



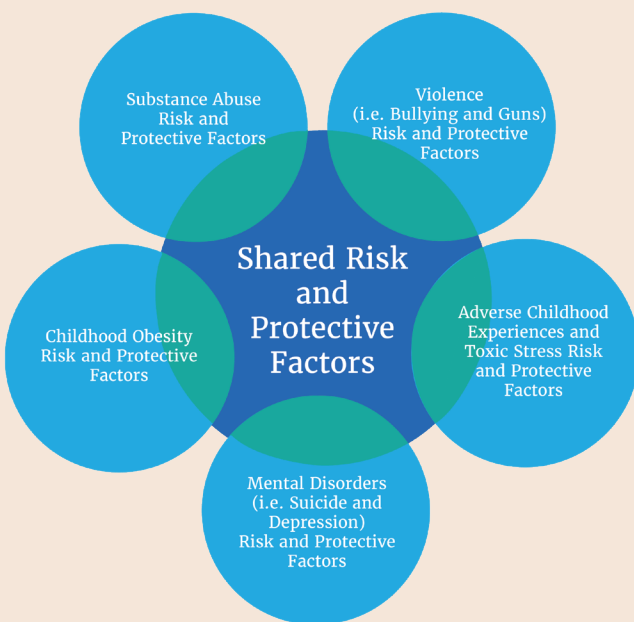
# Interrelated Approach to Comprehensive Health and Wellness in Afterschool

Although youth are generally healthy, the adolescent years are when we start to see the emergence of challenging health and social problems. Since the adolescent years tend to be when children go through substantial developmental transitions, youth are particularly sensitive to influences from their immediate environments. Their families, neighborhoods, school environments, and peers can either support or threaten young people's health and well-being. Societal norms, policies, and public perception such as media messages, historically unjust laws, and explicit and implicit bias, also play a part. These social and personal influences have been defined as risk and protective factors.

Given the magnitude of health and wellness challenges that youth are facing, it can be hard for afterschool providers to confidently feel they are adequately supporting each pressing health issue. To that end, we have developed a Positive Health Youth Development Framework that will help providers shift their approach from addressing each health issue separately to providing a holistic approach grounded in positive youth practice they most often already have in place.

The Positive Youth Development Framework is based on the Shared Risk and Protective Factors Diagram from [SAMSHA](#). The framework illustrates:

- Each health problem has its own risk factors. Each risk factor tends to be positively correlated to another health problem's risk factors and negatively correlated to another health problem's protective factors — meaning the higher the number of risk factors presenting, the greater likelihood that a health problem (or multiple health problems) will develop.
- Each health problem has its own protective factors. Each protective factor tends to be negatively correlated to another health problem's risk factors and positively correlated to another health problem's protective factors— meaning the higher number of protective factors presenting, the greater likelihood that multiple health problems will not develop.
- The intentional identification of shared risk and protective factors for many common health challenges can guide the development of appropriate program practices and interventions to defend against a broad spectrum of related health problems.



\*Please note any health issue can be added as a [bubble].  
Customize the health challenges based on your state, community and program needs

Using an integrated approach to prevention that addresses the spectrum of health problems youth face will help providers to not feel so overwhelmed by emerging health issues, address health challenges most appropriate to the communities they serve and support youth in a holistic manner. Identification of risk and protective factors should be program-specific and prioritized by those health challenges that most impact youth in your program and your community. Afterschool providers should consider key risk and protective factors when designing, implementing and evaluating program practice and activities.