

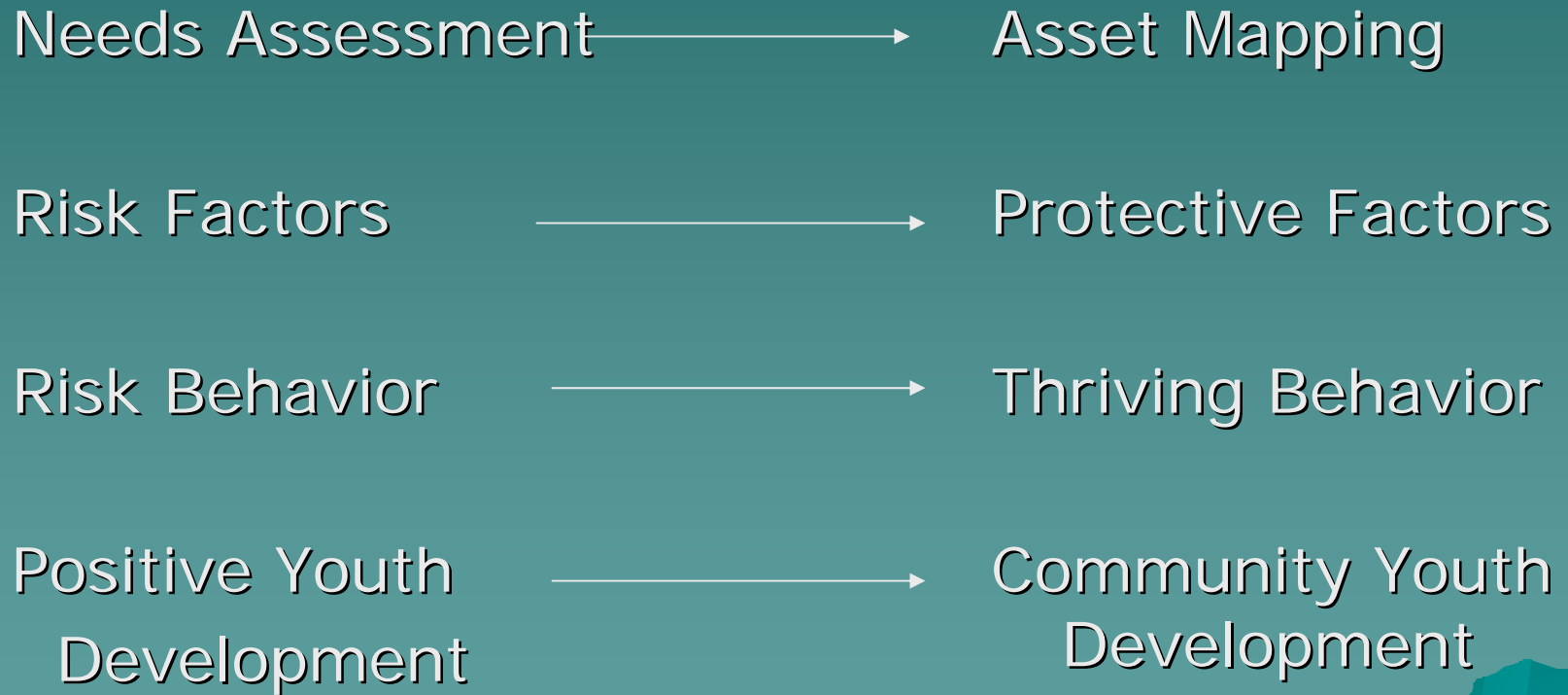
What is Youth Development?

- ◆ 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