

# Positive Parenting for Healthy Youth

## PAYS 2019: Risk and Protective Factors



### What is PAYS?

The Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) is a student survey administered in odd-numbered years (e.g., 2015, 2017, 2019) to youth in 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grades in participating schools throughout the state. The questions asked in the survey cover many types of **attitudes, knowledge, behaviors, and experiences**.

### Top Protective Factors

Assets that decrease risk taking behaviors among youth.  
Here is where we are doing well:

#### Family Attachment:

Young people that feel they are a valued part of their family.

71%



#### Family Rewards for Prosocial Involvement:

When parents, siblings, and other family members praise, encourage and attend to things done well by their child.

69%



#### Family Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement:

Youth that are exposed to more opportunities to participate meaningfully in the responsibilities and activities of the family.

67%



### Ways to Strengthen Our Protective Factors

**Take an interest in what your child is interested in** and make time to do that activity with them--be present and limit distractions.

**Eat meals as a family.** It can be any meal of the day, and even if schedules allow only a few times a week, it matters. Eating together sets the stage for conversation and sharing.

**Be available.** Make space for daily play or interaction with your kids. Yep, daily, even if for only 10 minutes. This sends the message that your relationship is a priority and connects you to your child. Feeling connected leads to more positive choices.

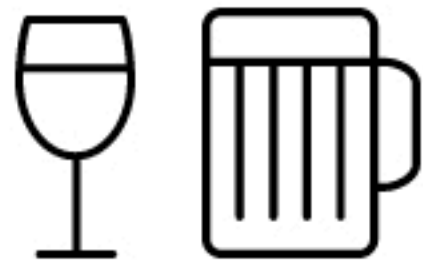
### Top Risk Factors

Characteristics in the community that are likely to increase risk taking behaviors among youth.  
Here's where we need support:

#### Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Drugs and Antisocial Behavior:

In families where parents use illegal drugs, are heavy users of alcohol, are tolerant of children's use, and/or use drugs or alcohol with their kids, children are more likely to become drug users in adolescence.

46%



#### Low Commitment toward School:

Students that report **not** liking school, spending time on homework, and perceiving the coursework as irrelevant.

53%



#### Perceived Risk of Drug use:

Students that **do not** perceive drug use to be risky.

43%



### Ways to Decrease Risk Factors

**Talk early and often** with your kids about drugs and alcohol, starting around age 8-11 years old. Early conversations can prevent early use.

**Role model healthy behaviors.** Most youth report their **parents are the biggest influence** on their decision of whether or not to drink or use drugs. Show your kids how to cope with stress in healthy ways, without using substances.

**Seek out help from trusted sources. Visit CTC's Resource Page for useful links and trusted sources:**  
[CLICK HERE!](#)

[www.dtownctc.org](http://www.dtownctc.org)

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