Risk and Protective Factors for Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Disorders Across the Life Cycle

**Sources of Risk/Protective Factors**
- Individual
- Family
- School/community

**Disorders**
- depression
- anxiety
- substance abuse

**Type of Factor**
- risk factor
- protective factor

### Risk Factors for Infancy and Early Childhood
- Difficult temperament
- Insecure attachment
- Hostile to peers, socially inhibited
- Irritability
- Fearfulness
- Difficulty temperaments
- Head injury
- Motor, language, and cognitive impairments
- Early aggressive behavior
- Sexual abuse

- Parental drug/alcohol use
- Cold and unresponsive mother behavior
- Marital conflict
- Negative events

- Parental drug/alcohol use
- Family dysfunction
- Disturbed family environment
- Poor academic performance in early grades

- Specific traumatic experiences
- Negative events
- Lack of control or mastery experiences

- Urban setting
- Poverty

### Protective Factors for Infancy and Early Childhood
- Self-regulation
- Secure attachment
- Mastery of communication and language skills
- Ability to make friends and get along with others

- Reliable support and discipline from caregivers
- Responsiveness
- Protection from harm and fear
- Opportunities to resolve conflict

- Adequate socioeconomic resources for the family
- Support for early learning

- Access to supplemental services such as feeding, and screening for vision and hearing

- Stable, secure attachment to childcare provider

- Low ratio of caregivers to children

- Regulatory systems that support high quality of care

### Factors for Middle Childhood
- Negative self-image
- Apathy
- Anxiety
- Dysphoria
- Insecure attachment

- Poor social skills: impulsive, aggressive, passive, and withdrawn

- Poor social problem-solving skills

- Shyness

- Poor impulse control

- Sensation-seeking

- Lack of behavioral self-control

- Impulsivity

- Early persistent behavior problems

- Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder

- Anxiety

- Depression

- Antisocial behavior

- Head injury

- Self-reported psychotic symptoms

- Parental depression

- Poor parenting, rejection, lack of parental warmth

- Child abuse/maltreatment

- Loss

- Marital conflict or divorce

- Family dysfunction

- Parents with anxiety disorder or anxious child rearing practices

- Parental overcontrol and intrusiveness

- Parents model, prompt, and reinforce threat appraisals and avoidant behaviors

- Marital conflict; poor marital adjustments

- Negative life events

- Permissive parenting

- Parent-child conflict

- Low parental warmth

- Parental hostility

- Harsh discipline

- Child abuse/maltreatment

- Substance use among parents or siblings

- Parental favorable attitudes toward alcohol and/or drug use

- Inadequate supervision and monitoring

- Low parental aspirations for child

- Lack of or inconsistent discipline

- Family dysfunction

- Peer rejection

- Stressful life events

- Poor grades/achievements

- Poverty

- Stressful community events such as violence

- Witnessing community violence

- Social trauma

- Negative events

- Lack of control or mastery experiences

- School failure

- Low commitment to school

- Peer rejection

- Deviant peer group

- Peer attitudes toward drugs

- Alienation from peers

- Law and norms favorable toward alcohol and drug use

- Availability and access to alcohol

- Urban setting

- Poverty

- Mastery of academic skills (math, reading, writing)

- Following rules for behavior at home, school, and public places

- Ability to make friends

- Good peer relationships

- Consistent discipline

- Language-based rather than physically-based discipline

- Extended family support

- Healthy peer groups

- School engagement

- Positive teacher expectations

- Effective classroom management

- Positive partnering between school and family

- School policies and practices to reduce bullying

- High academic standards

### Risk and Protective Factors for Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Disorders Across the Life Cycle (continued)

#### ADOLESCENCE
- Female gender
- Early puberty
- Difficult temperament: inflexibility, low positive mood, withdrawal, poor concentration
- Low self-esteem, perceived incompetence, negative explanatory and inferential style
- Anxiety
- Low-level depressive symptoms and dysthymia
- Insecure attachment
- Poor social skills: communication and problem-solving skills
- Extreme need for approval and social support
- Low self-esteem
- Shyness
- Emotional problems in childhood
- Conduct disorder
- Favorable attitudes toward drugs
- Rebelliousness
- Early substance use
- Antisocial behavior
- Head injury
- Marijuana use
- Childhood exposure to lead or mercury (neurotoxins)
- Parental depression
- Parent-child conflict
- Poor parenting
- Negative family environment (may include substance abuse in parents)
- Child abuse/maltreatment
- Single-parent family (for girls only)
- Divorce
- Marital conflict
- Family conflict
- Parent with anxiety
- Parental/marital conflict
- Family conflict (interactions between parents and children and among children)
- Parental drug/alcohol use
- Parental unemployment
- Substance use among parents
- Lack of adult supervision
- Poor attachment with parents
- Family dysfunction
- Family member with schizophrenia
- Poor parental supervision
- Parental depression
- Sexual abuse
- Peer rejection
- Stressful events
- Poor academic achievement
- Poverty
- Community-level stressful or traumatic events
- School-level stressful or traumatic events
- Community violence
- School violence
- Poverty
- Traumatic event
- School failure
- Low commitment to school
- Not college bound
- Aggression toward peers
- Associating with drug-using peers
- Societal/community norms about alcohol and drug use
- Clear expectations for behavior and problem-solving skills
- High self-esteem
- Emotional self-regulation
- Good coping skills and problem-solving skills
- Engagement and connections in two or more of the following contexts: school, with peers, in athletics, employment, religion, culture
- Family provides structure, limits, rules, monitoring, and predictability
- Supportive relationships with family members
- Clear expectations for behavior and values
- Presence of mentors and support for development of skills and interests
- Opportunities for engagement within school and community
- Positive norms
- Clear expectations for behavior
- Physical and psychological safety

#### EARLY ADULTHOOD
- Early-onset depression and anxiety
- Need for extensive social support
- Childhood history of untreated anxiety disorders
- Childhood history of poor physical health
- Childhood history of sleep and eating problems
- Poor physical health
- Lack of commitment to conventional adult roles
- Antisocial behavior
- Head injury
- Parental depression
- Spousal conflict
- Single parenthood
- Leaving home
- Family dysfunction
- Decrease in social support accompanying entry into a new social context
- Negative life events
- Attending college
- Substance-using peers
- Social adversity
- Identity exploration in love, work, and world view
- Subjective sense of adult status
- Subjective sense of self-sufficiency, making independent decisions, becoming financially independent
- Future orientation
- Achievement motivation
- Balance of autonomy and relatedness to family
- Behavioral and emotional autonomy
- Opportunities for exploration in work and school
- Connectedness to adults outside of family

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- schizophrenia
- anxiety
- conduct disorders
- substance abuse

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**Sources of Risk/Protective Factors**
- individual
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- school/community