

APPENDIX A. Description of Variables

(Web Only File)

Domain	Explanation
<i>Individual Level</i>	
Coping skills	<p>This variable assessed a youth’s average level of confidence in his or her ability to use various coping strategies (i.e., stay out of fights by choosing other solutions, talk out a disagreement, calm down when mad, ignore someone’s teasing, avoid a fight by walking away, apologize to the other students, and seek help from an adult). These items had high internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.88). The responses for each item were coded on a scale from 0 to 2 (i.e., 0 = “no confidence;” 1 = “somewhat confident;” 2 = “very confident”). The mean scale score was calculated for each youth. Based on the tertiles of the distribution of these values, youth were placed in one of three categories: low level of coping, moderate level of coping, high level of coping.</p>
Depressed mood	<p>This variable was dichotomized to capture any symptoms of a depressed mood. Youths were asked how many times they had been sad, grouchy or irritable or moody, and hopeless about the future in the past 30 days (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.77). To capture a youth having any of these symptoms at a clinically relevant level, each respondent was categorized based on his or her most severe response. Therefore, youths reporting “often” or “always” to any of the symptoms were categorized in the depressed mood group.</p>
Suicidal ideation	<p>This variable was comprised of one item, “Did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?”, which was used to assess suicidal ideation in the past 12 months. Response options were “yes” and “no”.</p>

Alcohol use	This variable used one item to capture the frequency youth had at least one drink of alcohol in the past 12 months. Response options were coded on a scale of 1 to 4 (i.e., 1 = “never;” 2 = “once a month or less;” 2 = “2-3 days a month;” 3 = “1-2 days a week or more”).
Drug use	This variable used one item to capture the frequency youth had used inhalants (glue or solvents) or illegal drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine, and heroin in the past 12 months. Response options were coded on a scale of 1 to 4 (i.e., 1 = “never;” 2 = “once a month or less;” 2 = “2-3 days a month;” 3 = “1-2 days a week or more”).
Delinquency	Youth were considered delinquent if they reported engaging in at least one of the following behaviors: deliberately damage property that did not belong to them, hurt someone badly enough to need bandages or care from a doctor or nurse, steal things, use or threatened to use a weapon to get something from someone, and sell marijuana or other drugs. These items had high internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.75). Response options ranged from 1 to 4 (1 = “never;” 2 = “1 or 2 times;” 3 = “3 or 4 times;” 4 = “5 or more times”). To capture the frequency of these behaviors, each respondent was categorized based on his or her most severe response.
Peer victimization	This variable was dichotomized to distinguish between those who have never been victimized and those who have had a peer do at least one of the following to them in the past 12 months: damage something that belonged to them, say things to hurt their feelings on purpose, threatened to hit or throw something at them, insulted them in front of others, scratched them, put down their looks, hit or slapped them, slammed them or held them against a wall, kicked them, pushed, grabbed, or shoved them, forced them to have sex or to do something sexual that they did not want to do, threw something at them that could hurt, punched or hit them with something that could hurt, threatened or injured them with a knife or gun, and hurt them badly enough to need bandages or care from a doctor or nurse. These items had high internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.92).

<i>Peer level</i>	
Peer support	This variable was dichotomized. Youths were considered to have peer support if they agreed “a lot” to any of the following items: “I have friends I can talk to, who care about my feelings and what happens to me; “I have friends I can talk to, who give good suggestions and advice about my problems;” and “I have friends who help me with practical problems, like how to get somewhere, or help me with a job or project” (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.90).
<i>Family level</i>	
Parental positive reinforcement	This variable was dichotomized. Youths were considered to have consistent parental positive reinforcement in the past 30 days if they reported that their parents “almost always” did any of the following to show approval: say something nice, praise or approval; hug, pat on the back, or kiss; give rewards; give special privileges; or do a special activity (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.79).
Parental monitoring	This variable captured the consistency of parent’s use of monitoring in the past 30 days. Parental monitoring strategies included: set curfew on school nights, set curfew on weekend, tell parents/guardian what you were doing when you were outside of the house, leave a note or call parents to let them know where you were going when they are not home, when you were out, tell parents who you were with when you were not at home, tell parents what you were doing when they are home (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.76). Response options ranged from 0 to 2 (0 = “No or almost never;” 1= “Sometimes;” 2=“Almost always”). The mean scale score was calculated. Based on the tertiles of the distribution of these values, youth were placed in one of three categories: low level of parental monitoring, moderate level of parental monitoring, high level of parental monitoring.

Family support	This variable was dichotomized. Youths were considered to be supported by their family if they agreed “a lot” with any of the following items: “There are people in my family I can talk to, who care about my feelings and what happens to me;” “There are people in my family I can talk to, who give good suggestions and advice about my problems;” and “There are people in my family who help me with practical problems, like helping me get somewhere or help me with a job or project” (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.91).
<i>Community level</i>	
Adult support at school	This variable was dichotomized. Youths were considered to be supported by their family if they reported agreeing “a lot” with any of the following items: “At school, there are adults I can talk to, who care about my feelings and what happens to me;” “At school, there are adults I can talk to, who give good suggestions and advice about my problems;” and “At school, there are adults who help me with practical problems, like helping me get somewhere, or helping me with a job or project” (Cronbach’s alpha=0.85).
School connectedness	This variable was dichotomized. Youths were considered to be connected to their school if they reported agreeing “a lot” with any of the following items: “I feel close to people at school;” “I feel part of the school;” “I feel happy to be at school” (Cronbach’s alpha=0.72).
Cumulative risk index	The risk variables were summed to create the index of cumulative risk factors. Non-dichotomous risk factors were dichotomized based on referent. The number of risk factors ranged from 0 to 6.
Cumulative protective index	The protective variables were summed to create the index of cumulative protective factors. Non-dichotomous protective factors were dichotomized based on referent. The number of protective factors ranged from 0 to 7.

Risk groups	This variable was created by splitting the cumulative risk index into two groups by its median: low risk group (0 to 2 risk factors) and high risk group (3 to 6 risk factors).
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