



Risk and Protective Factor Scale Construction Summary

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Introduction

Based on the work of Dr. J. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard F. Catalano, the *Communities That Care*[®] *Youth Survey* is designed to identify the levels of **risk factors** related to problem behaviors such as alcohol, tobacco and other drug use—and to identify the levels of **protective factors** that help guard against those behaviors.

Protective factors, also known as “assets,” are conditions that buffer children and youth from exposure to risk by either reducing the impact of the risks or changing the way that young people respond to risks. Protective factors identified through research include strong bonding to family, school, community and peers. These groups support the development of healthy behaviors for children by setting and communicating healthy beliefs and clear standards for children’s behavior. Young people are more likely to follow the standards for behavior set by these groups if the bonds are strong. Strong bonds are encouraged by providing young people with opportunities to make meaningful contributions, by teaching them the skills they need to be successful in these new opportunities, and by recognizing their contributions.

Risk factors are conditions that increase the likelihood of a young person becoming involved in drug use, delinquency, school dropout and/or violence. For example, children living in families with poor parental monitoring are more likely to become involved in these problems.

The *Communities That Care*[®] *Youth Survey* provides the most comprehensive measurement of risk and protective factors currently available for 6th to 12th graders. Risk and protective factors are measured by sets of survey items called scales. Because they are very broad, some risk factors are measured by multiple scales. For example, “Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior” is a single risk factor, but it is measured by two risk factor scales: *Parental Attitudes Favorable toward ATOD Use* and *Parental Attitudes Favorable toward Antisocial Behavior*. In total, 16 risk factors are measured by 23 risk factor scales, while each of the ten protective factors is measured by a single protective factor scale.

This document provides a breakdown of the specific survey items that are used to calculate each of these risk and protective factors. The scale construction information is organized by domain (Community, Family, School and Peer and Individual).

Community Domain Scales

RISK FACTORS

COMMUNITY DOMAIN	Low Neighborhood Attachment		CR3
	Q109	I'd like to get out of my neighborhood.	
	Q102	I like my neighborhood.	
	Q100	If I had to move, I would miss the neighborhood I now live in.	
	Community Disorganization		CR4
	Q103a	How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: crime and/or drug selling.	
	Q103b	How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: fights.	
	Q103c	How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: lots of empty or abandoned buildings.	
	Q103d	How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: lots of graffiti.	
	Q107	I feel safe in my neighborhood.	
	Transitions and Mobility		CR5
	Q110	Have you changed homes in the past year?	
	Q104	How many times have you changed homes since kindergarten?	
	Q106	Have you changed schools (including changing from elementary to middle and middle to high school) in the past year?	
Q108	How many times have you changed schools since kindergarten?		

RISK FACTORS, CONTINUED

COMMUNITY DOMAIN	Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use		CR9
	Q33a	How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age: to use marijuana.	
	Q33b	How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age: to drink alcohol.	
	Q33c	How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age: to smoke cigarettes.	
	Q29	If a kid drank some beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, or gin) in your neighborhood, would he or she be caught by the police?	
	Q27	If a kid smoked marijuana in your neighborhood, would he or she be caught by the police?	
	Laws and Norms Favorable to Firearms		CR10
	Q31	If a kid carried a handgun in your neighborhood, would he or she be caught by the police?	
	Perceived Availability of Drugs		CR11
	Q25	If you wanted to get some beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, or gin), how easy would it be for you to get some?	
	Q26	If you wanted to get some cigarettes, how easy would it be for you to get some?	
	Q32	If you wanted to get some marijuana, how easy would it be for you to get some?	
	Q28	If you wanted to get a drug like cocaine, LSD, or amphetamines, how easy would it be for you to get some?	
	Perceived Availability of Firearms		CR12
Q30	If you wanted to get a handgun, how easy would it be for you to get one?		

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

COMMUNITY DOMAIN	Community Rewards for Prosocial Involvement		CP2
	Q101	My neighbors notice when I am doing a good job and let me know.	
	Q111	There are people in my neighborhood who encourage me to do my best.	
	Q105	There are people in my neighborhood who are proud of me when I do something well.	
	Community Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement		CP1
	Q2912	Which of the following activities for people your age are available in your community: sports teams	
	Q2913	Which of the following activities for people your age are available in your community: scouting	
	Q2914	Which of the following activities for people your age are available in your community: boys and girls clubs	
	Q2915	Which of the following activities for people your age are available in your community: 4-H clubs	
	Q2916	Which of the following activities for people your age are available in your community: service clubs	
Q555	There are lots of adults in my neighborhood I could talk to about something important.		

Family Domain Scales

RISK FACTORS

FAMILY DOMAIN	Poor Family Management		FR10
	Q78	My parents ask if I've gotten my homework done.	
	Q80	Would your parents know if you did not come home on time?	
	Q79	When I am not at home, one of my parents knows where I am and whom I am with.	
	Q76	The rules in my family are clear.	
	Q83	My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.	
	Q82	If you drank some beer or wine or liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, or gin) without your parents' permission, would you be caught by your parents?	
	Q85	If you skipped school, would you be caught by your parents?	
	Q84	If you carried a handgun without your parents' permission, would you be caught by your parents?	
	Family Conflict		FR6
	Q2909	People in my family often insult or yell at each other.	
	Q2911	People in my family have serious arguments.	
	Q2910	We argue about the same things in my family over and over.	
	Parental Attitudes Favorable toward Antisocial Behavior		FR9
	Q74d	How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: steal anything worth more than \$5?	
Q74e	How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: draw graffiti, or write things or draw pictures on buildings or other property (without the owner's permission)?		
Q74f	How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: pick a fight with someone?		

RISK FACTORS, CONTINUED

FAMILY DOMAIN	Parental Attitudes Favorable toward ATOD Use		FR8
	Q74a	How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey or gin) regularly?	
	Q74b	How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: smoke cigarettes?	
	Q74c	How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: smoke marijuana?	
	Family History of Antisocial Behavior		FR7
	Q77	Has anyone in your family ever had a severe alcohol or drug problem?	
	Q75a	Have any of your brothers or sisters ever: drunk beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey or gin)?	
	Q75b	Have any of your brothers or sisters ever: smoked marijuana?	
	Q75c	Have any of your brothers or sisters ever: smoked cigarettes?	
	Q75d	Have any of your brothers or sisters ever: taken a handgun to school?	
	Q75e	Have any of your brothers or sisters ever: been suspended or expelled from school?	
	Q34a	About how many adults (over 21) have you known personally who in the past year have: used marijuana, crack, cocaine, or other drugs?	
	Q34b	About how many adults (over 21) have you known personally who in the past year have: sold or dealt drugs?	
	Q34c	About how many adults (over 21) have you known personally who in the past year have: done other things that could get them in trouble with the police, like stealing, selling stolen goods, mugging or assaulting others, etc?	
Q34d	About how many adults (over 21) have you known personally who in the past year have: gotten drunk or high?		

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

FAMILY DOMAIN	Family Attachment		FP1
	Q87	Do you feel very close to your mother?	
	Q88	Do you share your thoughts and feelings with your mother?	
	Q97	Do you feel very close to your father?	
	Q92	Do you share your thoughts and feelings with your father?	
	Family Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement		FP2
	Q99	My parents give me lots of chances to do fun things with them.	
	Q89	My parents ask me what I think before most family decisions affecting me are made.	
	Q96	If I had a personal problem, I could ask my mom or dad for help.	
	Family Rewards for Prosocial Involvement		FP3
	Q86	My parents notice when I am doing a good job and let me know about it.	
	Q91	How often do your parents tell you they're proud of you for something you've done?	
	Q93	Do you enjoy spending time with your mother?	
Q94	Do you enjoy spending time with your father?		

School Domain Scales

RISK FACTORS

SCHOOL DOMAIN	Poor Academic Performance		SR3
	Q13	Putting them all together, what were your grades like last year?	
	Q23	Are your school grades better than the grades of most students in your class?	
	Low School Commitment		SR4
	Q3681	How often do you feel that the schoolwork you are assigned is meaningful and important?	
	Q3682	How interesting are most of your courses to you?	
	Q3683	How important do you think the things you are learning in school are going to be for your later life?	
	Q3684	Now, thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you: Enjoy being in school?	
	Q3685	Now, thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you: Hate being in school?	
	Q3686	Now, thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you: Try to do your best work in school?	
Q738	During the LAST FOUR WEEKS, how many whole days have you missed because you skipped or “cut”?		

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

SCHOOL DOMAIN	School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement		SP1
	Q14	In my school, students have lots of chances to help decide things like class activities and rules.	
	Q17	There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk with a teacher one-on-one.	
	Q2891	Teachers ask me to work on special classroom projects.	
	Q2057	There are lots of chances for students in my school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.	
	Q3668	I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities.	
	School Rewards for Prosocial Involvement		SP2
	Q15	My teacher(s) notices when I am doing a good job and lets me know about it.	
	Q21	The school lets my parents know when I have done something well.	
	Q18	I feel safe at my school.	
Q731	My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.		

Peer and Individual Domain Scales

RISK FACTORS

PEER AND INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN	Low Perceived Risks of Drug Use		IP10
	Q3687	How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they: smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day?	
	Q3679	How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they: try marijuana once or twice?	
	Q3688	How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they: smoke marijuana regularly?	
	Q3680	How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they: take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor) nearly every day?	
	Early Initiation of Drug Use		IP15
	Q60a	How old were you when you first: smoked marijuana?	
	Q60b	How old were you when you first: smoked a cigarette, even just a puff?	
	Q60c	How old were you when you first: had more than a sip or two of beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, or gin)?	
	Q60d	How old were you when you first: began drinking alcoholic beverages regularly, that is, at least once or twice a month?	
	Sensation Seeking		IP13
	Q57a	How many times have you done the following things? Done what feels good no matter what.	
	Q57b	How many times have you done the following things? Done something dangerous because someone dared you to do it.	
Q57c	How many times have you done the following things? Done crazy things even if they are a little dangerous.		

RISK FACTORS, CONTINUED

PEER AND INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN	Rebelliousness		IP4
	Q55	I do the opposite of what people tell me, just to get them mad.	
	Q62	I ignore rules that get in my way.	
	Q73	I like to see how much I can get away with.	
	Friends' Delinquent Behavior		IP5
	Q65a	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have been suspended from school?	
	Q65b	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have carried a handgun?	
	Q65c	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have sold illegal drugs?	
	Q65d	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle such as a car or motorcycle?	
	Q65e	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have been arrested?	
Q65f	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have dropped out of school?		

RISK FACTORS, CONTINUED

PEER AND INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN	Friends' Use of Drugs		IP6
	Q58a	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have smoked cigarettes?	
	Q58b	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have tried beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey or gin) when their parents didn't know about it?	
	Q58c	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have used marijuana?	
	Q58d	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have used LSD, cocaine, amphetamines, or other illegal drugs?	
	Peer Rewards for Antisocial Behavior		IP7
	Q59a	What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you smoked cigarettes?	
	Q59b	What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you began drinking alcoholic beverages regularly, that is, at least once or twice a month?	
	Q59c	What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you smoked marijuana?	
	Q59d	What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you carried a handgun?	

RISK FACTORS, CONTINUED

PEER AND INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN	Favorable Attitudes toward Antisocial Behavior		IP8
	Q61a	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to take a handgun to school?	
	Q61b	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to steal anything worth more than \$5?	
	Q61c	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to pick a fight with someone?	
	Q61d	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to attack someone with the idea of seriously hurting him or her?	
	Q61e	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to stay away from school all day when their parents think they are at school?	
	Favorable Attitudes toward ATOD Use		IP9
	Q67a	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey or gin) regularly?	
	Q67b	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to smoke cigarettes?	
	Q67c	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to smoke marijuana?	
Q67d	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to use LSD, cocaine, amphetamines or another illegal drug?		

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

PEER AND INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN	Religiosity	IP1
	Q54	How often do you attend religious services or activities?
	Social Skills	IP2
	Q68	You're looking at CDs in a music store with a friend. You look up and see her slip a CD under her coat. She smiles and says, "Which one do you want? Go ahead, take it while nobody's around." There is nobody in sight, no employees and no other customers. What would you do now?
	Q69	It's 8:00 on a weeknight and you are about to go over to a friend's home when your mother asks you where you are going. You say, "Oh, just going to go hang out with some friends." She says, "No, you'll just get into trouble if you go out. Stay home tonight." What would you do now?
	Q70	You are visiting another part of town, and you don't know any of the people your age there. You are walking down the street, and some teenager you don't know is walking toward you. He is about your size, and as he is about to pass you, he deliberately bumps into you and you almost lose your balance. What would you say or do?
	Q71	You are at a party at someone's house, and one of your friends offers you a drink containing alcohol. What would you say or do?
	Belief in the Moral Order	IP3
	Q56	I think it is okay to take something without asking, if you can get away with it.
	Q72	I think sometimes it's okay to cheat at school.
	Q63	It is all right to beat up people if they start the fight.
	Q64	It is important to be honest with your parents, even if they become upset or you get punished.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS, CONTINUED

PEER AND INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN	Interaction with Prosocial Peers		N/A
	Q4000	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have participated in clubs, organizations or activities at school?	
	Q4001	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have made a commitment to stay drug-free?	
	Q4002	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have liked school?	
	Q4003	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have regularly attended religious services?	
	Q4004	Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past year (12 months), how many of your best friends have tried to do well in school?	