

# Protective Factors and Risk Factors

Strengthening protective factors around young people has multiple lifelong benefits. Protective factors buffer against the effects of risk factors.

Use this checklist of some protective factors and risk factors to identify how you can support a young person.

## Some protective factors

### Individual

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- Internal locus of control
- Positive sense of identity and belonging
- Social skills
- Critical thinking and decision making skills
- Spiritual connection
- Hope for the future

### Peer

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- At least one close, supportive friend
- Participation in positive peer activities (e.g. sports, drama)

### Family

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- Family connectedness
- Parent supervision and interest in development

### School

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- School connection
- Vocational pathway
- Academic achievement

### Community

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- Positive adult relationship outside of the family
- Positive activities
- Cultural connection
- Feeling safe in the community

## Some risk factors

### Individual

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- Emotional distress
- High levels of risk taking
- Poor social skills

### Peer

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- Peer substance use/favourable attitudes to use
- Peers who engage in problem behaviours

### Family

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- Parental substance use
- Poor family relationships
- Neglect or abuse
- Family poverty and isolation

### School

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- Low school connection
- Low academic achievement
- Peer rejection

### Community

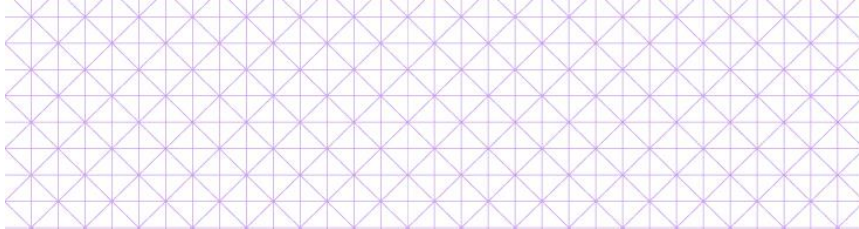
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- Lack of support, training, employment opportunities
- Neighbourhood problems/poverty
- Lack of positive activities

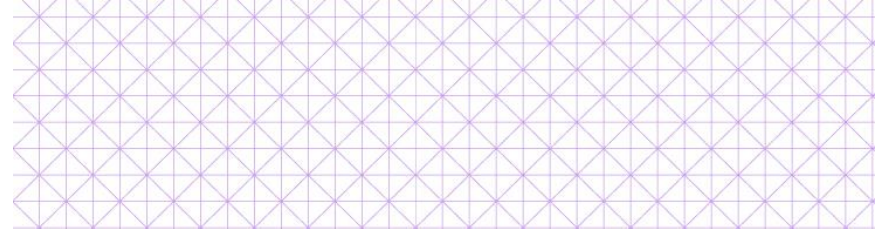
# Identifying change talk

We can build motivation by focusing on the language of change

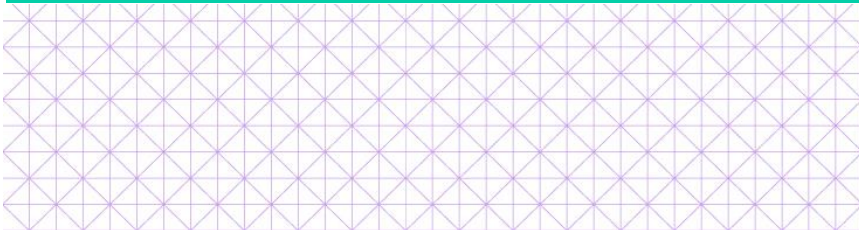
Desire to change



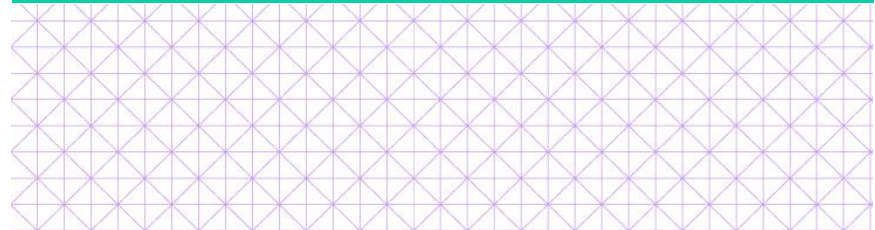
Abilities to change



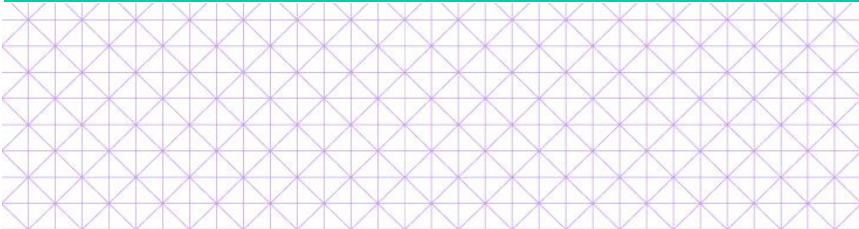
Reason to change



Need to change



Commitment to change



Comments

