



Girl Power! Web site: Risk and Protective Factors

Definitions¹:

A *risk factor* is an attitude, behavior, belief, situation, or action that may put a group, organization, individual, or community at risk for alcohol and drug problems.

A *protective factor* is an attitude, behavior, belief, situation, or action that builds resilience in a group, organization, individual, or community.

Domains²:

I. Individual

- Biological and psychological dispositions, attitudes, values, knowledge, skills, problem behavior

II. Peer

- Norms, activities

III. Family

- Function, management, bonding

IV. School

- Bonding, climate, policy, performance

V. Community

- Bonding, norms, resources, awareness/mobilization

VI. Society/Environmental

- Norms, policy/sanctions

¹Source: National Center for the Advancement of Prevention, "2000 Annual Summary: Effective Prevention Principles and Programs," Conference Edition Fall 2000.

²Source: SAMHSA/CSAP/DKDE, "Science-based Practices in Substance Abuse Prevention: A Guide," Working Draft, December 7, 1998.

I. Individual Risk and Protective Factors³

- Knowledge/Attitudes: Knowledge regarding risks associated with substance use/abuse is related to decreased risk of initiating or continuing use of substances.
- Knowledge/Attitudes: Lack of information on positive health behaviors is associated with increases in substance use.
- Knowledge/Attitudes: Lack of information on drug-related topics in curriculum is associated with increases in substance use.
- Skills: Social competence is associated with decreased likelihood of initiating or continuing use of substances.
- Values: Positive relationships with adults are related to decreases in multiple problem behaviors including substance use.
- Problem Behaviors: Early sexual activity/teen pregnancy is associated with multiple problem behaviors including substance use.
- Predispositions: Sense of well-being/self-confidence decreases the likelihood of participating in multiple problem behaviors including substance use.

Girl Power! Web site: Individual Risk and Protective Factors

- Knowledge/Attitudes; Problem Behaviors: Quick Stats on Adolescent Girls: Drugs and Alcohol, Tobacco, Sexual Behavior, Suicide and Depression, Violence and Child Abuse, Physical Activity, Nutrition and Body Image.
- Knowledge/Attitudes: BodyWise Web site component: Body Image & You, Eating Right the Girl Power! Way, Feeling Fit!, Facts about Eating Disorders, and Resource Guide to Nutrition, Fitness, and Eating Disorders.
- Knowledge/Attitudes: Health Science Curriculum On-line
- Skills/Predispositions: New Year's Resolutions page on the GP Web site
 - <http://www.health.org/gpower/girlarea/01jan/NewYearsRes.htm>

³Ibid.

- Values: Girl Power! Tips for Adults: “Adolescence is a very important time for the adults in young girls’ lives to give them love and support, and reassure them that they are not alone. By helping girls develop skills and confidence, you lower their chances of becoming involved in high-risk activities that can limit their life opportunities.”
 - <http://www.health.org/gpower/AdultsWhoCare/campinfo/hometown/keepit.htm>

II. Peer Risk and Protective Factors⁴

- Activities: Involving youth in alternative/recreational activities.
- Bonding with antisocial peers: Reinforcement of negative norms and expectations about substance use within peer group increases risk that youth will initiate or continue use of substances.

Girl Power! Web site: Peer Risk and Protective Factors

- Activities/Bonding/Norms: Girl Power! Activity Books: How to get it (9-11 year old girls) and Keep it going (12-14 year old girls)
- Activities: Sports and Fitness component of the Web site
- Activities: Games and Puzzles component of the Web site

III. Family Risk and Protective Factors⁵

- Skills: Consistency of parenting/interaction within family is associated with more positive family dynamics and decreased adult predispositions for stress.
- Family Bonding/Cohesion: Positive family dynamics are associated with more positive bonding with family members and gains in social skills.
- Family Climate: Family conflict/abuse increases the likelihood that children will initiate substance use.

Girl Power! Web site: Family Risk and Protective Factors

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

- Skills: BodyWise Handbook for Adults
- Skills/Family Bonding: Girl Power! Tips for Adults: “Adolescence is a very important time for the adults in young girls’ lives to give them love and support, and reassure them that they are not alone. By helping girls develop skills and confidence, you lower their chances of becoming involved in high-risk activities that can limit their life opportunities.” “Together with the girls in your life, plan special activities that you can do together, and include their friends when possible. This will not only strengthen the bonds between you, but will also enable you to get to know their friends and peers. “
 - <http://www.health.org/gpower/AdultsWhoCare/campinfo/hometown/keepit.htm>
- Family Bonding: 4 Grownups section of the Girl Power! Web site: In the What’s new section, there are many items listed that provide adults/caregivers ideas to bond with their girls such as “Mothers and Daughters Race Against Teen Smoking 2000,” visit a zoo or aquarium, celebrate “Take your daughters to work day,” and 10 tips for dads with daughters.
- Family Bonding: Girl Power! Activity Books: The books encourage the girls to engage in activities with their parents/caregivers/families.

IV. School Risk and Protective Factors⁶

- Performance: Academic failure/dropping out of school vs. academic achievement is associated with multiple problem behaviors including substance use.
- Bonding: School bonding is associated with positive attitudes toward school and improved school achievement.
- Bonding: Regular school attendance is associated with positive attitudes toward school.
- Climate: Positive instructional climate (responsiveness to student needs, classroom management patterns, parent involvement, etc.) is related to improved teacher practices and increases in student-school bonding and student achievement.
- School Policy: School norms/policies discouraging substance use and related behaviors are associated with improved teacher practices and positive student outcomes.

Girl Power! Web site: School Risk and Protective Factors

⁶Ibid.

- Performance/Bonding: Girl Power! Assignment Book: For example, August includes Homework Tips (encourages the girls to form study groups).
- Performance: Science & Technology section of the Girl Power! Web site: “Science and technology play a big part in just about everything we do and how we do it. It's all about discovering, creating, and solving mysteries-things that today's girls are good at. So, when you think about why something happens, how it works, or how it could be better, you're thinking like a scientist.” This section encourages girls to learn more about science and technology and without going to school they would miss the opportunity to do this.

V. Community Risk and Protective Factors⁷

- Norms: Community and societal norms that appear to condone substance abuse increase likelihood youth will initiate or continue to use substances.
- Access: Convenient access to alcohol, drugs, and/or tobacco increase likelihood youth will initiate or continue to use substances.
- Resources: Availability of constructive recreation decreases likelihood youth will participate in multiple problem behaviors including substance use.
- Mobilization: Existence of widely supported community prevention efforts reinforce positive messages sent by individual prevention programs to decrease likelihood that youth will initiate or continue to use substances.

Girl Power! Web site: Community Risk and Protective Factors

- Resources/Mobilization/Norms: Girl Power! Community Education Kit: Provides adults/caregivers with information on how to begin a Girl Power! program in your community.
- Mobilization: Across the Country section of the Girl Power! Web site: Includes a list of Girl Power! events across the country and Girl Power! programs across the country.

VI. Society/Environmental Risk and Protective Factors⁸

- Norms: Exposure to mass media messages that appear to support substance abuse increase likelihood that youth will initiate or continue to use substances.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

- Access: Low retail prices of alcohol, drugs, and/or tobacco increase likelihood that youth will initiate or continue to use substances.

Girl Power! Web site: Society/Environmental Risk and Protective Factors

- Norms: BodyWise: the Body Image and You section includes information on media and it represents women in relation to body image.
- Norms: Girl Power! Tips for Adults: “Help girls develop critical thinking and questioning skills by taking time to watch TV or listen to music with them. Discuss the images shown and messages given and how these can affect the way a person thinks and behaves. This will teach them to question what they see and hear and to learn how to form their own opinions.”
 - <http://www.health.org/gpower/AdultsWhoCare/campinfo/hometown/keepit.htm>

Summary of the Girl Power! Web site as its Content relates to the Risk and Protective Factors:

In reviewing the Girl Power! Web site for content as it relates to the risk and protective factors, the site contains factors from all six domains: individual, peer, family, school, community, and society/environmental. There are three domains: school, community, and social/environmental; in which certain factors are not available on the Girl Power! Web site. For school, these factors are climate and policy. For community, the factor is access. For society/environmental, these factors are access and policy. Given the nature of these factors: access, climate, and policy; its reasonable that these are not addressed on the Web site. Access, climate, and policy, would vary across the country. Is it feasible or possible to address these factors on this site? Overall, the Girl Power! Web site is comprehensive as it relates to the risk and protective factors.

Priorities for Future Content:

Future plans for the Girl Power! Web site include providing more information on families and relationships. Areas to focus on are: how to get along with your parents and siblings, how to negotiate, how to deal with issues and challenges with peer relations (i.e., “clics,” diversity, fights, etc.), and how to learn more about children of alcoholics (why do they behave the way they do). These topics could be links from the Girls Locker Room.

Attachment 1: Specific information on how the items listed in this document address the risk and protective factors

Attachment 2: Excel Spreadsheet -- “Executive Summary” of this analysis.

Attachment 1: A Sample of Girl Power! Materials--How they address the risk and protective factors

- **BodyWise Web site**

Individual Domain: Knowledge and Attitudes

Environmental/Society Domain: Norms

Getting BodyWise is all about learning to love and take care of your body—it's the only one you've got! That means knowing how to choose nutritious foods, eat smart, and stay fit. It's important to learn about the vitamins and nutrients your body needs to keep you going. It's also important to get the facts about serious health problems like eating disorders.

- **Girl Power! Activity Books**

Peer Domain: Activities/Bonding/Norms

- **How to get it** -- An activity guide developed with the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. for 9- to 11-year-old girls to help them build the skills they need to realize their full potential. This guide includes ideas to help girls get on the fitness track, tips to help girls understand others and getting them to understand themselves, six steps to making a good decision, and how to handle tough decisions.

- **Keep it going** -- An activity guide developed with the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. for 12- to 14-year-old girls to help them develop skills in communicating, problem solving, critical thinking, and resisting peer pressure. This guide includes how to be a media critic, how to understand body image, how to improve your eating habits and facts on eating disorders and how to keep fit. It also includes great service ideas to get girls to volunteer in their community.

- **Girl Power! Tips for Adults**

Family Domain: Skills/Family Bonding

The transition from childhood to adolescence is a time of special, and sometimes painful, development and change for young girls. Studies show that girls tend to lose self-confidence and self-worth during this pivotal age, becoming less physically active, performing less well in school, and neglecting their own interests and aspirations. It's during these years that girls become newly vulnerable to negative outside influences and to mixed messages about risky behaviors. This is a very important time for the adults in young girls' lives to give them love and support, and reassure them that they are not alone. By helping girls develop skills and

confidence, you lower their chances of becoming involved in high-risk activities that can limit their life opportunities. The tips are some ways to encourage Girl Power! in your daughter, granddaughter, students, sisters, and any other young girls in your life.

- **Girl Power! Assignment Book**

School Domain: Performance/Bonding

The assignment book provides a place for girls to keep track of homework and other assignments and has suggested homework tips. The book also provides "tips for success" told firsthand by successful women, including sports figures, journalists, heads of large organizations and other noted women of influence. The book also celebrates cultural diversity, highlights significant health observances and provides health facts and resources. Girls should use the books to build discipline and good habits by planning and organizing school-related deadlines and homework assignments.

- **Girl Power! Community Education Kit**

Community Domain: Resources/Mobilization/Norms

A part of the Girl Power! campaign, the kit provides useful and demonstrated activities to assist adults in building on the strengths and ideas of others to create their own programs for girls. Across the country, national, state and local organizations have enthusiastically embraced the Girl Power! message by developing community-based programs and activities that assist girls in realizing their full potential.