| **Risk Factor Descriptions** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Community** |  | **Availability of Drugs** | The availability of alcohol and other drugs is related to a higher risk of alcohol and other drug use and violence among adolescents. Perceived availability of drugs is also associated with increased risk. |
|  | **Availability of Firearms** | The availability of firearms is related to a higher risk of delinquency and violence among adolescents.  *If there is a gun in the home, it is much more likely to be used against a relative or friend than against an intruder or stranger. Youth who carry weapons, including firearms, are more likely to perpetrate violent acts. Also, when a firearm is used in a crime or assault, the outcome is much more likely to be fatal than if another weapon or no weapon is used.* |
|  | **Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use, Firearms and Crime** | When laws, tax rates and community standards are favorable toward alcohol and other drug use, firearms or crime—or even when standards are just unclear—young people are at higher risk.  *The attitudes and policies a community holds in relation to drug use, firearms and crime are communicated in a variety of ways: through laws and written policies, through informal social practices, and through the expectations parents and other members of the community have of young people.* |
|  | **Media Portrayals of the Behavior** | Research has shown a clear correlation between media portrayal of violence and the development of aggressive and violent behavior. |
|  | **Transitions and Mobility** | When children move from elementary school to middle school, or from middle school to high school, significant increases in drug use, dropping out of school & antisocial behavior may occur. Communities with high rates of mobility appear to be linked to an increased risk of drug & crime problems. |
|  | **Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization** | Higher rates of drug problems, delinquency, violence, and drug trafficking occur where people have little attachment to the community. Vandalism rates are high when there is low surveillance of public places. These conditions are not limited to low-income neighborhoods – they can also be found in more well-to-do neighborhoods. |
| **Community** |  | **Extreme Economic Deprivation** | Children who live in deteriorating neighborhoods characterized by extreme poverty, poor living conditions and high unemployment are more likely to develop problems with alcohol and other drug use, delinquency, teen pregnancy and dropping out of school, and to engage in violence toward others during adolescence and adulthood. |
| **Family** |  | **Family History of the Problem Behavior** | In families with a history of alcohol or other drug addictions, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school drop-out and violence, young people are at increased risk for similar behavioral problems. |
|  | **Family Management Problems** | Lack of clear expectations for behavior; failure of parents to supervise and monitor their children (knowing where they are and who they’re with); and excessively severe, harsh or inconsistent punishment. Children exposed to these family management practices are at higher risk for substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout and violence. |
|  | **Family Conflict** | Persistent, serious conflict between primary caregivers or between caregivers and children appears to increase children’s risk for violence, delinquency, school drop-out, teen pregnancy, and drug use. |
|  | **Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior** | Parents who approve of, encourage or participate in problem behaviors increase their children’s risk for these behaviors. |
| **School** |  | **Academic Failure Beginning in Late Elementary School** | Beginning in the late elementary grades, academic failure increases the risk of substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout and violence. It appears that the experience of failure itself, not any lack of ability, increases the risk of these problem behaviors. |
|  | **Lack of Commitment to School** | Lack of commitment to school means that a child no longer sees the role of student as meaningful and rewarding. Young people who have lost this commitment to school are at higher risk for substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout and violence. |
| **Peer-Individual** |  | **Early and Persistent Antisocial Behavior** | Boys who are aggressive in grades K-3 or who have trouble controlling impulses are at higher risk for alcohol and other drug use, delinquency and violent behavior.  This risk factor also includes persistent antisocial behavior in early adolescence, such as misbehaving in school, skipping school, and getting into fights with other children. Both girls and boys who engage in these behaviors in early adolescence are at increased risk for all five problem behaviors |
| **Peer-Individual** |  | **Rebelliousness** | Young people who do not feel that they are part of society or bound by rules, who don’t believe in trying to be successful or responsible, or who take an active rebellious stance toward society are at higher risk for drug use, delinquency and dropping out of school. |
|  | **Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behavior** | Even when young people come from well-managed families and do not experience other risk factors, spending time with friends who engage in problem behaviors greatly increases their risk of developing those behaviors. |
|  | **Gang Involvement** | Research has shown that children who have delinquent friends are more likely to use alcohol or other drugs and to engage in delinquent or violent behavior than children who do not have delinquent friends. Gang members, however, are even more likely to engage in these problem behaviors. |
|  | **Favorable Attitudes Toward the Problem Behavior** | During the elementary years, children usually express anti-drug, anti-crime, and prosocial views; they have trouble imagining why people use drugs, commit crimes, and drop out of school. In middle school, as others they know participate in such activities, their attitudes often shift toward greater acceptance, placing them at higher risk |
|  | **Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior** | The earlier that young people use drugs, commit crimes, first drop out of school or become sexually active, the greater their chances of having chronic problems with the respective behavior. |
|  | **Constitutional Factors** | Certain physiological, neurological or personality characteristics including sensation-seeking, low harm-avoidance and lack of impulse control, increase the risk of drug use, delinquency and/or violent behavior. |
| **DFC Core Measures** |  | **Perception of Risk** | When young people believe there is little or no harm in use, they are more likely to do so. This DFC core measure looks at youths’ perception of harm from binge drinking, smoking more than a pack of cigarettes per day, using prescription drugs without a prescription, or smoking marijuana regularly. |
|  | **Perception of Parental Disapproval** | Young people are less likely to engage in a behavior when they know their parents feel it’s wrong. This DFC core measure looks at perceived parental disapproval of alcohol, prescription drug use, cigarette or marijuana use. |
|  | **Perception of Peer Disapproval** | When young people feel it is wrong for someone their age to use alcohol, cigarettes or marijuana, they are less likely to do so. |
| **DFC Core Measures** |  | **Past 30-Day Use** | This is a measure of ‘current use,’ showing what percentage of youth used alcohol, cigarettes, prescription drugs, or marijuana at any time in the last 30 days. |
|  | **Average Age of Onset** | This reports the age of onset of drug use (drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, smoking marijuana or using prescription drugs). The earlier that young people use drugs, commit crimes, first drop out of school or become sexually active, the greater their chances of having chronic problems with the respective problem behavior later in life. |