

August 2018

**The Protective Factors that bring success to youth** are greatly increased when youth have positive supportive relationships with their parents/caregivers and other adults in their lives. **Protective Factors are values and characteristics that keep youth safe from participating in risk behaviors. These include:**

- Maintaining positive connections to supportive adults
- Engaging in service projects
- Establishing healthy relationships
- Expressing self-regulation and self-control
- Making plans and informed decisions
- Practicing a healthy life style
- Possessing a sense of purpose
- Keeping a positive view of personal future<sup>1</sup>

These factors have been proven to bring greater lifetime success for youth. They are acquired through relationships with adults in the lives of youth, especially with their parent/caregivers. Parent/caregivers' positive involvement and guidance of youth from early years predicts their success. Research shows that connection and communication with family is associated with less risk taking.<sup>2</sup> When youth believe that adults in their lives are concerned for their well-being, their perception of disorganization decreases and they feel more secure and safe no matter their neighborhood environment.<sup>3</sup> Our Powerful Choices lessons have been updated to assist youth in gaining these protective factors. We will be excited about our plans to hold parent/caregivers meetings and community events to promote increased Protective Factors of our students participating in *Powerful Choices* lessons. This component of our programming will unite students and their adults in important common causes.

Our work here at Equipping Youth has greatly increased this summer. We visited multiple schools in May and June to promote our *Powerful Choices* lessons for their health classes. We have written grant applications that are pending that may increase our availability. We continue writing additional lessons for grades 5 and 6 of our *Powerful Choices: Biblical Applications for Life Skills*. Updating the materials on our web site and managing our FaceBook account has been accomplished more frequently. We have processed additional mailings informing schools and community organizations of our planned expansion.

To facilitate all of the activity we have had, Paulette Kmetz has greatly increased her time commitment and taken the role of Office Manager. Frank Lovera has also joined us at the office to assist with continued updating and editing our curriculum for final printing.

With the start of school this month we need to hire educators. We anticipate much more work as additional schools request our curriculum for their health classes. We anticipate that our work will continue to increase as the word spreads of the success our *Powerful Choices* lessons have in giving youth hope and resiliency for their lives now and for their future successes. Any amount that you donate will help to assure that we are available to the youth in our schools and community.

We thank you for your continued support in prayers and donations. We ask for your prayerful consideration of our needs. Please pass this letter on to friends and family, sharing the exciting mission of Equipping Youth this coming year. Let them know about our website.

Ruth Anne Eccles, MSN, Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> **What are risk factors and protective factors? | National Institute on ...**

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/...risk-factors-protective-factors/what-are-risk-factors>

<sup>2</sup> Amialchuk, A and L. Gerhardinger, *Contraceptive use and pregnancies in adolescents' romantic relationships: Role of relationship activities and parental attitudes and communication*. Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 2015. 36(2): p. 86-97

<sup>3</sup> Brevard, J., et al., *Feeling safe: Intergenerational connections and neighborhood disorganization among urban and rural African American youth*. Journal of Community Psychology, 2013. 41(8): p. 992-1004.