclear</p> <p>Effectiveness: Clear but is not convincing or does not meet SMART criteria or have a logical evaluation plan</p> | <p>Effort: Somewhat Creative but may lack originality</p> <p>Quality: Description provides fairly clear explanation</p> <p>Effectiveness: Clear but is only somewhat convincing or does not meet SMART criteria or have a logical evaluation plan</p> | <p>Effort: Creative and original intervention</p> <p>Quality: Description provides clear explanation</p> <p>Effectiveness: Clear and convincing; meets SMART criteria, has appropriate evaluation plan</p> |