

Protective Factors Centered on Relationships

Relationships are essential throughout every stage of life. They do not need to be perfect to have value, and a strong support network does not have to be large. Even one caring, trusted, and supportive person can make a meaningful difference in helping us navigate challenges, build resilience, and support our overall health and well-being.

It is helpful to keep in mind that as we experience different phases of life, our relationships may change. Resources like this worksheet encourage reflection and awareness and can be revisited as often as we need.

STEP #1 - IDENTIFYING PROTECTIVE FACTORS CENTERED ON RELATIONSHIPS

Identify person(s) in each category and write an example of how a relationship with this person(s) provides support.



Parents and Caregivers

Trusted adults who provide care, guidance, support, and stability. They help nurture physical, emotional, and social well-being.

Name(s): _____

Example of how I feel supported by this person: _____



Friends

People we connect with through trust, care, shared experiences, and mutual support. Positive friendships can provide encouragement, belonging, comfort, and fun social connections in our lives.

Name(s): _____

Example of how I feel supported by this person: _____



School Staff

Teachers, counselors, coaches, nurses, and other adults within a school community who support student learning, growth, safety, and well-being. They help create a positive and supportive school environment.

Name(s): _____

Example of how I feel supported by this person: _____





Community Members and Other Trusted Adults

People outside of our immediate family who provide guidance, encouragement, support, and a safe space to turn to when we need it. They help foster connection and build up our resilience. Examples include mentors, neighbors, faith leaders, youth leaders, coaches, employers, or even friends of the family.

Name(s): _____

An example of how I feel supported by this person: _____

STEP #2 - STRENGTHENING PROTECTIVE FACTORS CENTERED ON RELATIONSHIPS

Healthy relationships grow over time and are built on trust, respect, kindness, honesty, and communication. Strong relationships also require effort and care from everyone involved. Strengthening relationships can begin with small, intentional steps that help us feel supported, valued, and connected.

Read each statement below and write an example of how you can practice or strengthen that skill in your own relationships.

- Spend quality time with people who support me.
 - Example: _____
- Ask for advice when I need help.
 - Example: _____
- Show kindness through words and actions.
 - Example: _____
- Respect other people's feelings, opinions, and boundaries.
 - Example: _____
- Be honest and share my thoughts, ideas, fears, and dreams.
 - Example: _____
- Show interest and learn what is important to the people I care about.
 - Example: _____
- Listen when others are talking without interruptions or distractions.
 - Example: _____

Protective Factors Centered on Relationships

- Include others and help them feel welcome.

- Example: _____

- Show appreciation when someone shows up for me.

- Example: _____

- Step outside my comfort zone and engage with others.

- Example: _____

STEP #3 - DATE I PLAN TO REVISIT THIS WORKSHEET

Revisiting this worksheet can help us reflect on our progress, recognize growth, and identify new ways to strengthen our relationships.

I plan to revisit this worksheet again in (ex. 1 month, 3 months, 6 months): _____

When our relationships are reliable, built on trust, respect, honesty, and open communication, they can be powerful (and invaluable) protective factors, factors that buffer against risks and support our overall well-being.

If you'd like to have a conversation on this topic, please feel free to contact SAFE Project at prevention@safeproject.us.

