

Resource Packet: Intro

Effective prevention strategies are rooted in the understanding that in order to prevent sexual violence, we must address the root causes and social norms that allow it to exist in the first place. This means making the connection between all forms of oppression (including racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, adultism, ageism, and others) and how they create a culture in which inequality thrives and violence is seen as normal.

Prevention goes beyond education and awareness-raising and engages communities in creating long-term solutions to social issues. Social change does not come about from teaching children how to be safe or telling women to watch their drinks or not walk alone. Effective prevention is addressing the problem at its core - by focusing on and eliminating the risk factors for perpetration and victimization.

Research points to several key principles of effective prevention programs (Nation et al., 2003). Effective programming can take a number of different forms, but should reflect as many of the following principles as possible:

1. Comprehensive

Prevention programming targets multiple levels of the social ecological model, in order to address the root causes of sexual violence and the attitudes and beliefs that allow it to exist.

2. Use varied teaching methods

Prevention programming is best absorbed or received when the message is delivered using multiple forms of media or presentation. This could include performance, artistic expressions, group work, and traditional lecture-style.

3. Deliver sufficient dosage

This has also been described by the phrase "saturation versus sprinkling." Effective prevention programming is delivered to a group over a period of time and with multiple exposures in order to increase knowledge AND develop skills for putting knowledge into practice.

4. Theory driven

Prevention programming that is grounded in theory (e.g., social change and feminist theories) and supported by research is more effective.



5. Emphasize positive relationships

Prevention programming that allows for positive relationship building and modeling has been shown to work best.

6. Appropriately timed

Programs should be developmentally appropriate and start early in life.

7. Socioculturally relevant

Programs are created by and for the specific community they are engaging, incorporating the cultural norms of that community.

8. Include outcome evaluation

Programs are successful when they invest in the outcomes of their prevention efforts. This includes the development of goals and objectives and the implementation of measurements to capture data and ensure the program is meeting those goals and objectives.

9. Delivered by well-trained staff

In order to be effective, prevention programs should invest time, energy, and money into supporting staff development and training.

These principles provide a foundation for effective prevention efforts and also highlight some aspects of the training and skills needed among prevention practitioners.

The goal of this resource packet is to provide guidance to prevention practitioners at local, state, tribal, territory, and national

organizations so they can work more effectively toward the goal of eliminating sexual violence in their communities.

There are five elements to the packet:

1. *Core Competencies for Sexual Violence Prevention Practitioners*
2. *Qualities and Abilities of Effective and Confident Prevention Practitioners*
3. *Guidance for Hiring, Training, and Supporting Community Prevention Practitioners*
4. *Sample Job Description*
5. *Strategies for Integrating Prevention into Organizational Operations*

Each resource can be used on its own or in combination with the others. They are meant to provide practical examples and strategies for preventionists and organizations committed to preventing sexual violence. The NSVRC intends for the packet to grow, for resources to be updated, and approaches to be included as the movement collects promising practices and shares innovations.

Reference

Nation, M., Crusto, C., Wandersman, A., Kumpfer, K. L., Seybolt, D., Morrissey-Kane, E., & Davino, K. (2003). What works in prevention: Principles of effective prevention programming. *American Psychologist, 58*, 449-456. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.58.6-7.449



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