

The Shared Risk and Protective Factors (SHARP) Tool

Introduction and Background

The Shared Risk and Protective Factor (SHARP) Tool is a web-based, interactive product designed to support SAMHSA-funded states, tribes and jurisdictions (S/T/Js) in using shared risk and protective factor data to inform prevention planning. Shared risk and protective factors are factors that relate to and/or influence the occurrence of *both* substance abuse and

mental health outcomes. Prevention efforts that target shared factors are more likely to have greater impact, as these factors have the potential to contribute to multiple outcomes. This focus on addressing shared risk and protective factors is particularly timely, given SAMHSA's goal of addressing Strategic Initiative #1: Prevention of Substance Abuse and Mental Illnesses, and the current efforts of multiple states and jurisdiction to align their substance abuse and mental health sectors.



Methods

The SHARP Tool evolved from a pilot study conducted in 2012 by a multi-disciplinary research team comprising representatives from SAMHSA's CAPT and former State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup contract. The pilot involved a preliminary review of research literature that identified risk and protective factors linked to both substance abuse and mental health outcomes. Findings from the pilot study were organized according to the socio-ecological model, a multi-level framework that describes the different contexts, or domains, in which these factors exist.

Beginning in 2014, the CAPT launched a more comprehensive systematic review of the research literature, building on findings from the pilot. The first phase of this review has focused on identifying school-related risk and protective factors present in the community domain of the socio-ecological model. A total of 671 articles were reviewed, with 122 of these articles showing scientific evidence of association with either substance abuse or mental health outcomes. These 122 articles identified 267 risk and protective factors associated with *either* substance abuse or mental health outcomes, and 12 "shared" factors associated with *both* substance abuse and mental health outcomes. Figure 1 provides an overview of the review process to date.

Figure 1: Research Literature Review of School-Based Factors (Progress to Date)



Features of the SHARP Tool

The SHARP tool contains information on the systematic review process and methods, instructions for using shared factor data, and interactive search functionality where users can access research literature findings related to each specific factor. The interactive search function, currently in development, will allow users to conduct searches by desired *risk or protective factor*, as well as by desired *outcome*

Using SHARP Data

The SHARP tool can assist SAMHSA-funded use data to inform their decision-making. S/T/Js that have identified their priority substance abuse problems can use the tool to identify shared factors that are associated with selected priorities. STJs that have already selected and prioritized risk and protective factors to address can use the SHARP Tool to find out which of factors impact both substance abuse and mental health outcomes. S/T/Js can then validate the SHARP tool findings based on their own data, and begin to mobilize community capacity to address selected factors. Finally, S/T/Js can use data on shared risk and protective factors to facilitate and/or strengthen collaboration with related sectors, such as mental health agencies, schools, and child and family services.

To access the SHARP Tool, go to <http://sharp.edc.org> (username: sharptool, password: sharptool)

Questions and Comments

Please contact Sandeep Kasat (SandeepKasat@Westat.com) and/or Craig Love (CraigLove@Westat.com) for more questions and comments regarding SAPPET.