Preventing Alcohol Abuse and Dependence

NIAAA Social Work Education Module 3

(revised 7/02)
Outline

• Prevention Frameworks
• Prevention Factors
• Prevention Strategies
• Prevention Examples
Prevention Frameworks

• What is prevention?
  - Actions that minimize or eliminate conditions known to contribute to a specific condition, problem, illness, or disorder
  - Establishing conditions that enhance opportunities to achieve healthy outcomes
  - Occurs prior to the problem appearing or becoming serious/severe
Universal-Selective-Indicated Framework

- **Universal** preventive intervention is:
  - applied to everyone in a population, regardless of risk level
  - benefits outweigh risks/costs for everyone
Universal-Selective-Indicated Framework

Selective prevention is:
• focused on groups whose risk of developing the problem is above average
• higher “risk” level does not mean the problem WILL develop

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Frameworks (continued)

- Indicated prevention efforts apply to individuals who:
  - exhibit specific risk factors
  or
  - have conditions that identify them as being at risk for development of the problem
Frameworks (continued)

• Public Health prevention framework:
  - primary,
  - secondary
  - tertiary
Prevention Factors

- Within each type of prevention, the aim is to reduce the occurrence of new cases

- This is accomplished by:
  - decreasing risk and vulnerability factors and/or
  - strengthening protective and resilience factors
Vulnerability and Resilience

- Full continuum (low to high)
- Factors intrinsic to the individual
- Biology (genetics, constitution, hormonal, disability, etc.)
- Experiences and learning (personal history)
- Behaviors and traits (e.g., personality, temperament, etc.)
Risk and Protection

• Full continuum (low to high)
• Extrinsic to individual (environmental contexts):
  - Family and other social institutions
  - Reinforcers/consequences (current)
  - Access to alcohol
  - Programs, policies
  - Resources, access
## Interaction of Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VULNERABILITY</th>
<th>RISK</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low</strong></td>
<td><strong>Low</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Low</strong> Probability</td>
<td><strong>Low</strong> Probability</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong> Probability</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong> Probability</td>
<td><strong>High</strong> Probability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- Low: Low vulnerability and low risk.
- High: High vulnerability and high risk.
- Moderate: Low vulnerability and high risk or high vulnerability and low risk.

Review of Research on Factors

Individual and Interpersonal Factors

- Sensation seeking
- Poor impulse control
- Family behavior/attitudes promote alcohol
- Inconsistent parenting/discipline
- Family conflict/low family bonding
- Academic failure/low school commitment
- Rebelliousness
- Early onset of alcohol use

Source: Hawkins et. al., 1992
Contextual & Other Environmental Factors

- Availability of substances
- Economic deprivation
- Poor housing
- Neighborhood disorganization
- Laws/norms favoring alcohol consumption

Source: Hawkins et al, 1992
Prevention Strategies

• Shift groups from a higher probability of alcohol use disorders toward a lower probability. Utilize a combination of efforts to:
  1. Increase protective factors
  2. Decrease risk factors
  3. Increase resilience factors
  4. Decrease vulnerability factors
Prevention Strategies (continued)

Six domains for organizing alcohol prevention effort (SAMSHA, 2001):

- Individual
- School
- Family
- Community
- Peer
- Society/Environments
Prevention Strategies (continued)

- Build social and personal skills
- Design culturally sensitive interventions
- Provide alternatives for youth in high risk contexts
- Recognize relationships between substance use and other health/mental health problems
Prevention Strategies (continued)

Family Domain

- Target entire family system
- Develop bonds between and within families
- Ensure cultural sensitivity
- Respond to “isms”
- Develop parenting skills; train parents
- Offer practice opportunities
- Promote family communication
- Structure alternative supervised activities
- Add social and personal skills building opportunities
- Offer alternative intensive programs
- Communicate peer norms against alcohol
- Involve youth in program development
- Involve youth in interventions
Prevention Strategies (continued)

School Domain

- Correct prevalence misconceptions
- Provide skills practice opportunities
- Use booster sessions to retain skills
- Involve parents
- Communicate commitment to prevention
- Control school environment and other areas
Prevention Strategies (continued)

Community Domain

- Develop integrated, comprehensive interventions
- Community service
- Perform benefit/cost analyses (employers)
- Coalition building and maintenance
- Assign goals, tasks, and responsibilities
- Organize alcohol-free events
- Support a range of prevention activities
- Organize at the neighborhood level
Prevention Strategies (continued)

Society/Environmental Domain

- Media efforts
- Beverage server training and liability
- Increase cost through excise taxes
- Limit retail alcohol outlets
- Enforce minimum age laws and other policies
- Feedback to merchants
- Enact/enforce impaired operations deterrence laws
Moving from Strategies to Programs

- Target underlying contributing factors
- Consult literature
- Assess strengths, barriers, resources
- Develop and implement program
- Evaluate intervention

(Source: CSAP, 1995)
Examples of Prevention Programs

• Life Skills Training
• Seventh Generation Program
• Project Northland
• Communities Mobilizing for Change
• Community Trials Project
Program Examples

- Life Skills Training
  - Universal strategy
  - Youth-targeted
  - Cognitive behavioral psycho-educational approach
  - 15 sessions to teach general personal and social skills; how to resist social influences
  - Focus on problem solving, decision-making, self-awareness, effective communication, assertiveness, and stress reduction
Program Examples (continued)

- **Seventh Generation Program**
  - Selective (urban American Indian youth, grades 4-7)
  - 13 week after-school program plus 5 week booster
  - Grounded within American Indian culture
  - Corrects inaccurate stereotypes of Indian drinking
  - Enhances personal and cultural values of non-use
  - Enhances self-esteem and Indian identity
  - Focuses on decision making and refusal skills
  - Encourages meaningful commitment to not use
Program Examples (continued)

- **Project Northland**
  - Selective (6th-8th grade, parents, community)
  - Resistance skills training with homework that involved the parents
  - Peer-directed alcohol-free activities
  - Student-developed anti-alcohol plays performed for parents
  - Newsletters to parents
  - Community organization efforts to develop policies regarding under-age drinking
• Communities Mobilizing for Change
  - Universal (change community and policies to reduce youth access to alcohol)
  - Responsible beverage server training
  - Shortened hours for alcohol sales
  - Citizen monitoring of alcohol outlets
  - Use of police decoys who appeared to be underage
  - Educational programs for youth and adults
Program Examples (continued)

• Community Trials Project
  - Universal (reducing alcohol-related injury)
  - Knowledge, values, and mobilization
  - Responsible beverage service practices
  - Reduction of underage drinking
  - Increasing the “costs” of drinking and driving
  - Reducing access to alcohol (controlling outlet density and location)
Conclusions

• **Social work prevention activities:**
  1. Provide information
  2. Promote awareness and self-efficacy
  3. Provide skills building
  4. Provide healthy alternatives
  5. Change norms
  6. Foster community collaboration

(Source: Bush, 2000)