



Mental Health Awareness Week

Building Resiliency



Grades 9-12

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Time: 40 minutes

Materials: Protective Factors worksheet, “Brains: Journey to Resilience” YouTube video: sdsfec.org/MHAW-W3

Directions:

This is a discussion-based activity, where students will recognize stressors (above the umbrella) and protective factors (under the umbrella) in their own life. The visual of an umbrella in the rain will help them realize how protective factors can help with their resiliency.

Hand out the umbrella worksheet. Discuss how stress can be like rain and the protective factors are the umbrella protecting us from getting soaked.

Have students list stressors in their life in the rain above the umbrella. Now move to protective factors, which are things or attributes in someone’s life which help mitigate the effects of stress. Examples include having social connections, getting exercise, connection to caring adults, and access to a counselor. Discuss which protective factors exist for your students, including those that are part of the individual, home, school, and community. Then, give them time to add protective factors that are relevant to their own lives within the umbrella on their worksheets.

Some students may notice that there is a discrepancy between the number of stressors and the number of protective factors. Lead a discussion about which protective factors your students can control and ask them to circle or highlight the ones they have the power to strengthen.

End by watching the video “Brains: Journey to Resilience.”



Note: Listing stressors may be too traumatic for some students. If you see a student shut down, please just allow it. Touch base after class to let them know you’re there for them. Inform your school counselor of the student’s reaction so they can monitor and check in.

Should the conversation agitate a student, call for your school counselor to respond.



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Awareness Week**

My Protective Factors

List stressors in your life above the umbrella. List your protective factors on the umbrella

MY STRESSORS

MY PROTECTIVE FACTORS

