

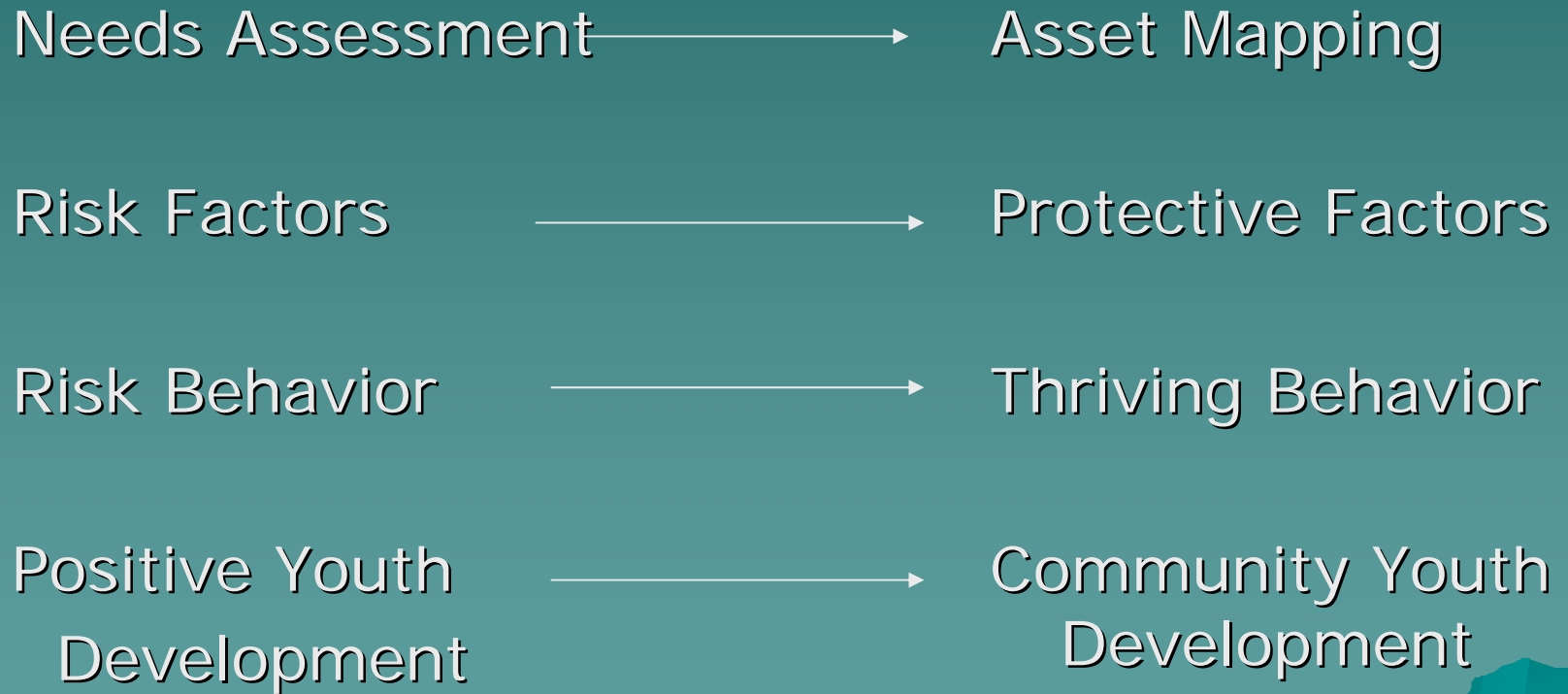
# What is Youth Development?

- ◆ A process by which young people acquire competencies and positive connections to self, others and the larger community (National Youth Development Research Response Initiative, 2003)
- ◆ A combination of all of the people, places, supports, opportunities and services that young people need to be happy, healthy and successful (Center for Youth Development and Policy Research)
- ◆ First of all, a relatively predictable, natural process....that represents intentional efforts to help guide and influence this process in a positive manner" (Youth Development Basics, New York State Advancing Youth Development Partnership)

# What is Youth Development?

*Youth development is in essence, all of the essentials necessary for young people to move from childhood into positive, productive adulthood.*

# Recent Shifts in Focus Areas



# Prevention Approach

- ◆ Proactive stance in taking steps to keep problems from occurring
- ◆ Deficient-oriented, focusing primarily on youth and their “problems”
- ◆ Address issues: drug use, delinquency, violence and teen pregnancy
- ◆ Little emphasis on building protective factors in a young person’s environment to promote resiliency and thriving behavior

# Resiliency

- ◆ Aims to identify and understand factors that distinguish individuals who not only survive negative circumstances, but thrive to become competent, problem-free individuals (Small & Memmo, 2004)
- ◆ Lack of consistency in how resiliency is defined
- ◆ Lack of acknowledgement in the variations among domains (e.g., academic, employment, relationships)

# Positive Youth Development

- ◆ Focuses on aspects that foster the healthy well-being of youth
- ◆ Applies practices and principles through various outcomes (eg., developmental, achievement)
- ◆ Builds on strengths (“youth-as-assets”) rather than deficits
- ◆ Aims to help youth reach full potential in order to become productive adults

# Community Youth Development

- ◆ Integration of youth development and community development (Villarruel, Perkins, Borden & Keith, 2003)
- ◆ Involves a shift from problems, to concentrating on strengths, competencies, and engagement in self-development and community development
- ◆ Engaging youth as active collaborators through positive relationships with adults
- ◆ Purposely creates environments where constructive, affirmative, and encouraging relationships with adults and peers are sustained over time

# Current Areas of Emphasis

- ◆ Positive Youth Development
- ◆ Community Youth Development
- ◆ Capacity for Adult Support
- ◆ Out-Of-School Time
- ◆ Youth Engagement and Participation

# Essentials of 4-H/Youth Development

- ◆ To teach knowledge and life skills which enhance quality of life
- ◆ To engage young people in the work of the Land-Grant University
- ◆ To create opportunities which promote positive youth development

\* Source: National 4-H/CSREES