

about

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

what you need to know...

The Fairfax County Youth Survey is designed to provide information about behaviors, experiences and other factors, both positive and harmful, that influence the health and well-being of the county's youth.

2008 Youth Survey Topics

- Substance Use
- Delinquent Behaviors
- Bullying and Aggression
- Mental Health
- Sexual Health
- Physical Activity, Health and Nutrition
- Risk and Protective Factors

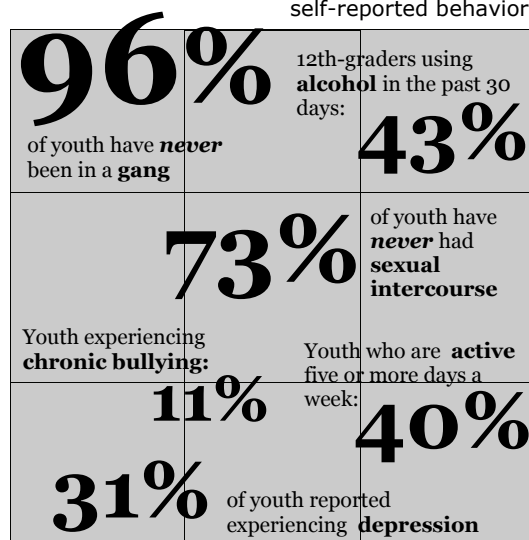
Risk factors help us explain circumstances that may increase the likelihood of problem behaviors.

Protective factors, or assets, can help increase resiliency to drug abuse and problem behaviors and are believed to buffer youth from risk.

By focusing on protective factors we foster resiliency in our young people; view youth as empowered with strengths rather than confronted by risks; and encourage nurturing young people in order to help them succeed. Some protective factors:

- Opportunities to engage in community activities.
- Strong family support, enjoying time with parents or guardians.
- Positive interactions with teachers and having school-related opportunities.
- Social competencies to make good decisions about substance use or other challenges.

Fairfax County youth self-reported behavior



2008 Fairfax County Youth Survey Report

what can you do?

promote healthy behaviors

- Spend time with teens. Build relationships that include trust, honesty, open lines of communication, and setting limits.
- Be a good role model. Eat right, exercise, and deal with stress in healthy ways. Don't misuse alcohol, cigarettes, or medications. Don't use illegal drugs!
- Teach good values and a sense of responsibility, then trust teens to make good choices.
- Set rules and stick with them. Setting and enforcing fair rules can help avoid social settings where teens may run into peer pressure they can't handle.



Source: adapted from www.girlshealth.gov/parents

understand, encourage, learn, and act

- Understand that it's normal for teens to want to try new things.
- Understand that angry teens may rebel by making poor choices. Turn mistakes into lessons, show you still love them, and point out the good things they do.
- Encourage and support teens' involvement in positive, pro-social activities such as sports, school clubs, the arts, community service, and any activity that provides a sense of belonging.
- Encourage teens not to be ashamed of having a problem with stress, relationships, grades, weight, drugs, or alcohol, but to learn how to handle problems in healthy ways.
- Learn about teen depression and suicide; alcohol and drug abuse; bullying and dating abuse; and eating disorders that contribute to weight loss or weight gain.
- Consult with your doctor, school staff, local hospitals, or county alcohol and drug services. Read books and get information from Web sites on preventing and handling risk-taking behaviors. Join and support school and community coalitions.

who can help?



Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) Alcohol and Drug Services
24-Hour CSB Emergency Services Phone: 703-573-5679 | TTY: 703-207-7737
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/ads

Fairfax County Public Schools Department of Intervention and Prevention
703-423-4020

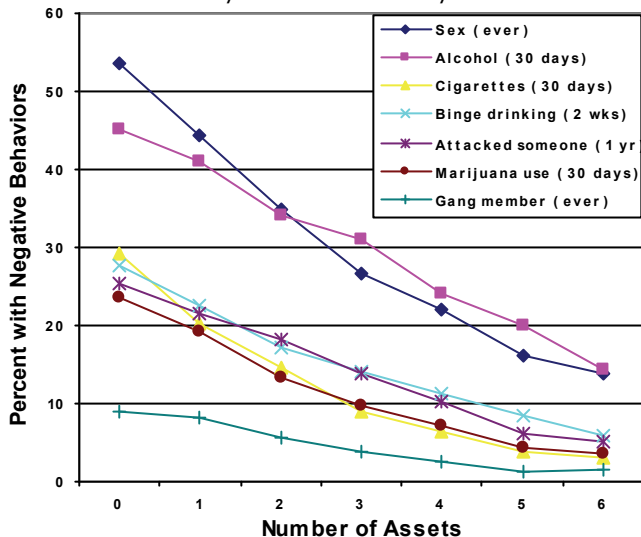
Fairfax County Public Schools Student Safety and Wellness Section
www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/ssaw



THREE TO SUCCEED

Thriving in Fairfax

Fairfax County 2008 Youth Survey



The Three to Succeed concept is based on the youth survey analysis that shows how just having three assets (or strengths) dramatically reduces risk behaviors and promotes thriving youth.

schools, and communities that help them thrive in health, in school and daily life, and in a safe environment.

Young people in Fairfax County report positive influences from their communities, families, schools, and friends demonstrating the benefits of everyone taking a role in ensuring that EVERYONE'S CHILDREN are thriving in Fairfax.

The more assets an individual has in their lives, the fewer risk behaviors. Assets are strengths in young people, their families,

Assets

- Good grades
- Involved in decision-making
- Adults in my neighborhood to talk to
- Parents notice when doing a good job
- Involved in extracurricular activities
- Involved in community service

Selected Protective and Risk Factors

High Protection for These Factors	All Respondents	Sub-Populations	
		Past 30-Day Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug Use	Ever in a Gang
High Family Attachment	51%	43%	33%
Peer and Individual Social Skills	67%	40%	30%
Community Rewards for Involvement	51%	46%	37%

High Risk for These Factors	All Respondents	Sub-Populations	
		Past 30-Day Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug Use	Ever in a Gang
Low Neighborhood Attachment	35%	40%	48%
Parental Attitudes Favorable to Drug use	40%	62%	55%
Poor Family Management	43%	62%	71%

The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the spring semester of 2008 to a randomly drawn, statistically valid sample of students.

web sites for more information

protective factors

Fairfax County Prevention System (*links to Youth Survey*)

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dsm/prevention

Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County Public Schools

www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org

Fairfax-Falls Church Network of Care for Behavioral Health

www.fairfax-fallschurch.va.networkofcare.org/mh/resource/find.cfm

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America

www.drugfree.org

Parents, the Anti-Drug

www.theantidrug.com

SAMHSA Family Guide

www.family.samhsa.gov



A publication of Fairfax County, Va., and Fairfax County Public Schools

Youth in Fairfax County report they ...

- Have opportunities to be involved in school activities (94%), feel safe in school (89%) and have teachers who notice their good work (73%).
- Can ask parents for help (76%), have parents who notice when they do a good job (69%) and are involved in family decisions that affect them (68%).
- Believe it is wrong to cheat at school (62%), believe it is wrong to steal (85%), and are honest with their parents (81%).
- Volunteer for community service (81%).