

Protective Factors Checklist

Identifying Strengths That Support Student Well-Being

School Counselor Resource Series

Purpose

Protective factors are the strengths, relationships, and supports that help students cope with adversity and thrive despite challenges. This checklist is designed to help school counselors identify existing strengths while also recognizing areas where additional support may be beneficial.

This checklist is intended as a conversation and planning tool and should not replace professional judgment or a formal assessment.

Student Information

Student: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Counselor: _____

Individual Strengths

Check strengths that are currently present.

- ☐ Positive self-esteem
- ☐ Good problem-solving skills
- ☐ Demonstrates resilience after setbacks
- ☐ Sense of humor
- ☐ Hopeful about the future

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- ☐ Can identify emotions
- ☐ Uses healthy coping strategies
- ☐ Accepts encouragement from adults
- ☐ Willing to ask for help
- ☐ Shows empathy toward others
- ☐ Demonstrates self-control
- ☐ Participates in hobbies or interests

Notes:

Family Supports

- ☐ Caring adult at home
- ☐ Stable housing
- ☐ Consistent routines
- ☐ Parent or caregiver involvement in school
- ☐ Family communicates openly
- ☐ Family seeks help when needed
- ☐ Positive sibling relationships
- ☐ Extended family support

Notes:

School Supports

- ☐ Positive relationship with a teacher
- ☐ Positive relationship with a school counselor

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- ☐ Feels safe at school
- ☐ Regular attendance
- ☐ Academic strengths
- ☐ Participates in extracurricular activities
- ☐ Has trusted adults at school
- ☐ Connected to clubs, teams, or organizations

Notes:

Peer Supports

- ☐ Has at least one close friend
- ☐ Positive peer relationships
- ☐ Feels accepted by peers
- ☐ Participates appropriately in groups
- ☐ Able to resolve conflict respectfully

Notes:

Community Supports

- ☐ Connected to a faith community (if applicable)
- ☐ Mentor or coach
- ☐ Community programs or organizations
- ☐ Access to healthcare
- ☐ Access to mental health services
- ☐ Safe neighborhood activities

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Notes:

Coping & Wellness

- ☐ Healthy sleep habits
- ☐ Regular physical activity
- ☐ Balanced nutrition
- ☐ Healthy stress management
- ☐ Can identify trusted support people
- ☐ Demonstrates emotional regulation

Notes:

Areas for Growth

Which protective factors could be strengthened?

- ☐ Family support
- ☐ School connection
- ☐ Friendships
- ☐ Emotional regulation
- ☐ Coping skills
- ☐ Self-confidence
- ☐ Community involvement
- ☐ Access to resources

Other:

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Action Plan

Current strengths to reinforce:

Protective factors to build:

Next steps:

Reflection

Every student has strengths. Identifying and building protective factors helps counselors, families, and educators focus not only on reducing risk but also on increasing the supports that promote resilience, healthy development, and long-term success.

Part of the Freedom Path Counseling School Counselor Resource Series

These resources are provided free of charge to support school counselors as they invest in the emotional well-being of students and families. Learn more and access additional downloadable tools at **freedompathcounseling.org/school-counselor-resource-center**

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