

Foundations in Behavioral Health Prevention Webinar Series

Webinar 2: Foundations of Prevention Theory Resource Guide

Iowa's Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health

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Summary

In this resource document, one will find a list of commonly used prevention theories & models as well as additional resources which will assist prevention specialist professionals in their overall work. Prevention theories and models support the practice of prevention which include a range of activities that are aimed at reducing the risk or threat to health.

The theories and models reviewed during the corresponding training are used for program planning to help understand and explain health related behaviors while working with individuals, groups and communities.

Resources for Prevention Theories & Models

Theory at a Glance: A Guide for Health Promotion Practice

- This publication by the National Health Institute describes influential theories of health-related behaviors, processes of shaping behavior, and the effects of community and environmental factors on behavior.

Health Education: Theoretical Concepts, Effective Strategies and Core Competencies

- This health education foundation document by the World Health Organization (WHO), provides a review of the various health education theories, identifies the components of evidence-based health education, outlines the competencies necessary to engage in effective practice, and seeks to provide a common understanding of health education disciplines and related concepts. It also offers a framework that clarifies the relationship between health literacy, health promotion, determinants of health and healthy public policy and health outcomes.

Commonly Used Prevention Theories & Models

Prevention theories and models support the practice of prevention which includes a range of activities that are aimed at reducing the risk or threat to health. In their support with the practice of prevention, prevention theories and models are used for program planning to help understand and explain health related behaviors while working with individuals, groups and communities.

Institute of Medicine Model (IOM)

- The IOM is often referred to as the continuum of care. It is organized into several categories of prevention strategies which include: Universal, selective and indicated categories.

Public Health Model

- The Public Health Model is often represented by a triangle with three levels encompassing primary, secondary, and tertiary strategies aimed at preventing the onset of a health condition.

Social-Ecological Model

- The Social-Ecological Model identifies multiple influences at different levels of a person's life typically ranging from individual factors such as one's biological state to broader community, geopolitical, and policy influences.

Stages of Change Model

- The Stages of Change Model, a subset of the Transtheoretical Model (TTM), includes five stages which are aimed at altering personal behavior patterns that lead individuals to long-term change: Precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance.

Theory of Reasoned Action

- This theory suggest that an individual's health behavior is driven by their intention to perform a behavior. This behavior intention is then predicted ultimately by a person's attitude and perceived norms regarding the behavior.

Institute of Medicine Classifications for Prevention

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) Model classifications, often referred to as a continuum of care, categorizes preventive interventions according to their population of focus. The definitions for these population classifications are:

- + **Universal:** Focuses on the general public or a whole population group and are not directed at a specific risk group.
- + **Universal Direct:** Interventions directly serve a group of participants who have not been identified based on individual risk.
- + **Universal Indirect:** Interventions support population-based programs and environmental strategies.
- + **Selective:** Focuses on individuals or a subgroup of the population whose risk of developing a disorder is significantly higher than average.
- + **Indicated:** Focuses on individuals in high-risk environments who have minimal but detectable signs or symptoms foreshadowing a disorder or have biological markers indicating predispositions for a disorder but do not yet meet diagnostic levels.

According to the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a comprehensive approach to behavioral health also means seeing prevention as part of an overall continuum of care.

The Behavioral Health Continuum of Care Model recognizes multiple opportunities for addressing behavioral health problems and disorders. Based on the Mental Health Intervention Spectrum, first introduced in a 1994 Institute of Medicine report, the model includes the following components:

- + **Promotion:** These services are designed to create environments and conditions that support behavioral health and the ability of individuals to withstand challenges. Promotion strategies also reinforce the entire continuum of behavioral health services.
- + **Prevention:** Delivered prior to the possible onset of a disorder, these services are intended to prevent or reduce the risk of developing a behavioral health problem, such as underage alcohol use, prescription drug misuse, illicit drug misuse, and/or problem gambling.
- + **Treatment:** These services are for individuals diagnosed with a substance misuse, problem gambling, or other behavioral health disorders.
 - + **Recovery:** These services provide supports to help individuals live productive lives in the community and can often help with abstinence.



Public Health Model for Substance Abuse Prevention

OVERVIEW

The focus of public health is on the health, safety and well-being of entire populations. A unique aspect of the approach is that it strives to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people.

Public health draws on a science base that is multi-disciplinary. It relies on knowledge from a broad range of disciplines including medicine, epidemiology, sociology, psychology, criminology, education, and economics. This broad knowledge base has allowed the field of public health to respond successfully to a range of health conditions across the globe.

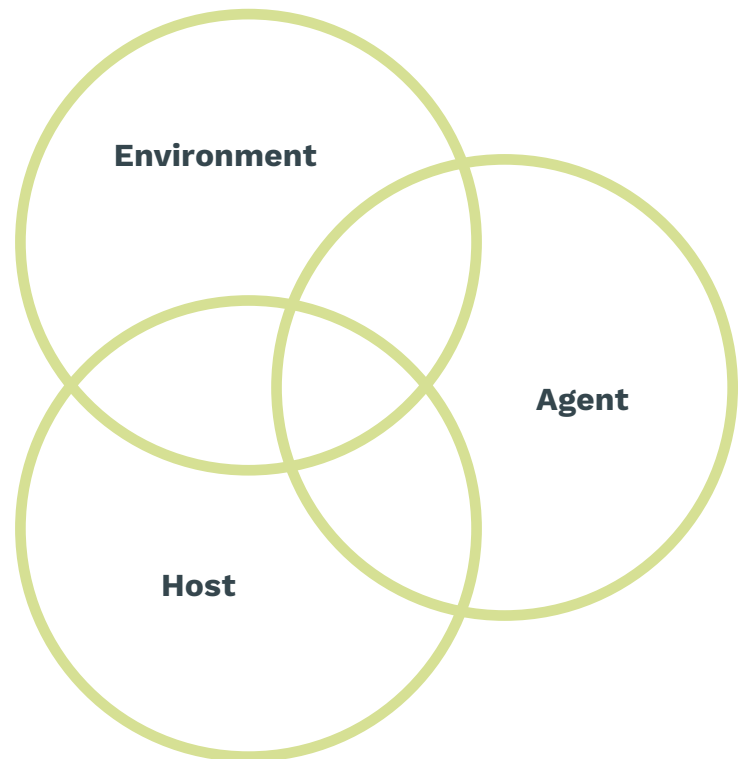
The public health approach also emphasizes input from diverse sectors including health, education, social services, justice, policy and the private sector. Collective action on the part of these stakeholders can help in addressing problems like substance misuse and abuse.

The Public Health Model embraces a comprehensive approach to community change. Instead of focusing efforts on changing individuals, one at a time through prevention efforts, this model looks at changing the environment that surrounds those individuals.

As the model suggests, a specific substance use problem does not result from only one source. Rather, the model emphasizes the interaction of sometimes subtle forces that shape the type and magnitude of problematic outcomes. The etiology of the specific problem can often be understood best from a public health perspective by isolating the relevant individual, agent, and environmental variables that are identified through the intervening variables and underlying conditions.

Intervening variables are the underlying factors that contribute to the problem and answer the question “Why here?”

Underlying conditions continue to drill down to the intervening variable to answer the question “But, why here?”



Public Health Model for Substance Abuse Prevention

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The focus of the public health model is a broad approach to improve individual and community health through the prevention and treatment of disease and other physical and mental health conditions by promoting healthy behaviors. Some examples include promotion of hand washing and breastfeeding, providing vaccinations, and distributing condoms to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

The public health model seeks to not only change an individual's behavior, but to *understand* the impact the environmental context has in relation to encouraging or precipitating behavior. Using a disease prevention analogy, the public health model approaches an issue by understanding the interrelationship between the host (person) the agent or vector (substance) and the environment (place, situation, circumstances, relationships).

The public health approach influences prevention. The key characteristics of the approach are:

1. **Promotion and prevention** – which focuses on promoting wellness and preventing problems.
2. **Population based** – meaning that the focus is not on one individual but on the population that is affected or is at risk.
3. **Risk and protective factors** – draws connections between the risk and protective factors that influence individual behaviors.
4. **Multiple contexts** – embraces the understanding that individuals are influenced by different environments (or as defined in prevention – domains), such as family, neighborhood, school, community and culture.
5. **Development stages** – takes into consideration the developmental stages of the population at risk, and engages in deliberate, active & ongoing planning.

By analyzing the environment and its particular characteristics, and by understanding the relationship an environment, agent, and host have on each other – prevention professionals can better plan for effective prevention strategies to impact substance use.

Sources:

"Foundational Prevention Theories." *Prevention 101, Community Prevention Initiative*, ca-cpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Foundational-Prevention-Theories.pdf. Accessed 21 June 2021.

"The Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention." *Violence Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/publichealthapproach.html. Accessed 21 June 2021.

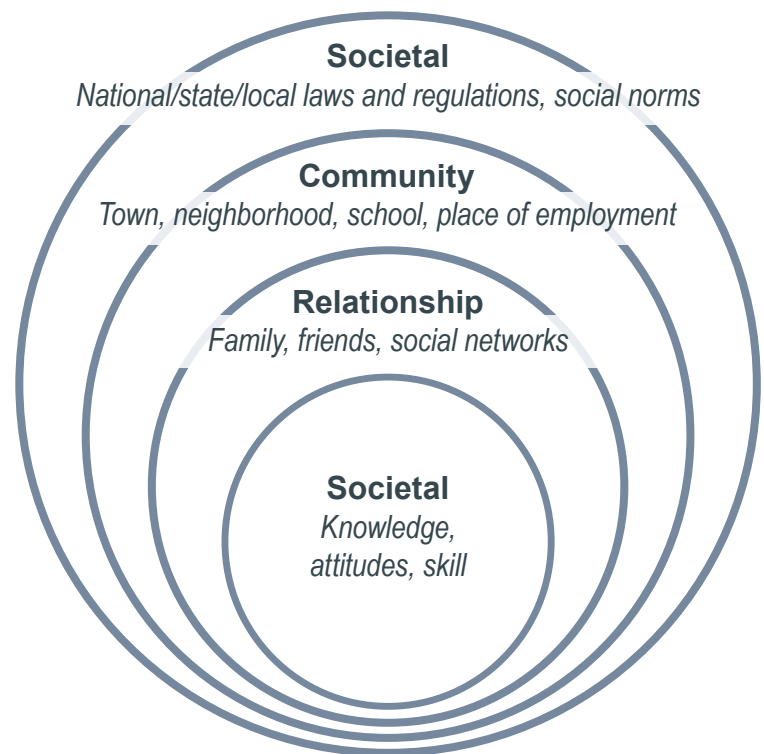
Socio-Ecological Model

The social-ecological model is a multi-faceted public health model grounded in the understanding that to achieve sustainable changes in behavior, prevention efforts must focus on the individuals within the population of focus at the different levels of influence surrounding them. The theory is that the individual does not exist in a vacuum and that his/her behavior both influences and is influenced by the surrounding environment.

The social-ecological model consists of four levels that a prevention effort should strive to impact. Each are listed below:

- + Individual:** This level includes factors specific to the individual within the target population, such as age, education, income, health and psychosocial problems and encompasses the knowledge, attitudes, and skills. This level can be influenced by individual-level strategies such as educational and skill-building programs.
- + Relationship:** This level includes the individual within the target population's closest social circle – family, friends, and peers. These persons have the ability to shape the behaviors of the individuals in the target population. This level can be influenced by enhancing social supports and social networks as well as changing group norms and rules.
- + Community:** This level includes the unique environments in which the individuals in the target population live and spend much of their time, such as schools, places of employment and worship, neighborhoods, sports teams, and volunteer groups. This level can be influenced by changes to rules, regulations, and policies within the different community organizations and structures.

- + Societal:** This level includes the larger, macro-level factors that influence the behaviors of the individuals in the target population, such as laws, policies, and social norms. This level can be influenced by changing state and local laws, policies, and practices, as well as other initiatives designed to change social norms among the target population as a whole, such as a media campaign.



Sources:

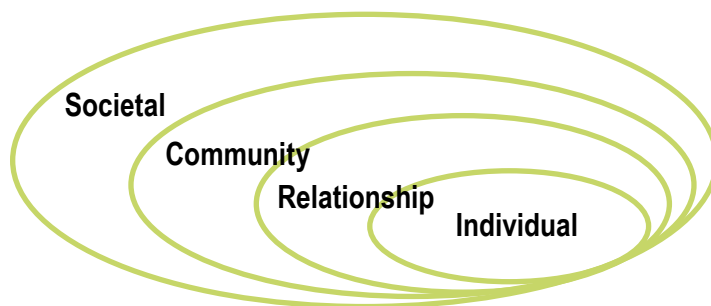
"The Social-Ecological Model: A Framework for Prevention." *Violence Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021, [cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/social-ecologicalmodel.html](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/social-ecologicalmodel.html). Accessed 21 Jun 2021.

"A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework." *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*, <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/20190620-samhsa-strategic-prevention-framework-guide.pdf>. Accessed 21 June 2021.

Socio-Ecological Model

APPLYING THE MODEL TO PREVENTION

The socio-ecological model highlights the importance of working across levels to address the constellation of factors that influence both individuals and populations. The table below, organized by the levels of the socioecological model, offers examples of relevant risk and protective factors and related prevention strategies.



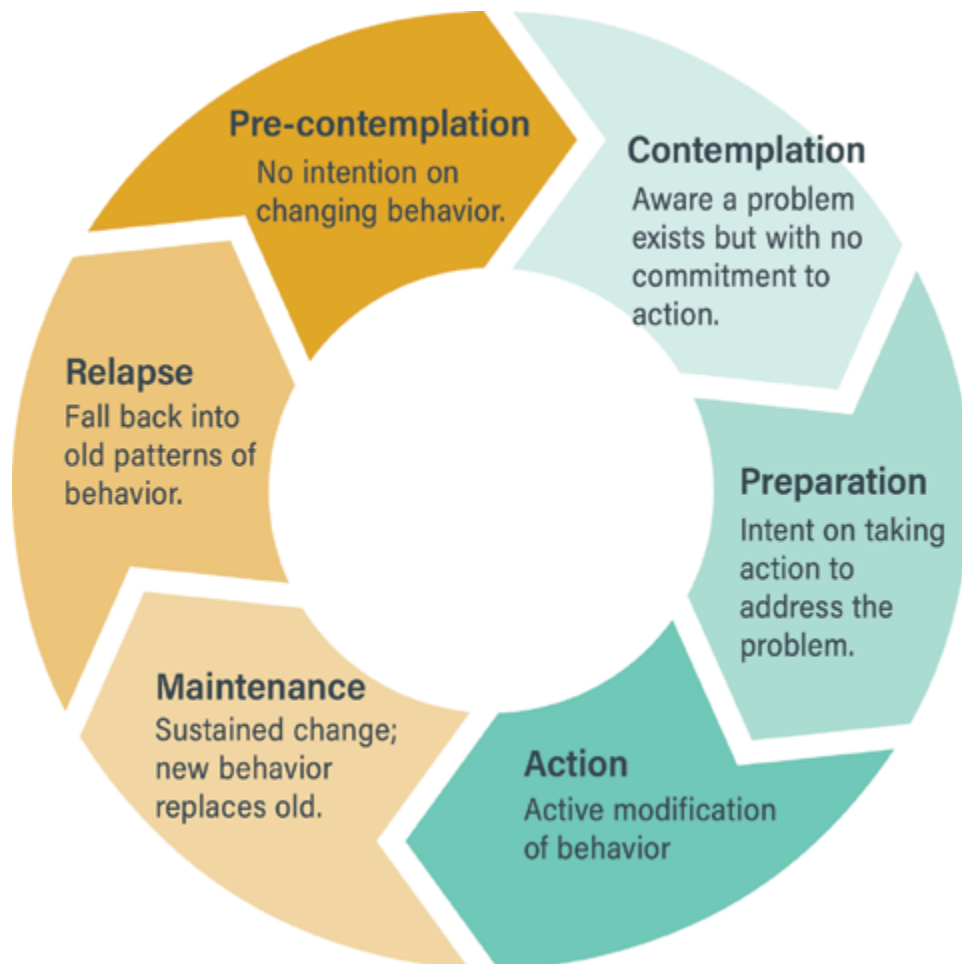
	Risk Factor	Protective Factor	Strategy Example
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Genetic predisposition to substance misuse + Prenatal exposure to alcohol + Poor impulse control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Positive self-image + Self-regulation and control + Social competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Life skills education + Social and decision making education
Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Parental permissiveness + Peer acceptance of heavy drinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Positive parental involvement + Peer disapproval of substance use + Low peer substance use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Parental education on communicating disapproval of use + Peer refusal skills education
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Poor neighborhood safety + Law enforcement permissiveness of underage substance use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Availability of after school activities + Low perceptions of alcohol use among the general student population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Social marketing campaign to promote positive social norms
Societal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Laws favorable to substance use + Historical trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Limited availability of substances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Increase price or tax of alcohol

Stages of Change

The stages of change, also known as the Trans Theoretical Model, speaks to how prepared a person, group or community is to recognize and act on making meaningful change. Each stage of the cycle is most benefited by unique interventions.

A person, group, or community will be best supported by different strategies of prevention in different stages of this decision-making model.

The stages of charge are an upward spiral because a group may be moving through any of these stages then face new topics or areas which require change, bringing them back to earlier stages but landing them further along than where they started. A group may enter, exit, and reenter at any stage.



Sources:

"New England Prevention Specialist Onboarding and Orientation Roadmap 2021." New England (HHS Region 1) Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network, 2021, <https://pttcnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/New%20England%20Onboarding%203.31.21.pdf>. Accessed 15 July 2021.

"The Transtheoretical Model (Stages of Change)." Behavioral Change Models, Boston University School of Public Health, 2021, <https://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/mph-modules/sb/behavioralchangetheories/BehavioralChangeTheories6.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.

Stages of Change

To progress through the stages of change, people apply cognitive, affective, and evaluative processes. Ten processes of change have been identified with some processes being more relevant to a specific stage of change than other processes. These processes result in strategies that help people make and maintain change.

Consciousness Raising	Increasing awareness about the healthy behavior.
Dramatic Relief	Emotional arousal about the health behavior, whether positive or negative arousal.
Self-Reevaluation	Self reappraisal to realize the healthy behavior is part of who they want to be.
Environmental Reevaluation	Social reappraisal to realize how their unhealthy behavior affects others.
Social Liberation	Environmental opportunities that exist to show society is supportive of the healthy behavior.
Self-Liberation	Commitment to change behavior based on the belief that achievement of the healthy behavior is possible.
Helping Relationships	Finding supportive relationships that encourage the desired change.
Counter-Conditioning	Substituting healthy behaviors and thoughts for unhealthy behaviors and thoughts.
Reinforcement Management	Rewarding the positive behavior and reducing the rewards that come from negative behavior.
Stimulus Control	Re-engineering the environment to have reminders and cues that support and encourage the healthy behavior and remove those that encourage the unhealthy behavior.

Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action suggest that an individual's health behavior is driven by their intention to perform a behavior. This behavior intention is then predicted ultimately by a person's attitude and perceived norms regarding the behavior.



Attitudes

An individual's attitude regarding a certain behavior.

+



Perceived Norms

An individual's perceived norms regarding a certain behavior.

=



Intentions

The behavior intention selected by an individual based on the attitudes and perceived norms they have formed regarding that certain behavior.