

What is Substance Misuse Prevention?

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Central East (HHS Region 3)

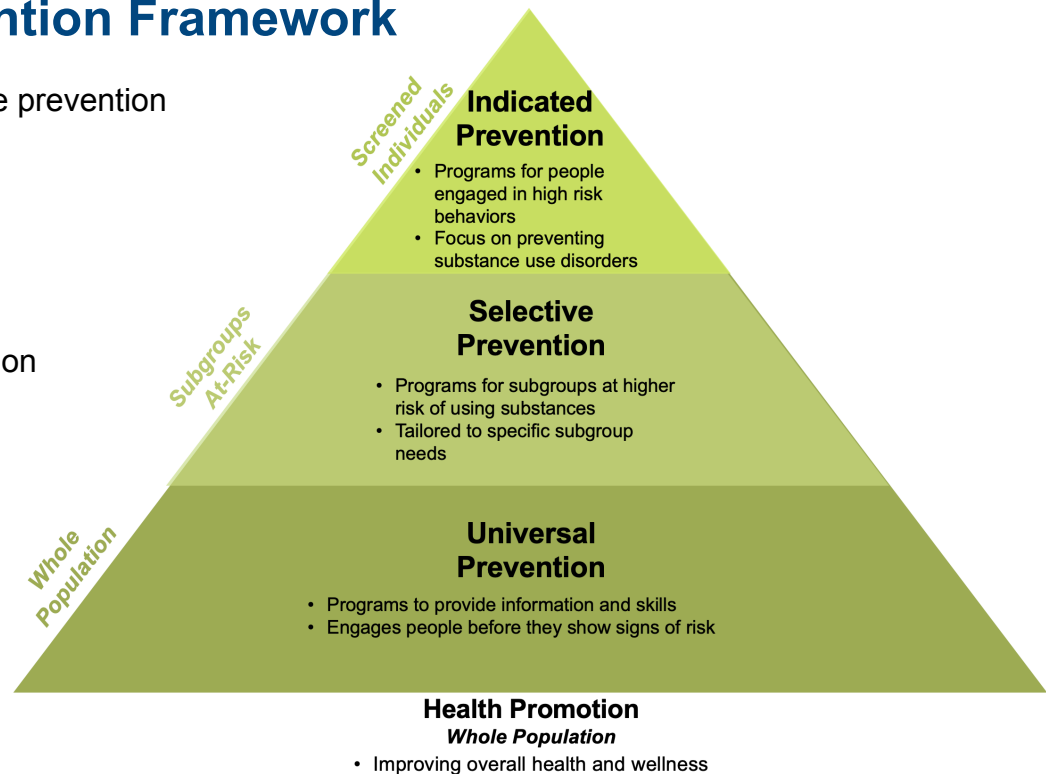
PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Substance misuse prevention encompasses a wide array of policies, programs, and other strategies intended to help people make healthy choices and reduce the scope and impact of substance use. These activities seek to strengthen protective factors and weaken risk factors for substance use through positive impacts on people and communities. Substance misuse prevention seeks to prevent and reduce substance use and the consequences of use.

The Prevention Framework

Substance misuse prevention can be organized and defined along a continuum, ranging from whole health promotion among the entire population to indicated services for specific individuals in need.



SIX PRINCIPLES: Prevention should be...

1 Focused on risk and protective factors¹
Understanding the importance and changeability of different factors is vital to implementing successful activities.

2 Evidence-based
Existing research can inform which activities produce positive outcomes under what circumstances.

3 Collaborative
Developing partnerships, sharing information, and pursuing shared goals is the key to expanding the reach of prevention.

4 Systematic
A comprehensive approach to prevention, which understands how different activities interact, will yield better results than isolated activities implemented on their own.

5 Culturally competent
Respecting and valuing different cultural values, attitudes, and beliefs, and incorporating them into prevention activities, can improve outcomes among vulnerable populations.

6 A continuum
Prevention includes a wide range of activities that meet people at different stages of need.²



WHY PREVENTION IS NEEDED

Substance use affects everyone



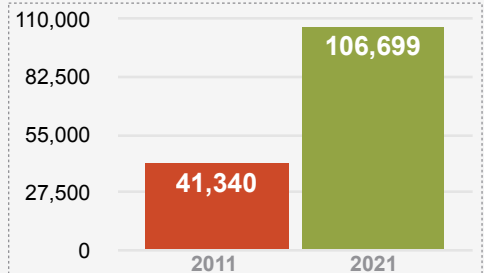
Americans have a **illicit substance use disorder**³

Many Americans use illicit drugs



2 out of 10 Americans use illicit drugs each year⁴

Fatal overdoses have increased



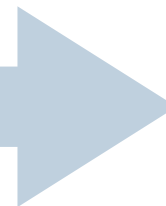
158% increase in fatal overdoses over last 10 years⁵

PREVENTION SAVES MONEY

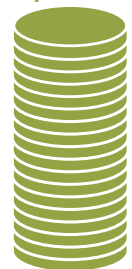
Every \$1 Invested



Prevention is an investment in the future. Every dollar spent on prevention has the potential to yield significant future savings. For example, one study has found that school-based prevention could save up to \$18 per \$1 invested.⁶



Could Save \$18



PREVENTION CAN BE MANY THINGS

Prevention can take many forms, ranging from environmental strategies that change the context which people live in to targeted interventions that provide education or skills training. Planning tools like the [Strategic Prevention Framework](#) can be used to identify and implement the most appropriate activities.⁷ Examples of prevention activities include:

- Educational campaigns
- Life and social skills training
- Harm reduction activities
- Problem solving and coping skills training
- Family education and bonding programs
- Retail advertising restrictions
- Law enforcement activities

Harm Reduction is another term for reducing the consequences of substance use. Overdose prevention is an example of harm reduction.

NOTES

1. SAMHSA (2019). Risk and Protective Factors.
2. SAMHSA (2017). Focus on Prevention: Strategies and Programs to Prevent Substance Use.
3. SAMHSA (2021). Results From The 2020 National Survey On Drug Use And Health: Detailed Tables. Table 5.1A.
4. SAMHSA (2021). Results From The 2020 National Survey On Drug Use And Health: Detailed Tables. Table 1.1B
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics (2021). Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2020 & Multiple Cause of Death Files 2018-Last Month.
6. SAMHSA (2008). Substance Abuse Prevention Dollars and Cents: A Cost- Benefit Analysis.
7. SAMHSA (2019). A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework.