

# Practices for the Sacred Circle:

## Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Matrix

Use this risk assessment to document factors that create resilience or undermine it for children. Map these along the risk and vulnerability matrix. The risk factors for sexual abuse and exploitation should also be considered.<sup>5</sup>

### Child

#### Sources of Vulnerability

- Young age
- Disability
- Earlier history of abuse

#### Sources of Resilience

- Higher IQ
- Good attachment
- Good self-esteem
- Cultural identification

### Parent or Caregiver

#### Sources of Vulnerability

- Domestic violence
- Serious substance misuse
- Chronic serious psychiatric illness
- Severe learning disability
- History of victimization - abused as a child

#### Sources of Resilience

- Social support
- Positive parental childhood
- Good parental health
- Good relationship with sibling
- Education
- Work role

<sup>5</sup> ICSP (n.d.) Risk Assessment Tools, General. Physical Abuse, Neglect, Emotional Abuse, and Sexual Abuse. Risk and Vulnerability Matrix. Available from: <http://iscp.gg/article/167411/Risk-Assessment-Tools>

## Family and Environment

### Sources of Vulnerability

- Neighborhood known to be dangerous
- Poor relationship with school
- Weak fabric of social support
- Poverty
- Social isolation
- Inter-generational cycle of abuse

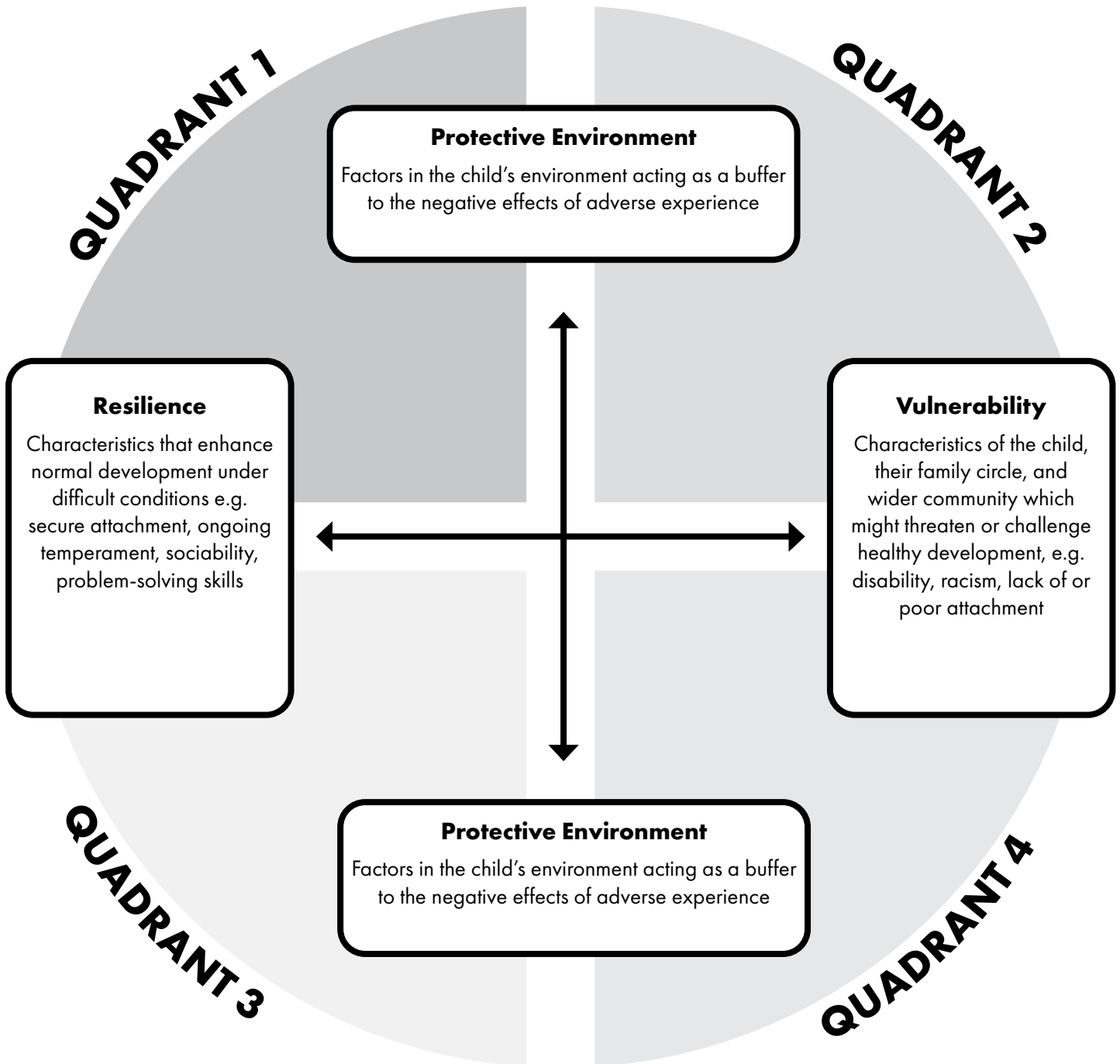
### Sources of Resilience

- Committed adult
- Good school experience
- Strong community
- Good services/supports
- Cultural connections

## Factors should be mapped across the Risk and Vulnerability Matrix using the following process:

1. Identify the factors that create evidence resilience in the child, and those that indicate a protective environment.
2. Identify the factors that create vulnerability in the child and their circumstances.
3. Identify the factors that are creating adversity at this point in time.
4. Ascribe each of these a value between 1 and 5, with 5 being strong and 1 being weak.
5. Plot where you assess the child to be on the matrix according to these values - which quadrant do you assess the child as being in?

# RISKS AND VULNERABILITY MATRIX



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## Consider the following questions when assessing resilience in children:

### I have.....

- People around me I can trust, and who love me no matter what.
- People who set limits for me so I know when to stop before there is danger or trouble.
- People who show me how to do things right by the way they do things.
- People who want me to learn to do things on my own.
- People who help me when I am sick, in danger, or need to learn.

### I am.....

- A person people can like and love.
- Pleased to do things for others and show my concern.
- Respectful of others and myself.
- Willing to be responsible for what I do.
- Sure things will be all right.

### I can.....

- Talk to others about things that frighten me or bother me.
- Find ways to solve problems I face.
- Control myself when I feel like doing something not right or dangerous.
- Figure out when it's a good time to talk to someone or take action.
- Find someone to help me when I need it.

### Other considerations

- The child has someone who loves them unconditionally.
- The child has an older person outside their home they can talk to about problems and feelings.
- The child is praised for doing things on its own.
- The child can count on their family being there when needed.
- The child knows someone they want to be like.
- The child believes things will turn out all right.
- The child likes others and takes pleasure in doing things that make them be liked in return.
- The child believes in power greater than seen - has a conscience or sense of right and wrong.
- The child is willing to try new things.
- The child likes to achieve.
- The child feels that what they do makes a difference in what happens.
- The child likes itself.
- The child can focus on a task, and stay with it.
- The child has a sense of humor.
- The child makes plans to do things.