

Power of Protective Factors worksheet:

How can communities use protective factor data?

Review your community's Minnesota Student Survey protective factor data. Consider these guiding questions:

- Which protective factors are youth in your community most likely to report? Least likely? You may want to address factors for which there is more room for improvement.
- For which protective factors are your community's lower than the statewide average? The statewide average can serve as a benchmark.
- How have your community's protective factor rates changed over time? For example, were youth in 2022 more or less likely to feel that teachers and other adults at school care about them as compared to youth in 2013?
- Which protective factors does your community have the resources and readiness to address? For example, does your community have a strong history of engaging parents and caregivers or does more work need to be done before trying to enhance family-level protective factors?
- Which protective factors have the strongest association in terms of reducing the likelihood of your priority community concerns (e.g., youth alcohol use, suicidal ideation)? See Tables 2a and 2b.
- Which populations in your community face the greatest disparities in terms of low levels of protective factors?

Risk ratios can help us show the strength of association between a protective factors and outcomes of interest. For example, youth who feel that adults in the community care about them very much or quite a bit are 2 times less likely to report past-month marijuana use, as compared to youth who feel that adults in the community care some, a little, or not at all. A larger risk ratio is a stronger association.

Table 2a. Association of protective factors with reduced rates of past-month substance use among Minnesota 8th, 9th, and 11th graders (2022 MSS)

	Risk Ratios			
	<u>Alcohol</u>	<u>Tobacco</u>	<u>Marijuana</u>	<u>Rx Drugs</u>
<u>Community</u>				
Feel adults in community care	2.0	2.5	2.7	2.5
Participate in 1-5 activities	--	1.4	1.7	--
Feel safe in neighborhood	2.2	2.4	2.6	3.9
<u>School</u>				
Educational engagement	2.5	3.1	3.3	3.0
Feel teachers/school staff care	2.1	2.5	2.6	2.2
Feel safe at school	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.8
Can talk to a school adult about problems	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3
<u>Peer</u>				
Feel friends care	1.5	1.7	1.7	2.1
<u>Family</u>				
Feel parents care	2.6	3.4	3.4	4.4
Can talk to parent or guardian	2.3	2.9	2.9	3.6
Feel other relatives care	2.0	2.5	2.6	3.2
<u>Individual</u>				
Positive identity	2.3	3.4	3.5	3.3
Social competency	3.8	6.9	6.5	4.6
Empowerment	2.1	2.8	2.9	3.3
<u>Substance-specific</u>				
Think most other students use	7.9	5.0 (tobacco) 6.8 (vaping)	8.9	N/A

Table 2b. Association of protective factors with reduced rates of depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation use among Minnesota 8th, 9th, and 11th graders (2022 MSS)

	Risk Ratios		
	<u>Depression</u>	<u>Anxiety</u>	<u>Suicidal Ideation</u>
<u>Community</u>			
Feel adults in community care	2.4	2.1	3.3
Participate in 1-5 activities	1.2	--	1.1
Feel safe in neighborhood	2.2	2.0	2.8
<u>School</u>			
Educational engagement	1.9	1.5	2.1
Feel teachers/school staff care	2.1	1.9	2.7
Feel safe at school	2.2	2.1	2.8
Can talk to a school adult about problems	1.3	1.2	1.3
<u>Peer</u>			
Feel friends care	2.0	1.7	2.2
<u>Family</u>			
Feel parents care	2.7	2.3	4.0
Can talk to parent or guardian	2.6	2.2	3.6
Feel other relatives care	2.5	2.1	3.3
<u>Individual</u>			
Positive identity	3.7	3.6	6.4
Social competency	2.1	1.6	2.9
Empowerment	2.8	2.3	4.0

How to read Tables 2a and 2b:

*As compared to students who **feel adults in their community care about them some, a little, or not at all**, those who feel adults in the community care about them very much or quite a bit are **2 times less likely to report past-month alcohol use and over 3 times less likely to report past-year suicidal ideation.***

Further, lower rates of past-month alcohol use are most strongly associated with higher levels of social competency, educational engagement, and feeling like parents care.

Importantly, Tables 2a and 2b show us that if your community is working to increase and enhance protective factors to reduce past-month alcohol use, you may also end up seeing a reduction in use of other substances, as well as reductions in mental health issues such as suicidal thoughts. This can serve as a call for increased collaboration with community partners addressing other priorities, as you can work jointly to improve the overall health and well-being of young people.

The template below can serve as a planning tool for identifying which protective factors your community wants to prioritize. For a comprehensive approach, try to enhance protective factors from multiple socioecological levels.

Planning tool for enhancing youth protective factors					
	2022 Rate (8 th -11 th grades)	Statewide Comparison (8 th -11 th grades)	Trend	Readiness + Resources	Strength of Association
Community					
Feel adults in community care		28.8%			
Participate in 1-5 activities		24.7%			
Feel safe in neighborhood		96.3%			
School					
Educational engagement		59.6%			
Feel school staff care		36.8%			
Feel safe at school		86.4%			
Can talk to adult at school		27.4%			
Peer					
Feel friends care		73.0%			
Family					
Feel parents care		87.4%			
Can talk to parent or guardian		79.9%			
Feel other relatives care		74.2%			
Individual					
Positive identity		32.3%			
Social competency		47.9%			
Empowerment		51.7%			
Substance-specific					
Think most other students use: alcohol		35.2%			
Think most other students use: tobacco		19.6%			
Think most other students use: vaping		48.6%			
Think most other students use: marijuana		32.5%			

2022 Rate: Enter the percentage of students reporting each protective factor.

Statewide Comparison: Enter the percentage of youth statewide reporting each protective factor, and/or simply note whether the statewide average is higher than, the same as, or lower than your community's rate.

Trend: Note whether the protective factor rate has improved over time, stayed the same, or decreased. This could be simply done with arrows as well (▲, ►, and ▼).

Readiness + Resources: Based on conversations with community partners and other stakeholders, note whether resources and readiness are high, moderate, or low for addressing each protective factor.

Strength of Association: Use the risk ratios from the table on page 3 to note the strength of association for your community's priority concern—whether that's alcohol use, tobacco use, marijuana use, prescription drug misuse, or depression, anxiety, or suicidal thoughts. Add columns if your community has multiple priorities.

Example:

	2016 Rate	MN Rate	Trend	Readiness + Resources	Strength of Association w/ suicidal ideation
Feel adults in community care	38%	41%	▼	Civic orgs eager to help	3.3x
Greater educational engagement	75%	76%	▲	Strong partnerships w/ schools	2.3x
Feel adults at school care	41%	47%	▶	Strong partnerships w/ schools	3.1x
Feel friends care	72%	76%	▼	Interest of youth leadership team	2.9x
Can talk to parent/guardian about problems	91%	90%	▶	Hard to engage parents	3.4x
Positive identity	30%	34%	▼	Focus of local mentoring program	8.0x

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What resources are available?

You can access Minnesota Student Survey data in multiple ways.

- County-level data on protective factors, as well as statewide data by race/ethnicity and sexual orientation, can be found at Substance Use in Minnesota (www.sumn.org)
- Both county- and school district-level data on protective factors can be accessed via the Minnesota Department of Education's Data and Analytics page: <https://public.education.mn.gov/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=242>
- County-level data tables can be accessed through the Minnesota Center for Health Statistics: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/mchs/surveys/mss/index.html>

If your community is working to address youth substance use, you can receive technical assistance on using risk and protective factor data in prevention planning from your Regional Prevention Coordinator. Find the coordinator for your region on the RPC's website: <http://rpcmn.org/>

Also, the Minnesota State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup, funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Division, has created a number of data products housed at www.sumn.org in the 'Toolbox'. This report, "Power of Protective Factors for Minnesota Youth", can be found in the SUMN Toolbox under 'Special Topics' > '[Protective Factors](#)'. There you will also find various fact sheets providing more detail about specific protective and risk factors included in the report.

The Minnesota Department of Health has resources relevant to suicide prevention data, health disparities, and health equity. Learn more by visiting:

- MDH's Suicide Prevention Program webpage (and click on 'Data'):
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/topic/suicide/>
- MDH's Health Equity webpage: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/equity/>
- Race Rate Disparity in Drug Overdose Deaths on MDH's Opioid Dashboard:
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/opioids/data/racedisparity.html>