

What is Prevention Science?

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Central East (HHS Region 3)

PTTC

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Prevention science uses scientific principles and processes to guide prevention services. It uses a multidisciplinary approach to assess interventions and determine when and how to implement them.^{1,2} Prevention science seeks to identify what issues affect communities, the best practices to address these issues, and the most effective ways of disseminating that knowledge.

Prevention science draws on many fields – including behavioral science, public health science, life science, management science, and social science³ – to understand how prevention interventions affect communities or targeted issues. A key part of this process involves assessing the scope of factors that can contribute to substance use at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels, including environmental conditions referred to as the **social determinants of health**. Confirming the presence and scale of various factors are the first steps to prevention science – understanding the nature and scope of the problem.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER



HOW SCIENCE SUPPORTS PREVENTION

1. DETERMINES EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

THE VALUE OF RESEARCH⁵

Identifies changeable factors, disparities, and inequities
Measures the outcomes of interventions
Identifies ideal means for disseminating findings

Evidence developed by researchers allows prevention professionals to learn the most effective interventions for different problems.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING BEST PRACTICES vs PROMISING PROGRAMS⁶

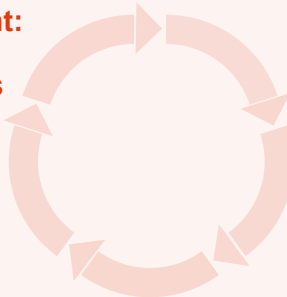
Impact: Size and Significance
Adaptability: History and Required Expertise
Evidence: Quality of Assessment Tools and Findings

2. ENABLES PREVENTION TO USE EVIDENCE⁷

STRATEGIC PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

Assessment:
Evidence of Local Needs

Evaluation:
Evidence of Positive Outcomes



Capacity:
Evidence of Available Resources

Planning:
Evidence for Possible Interventions

Implementation: Evidence of Effective Processes and Procedures

Science allows prevention professionals to better plan for and implement effective and relevant interventions in their communities. This increases the likelihood of obtaining positive results.

3. FOSTERS A CULTURE OF PREVENTION

KEY PARTICIPANTS



A Culture of Prevention is the broad-based support of and belief in the value of effective strategies for delaying or stopping the onset of problems.⁸ It requires buy-in from participants across health care, public health, community, and government sectors. Once in place, a culture of prevention facilitates the development, implementation, and sustainment of effective interventions.

NOTES

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