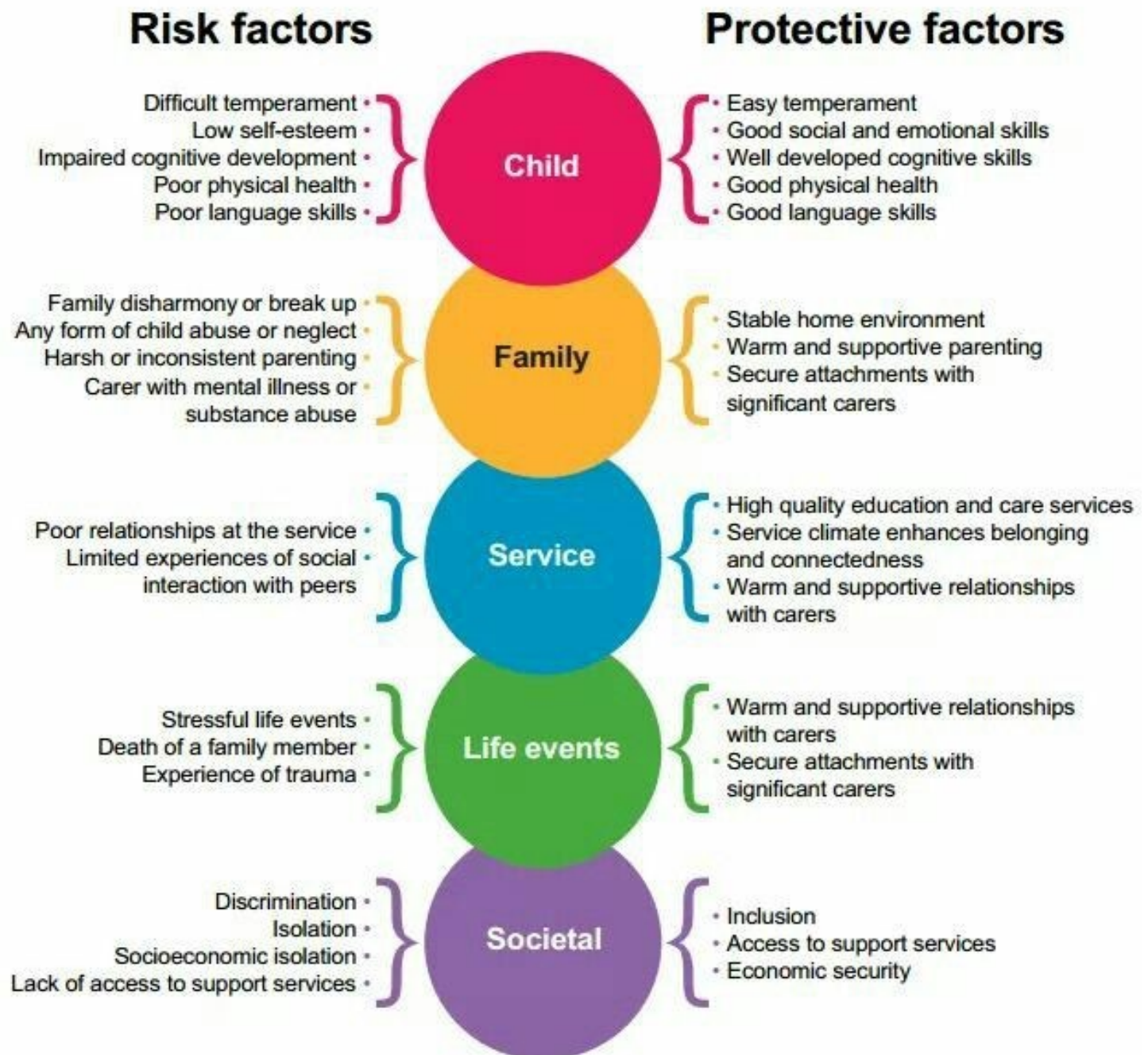


# PREVENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Just as you protect your kids against illnesses like measles, you can help "immunize" them against drug use by giving them the facts before they're in a risky situation. When kids don't feel comfortable talking to parents, they'll seek answers elsewhere, even if their sources are unreliable. Kids who aren't properly informed are at greater risk of engaging in unsafe behaviors and experimenting with drugs. Parents who are educated about the effects of drug use and learn the facts can give their kids correct information and clear up any misconceptions.

Prevention works best when attention is given to multiple risk and protective factors. Such factors exist in many areas of your child's life and common risk factors can predict many problems. Reducing one risk factor may result in reduction of multiple problems in the family, school, peer group, and/or community. Increasing protective factors supports healthy development in all life areas, which helps them to resist influences to use.





## PARENT/MALE Engagement ACTIVITY

Conversations are one of the most powerful tools parents can use to connect with and protect their kids. When tackling some of life's tougher topics, especially those about drugs and alcohol, just figuring out what to say can be a challenge.

Since the foundation for all healthy habits, from nutrition to tooth brushing, is laid down during the preschool years, this is a great time to set the stage for a drug-free life. The following tips will help you get conversations going with your 2- to 4-year-old child:

### Tips for Conversations with Your Child

- Explain the importance of taking good care of our bodies – eating right, exercising and getting a good night's sleep. Discuss how good you feel when you take care of yourself — how you can run, jump, play and work for many hours.
- Celebrate your child's decision-making skills. Whenever possible, let your child choose what to wear. Even if the clothes don't quite match, you are reinforcing your child's ability to make decisions.
- Turn chores like brushing teeth, putting away toys, wiping up spills, and caring for pets into fun experiences that your child will enjoy. Break the activities down into manageable steps so that your child learns to develop plans.
- Help your child steer clear of dangerous substances that exist in her immediate world. Point out poisonous and harmful chemicals commonly found in homes, such as bleach, kitchen cleansers and furniture polish. Explain that she should only eat or smell food or a medicine from a doctor that you, a relative or other known caregivers give to her. Also, explain that drugs from the doctor help the person the doctor gives them to but that they can harm someone else.
- Help your child understand the difference between make-believe and real life. Ask your child what he thinks about a TV program or story. Let your child know about your likes and dislikes. Discuss how violence or bad decisions can hurt people.
- Turn frustration into a learning opportunity. If a tower of blocks keeps collapsing during a play session, work with your child to find possible solutions to the problem.

## RESOURCES

### Idaho:

**Friendship Club: A Social setting for those recovering from drug & alcohol dependency, also for family/friends.**

- 745 S. 1st Ave. Pocatello, ID 83201 - (208-232-9565)

### Utah:

**Bear River Health Department Division of Substance Abuse : Affordable prevention services & counseling for all types of substance abuse to individuals, families, or groups.**

- 655 E. 1300 N. Logan, UT
- 817 W. 950 S. Brigham City, UT 84302
- Logan: 435-792-6420
- Brigham: 435-730-2793
- Tremonton: 435-257-3318
- [www.brhd.org](http://www.brhd.org)

### Online:

**My Recovery: Social networking and resource site for people in addiction recovery including online AA meetings.**

- [myrecovery.com](http://myrecovery.com)

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Hotline**

- [samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)