It is important to identify both Risk and Protective Factors when creating a prevention program for a community.
**Risk Factors:** Characteristic of people or their family, school, and/or community environments that are associated with increases in alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

**Examples of Risk Factors:**
- Chaotic home environments, particularly in which parents abuse substances or suffer from mental illnesses
- Ineffective parenting, especially with children with difficult temperaments or conduct disorders
- Lack of parent-child attachments and nurturing
- Inappropriately shy or aggressive behavior in the classroom
- Failure in school performance
- Poor social coping skills
- Affiliations with peers displaying deviant behaviors
- Perceptions of approval of drug-using behaviors in family, work, school, peer, and community environments

**Protective Factors:** Factors associated with reduced drug use potential, encompassing psychological, behavioral, family, and social characteristics that can insulate individuals from effects of risk factors in the environment.

**Examples of Protective Factors:**
- Strong and positive family bonds
- Parental monitoring of children's activities and peers
- Clear rules of conduct that are consistently enforced within the family
- Involvement of parents in the lives of their children
- Success in school performance; strong bonds with institutions, such as school and religious organizations
- Adoption of conventional norms about drug use

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