



Integrating Wellness and Substance Use Prevention

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Purpose

Gain an understanding of wellness and its essential role in substance use prevention practice for enhancing the mental and physical wellbeing, performance and happiness of youth and young adults.

Session Objectives

01

Describe models of wellness and how wellness relates to substance abuse recovery and prevention.

02

Review examples of how to address specific wellness dimensions in substance use prevention practice.

03

List 6 reasons for integrating wellness into substance use prevention.



Wellness Definitions & Models

Health as Wellness

A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1948).

Wellness is a multi-faceted & interconnected construct.

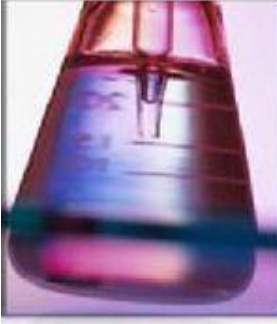
No consensus on the definition or dimensions of wellness.

High-Level Wellness for Man & Society

- The “father” of the wellness movement (Halbert L. Dunn, 1959).
- The Health Grid

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1372807/?page=3>





The Health Grid



National Wellness Institute

- **Wellness Definition:** Wellness is an active process through which people **become aware of**, and **make choices toward**, a more successful existence.
- 1. Wellness is a conscious, self-directed and evolving process of achieving **full potential**
- 2. Wellness is **multidimensional and holistic**, encompassing **lifestyle, mental and spiritual well-being, and the environment**
- 3. Wellness is **positive and affirming**
- **6 Dimensions:** Emotional, Physical, Occupational, Spiritual, Intellectual & Social

<https://nationalwellness.org/resources/six-dimensions-of-wellness/>

Health-Related Quality of Life & Well-Being

1. New topic area for *Healthy People 2020*
2. Healthy People 2020 Goal: **Improve HRQOL for all individuals**
3. HRQOL is a **multi-dimensional concept** that includes domains related to **physical, mental, emotional, and social functioning**.
4. **Well-being (i.e., wellness)** is a **relative state** where **one maximizes** his or her **physical, mental, and social functioning** in the context of **supportive environments** to live a **full, satisfying, and productive life**.
5. *Instead of the traditional view of prevention as only avoiding or minimizing illness and risk factors, well-being also focuses on disease resistance, resilience, and self-management*

https://archive.cdc.gov/www_cdc_gov/hrqol/index.htm

SAMHSA's Wellness Initiative (2010)

- **Definition:** Not the absence of disease, illness, and stress, but the presence of a **positive purpose in life, satisfying work and play, joyful relationships, a healthy body and living environment, and happiness.**
1. **Wellness Integrates Behavioral and Physical Health:** The wellness approach recognizes that the mind and body are interconnected and that **behavioral health is inseparable from physical health.**
 2. **Wellness Is Empowering and Prevention Oriented, Unlike the Disease Treatment Model:** This approach **emphasizes having positive goals, learning self-management skills, and developing healthy habits** (Swarbrick et al., 2011, p. 329; Swarbrick, 2014, p. 11).
 3. **Wellness Is a Journey, Not a Destination:** Wellness is a lifelong journey of striving for good mental and physical health and quality of life.

<https://library.samhsa.gov/product/what-health-providers-and-organizations-need-know-about-wellness/sma16-4951>

Wellness and Recovery I

1. **SAMHSA** defines **recovery** as a **process of change** through which individuals **improve their health and wellness**, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential:
<https://library.samhsa.gov/product/creating-healthier-life-step-step-guide-wellness/sma16-4958>
2. SAMHSA created the **Wellness Initiative**.
3. **Wellness is central to recovery** from behavioral health conditions.

<https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/sma16-4957.pdf>



Wellness and Recovery II

People with serious mental or substance use disorders are dying decades earlier, mostly from preventable, chronic medical conditions (SAMHSA, 2021).

According to SAMHSA, **wellness is important** for individuals with behavioral health issues because it can **“improve quality and years of life.”**

Wellness is ubiquitous when discussing recovery from substance abuse and mental health problems.

An online search using the words “Wellness and Recovery” found **829 million results!**



Is wellness also important or even essential for drug prevention?

Mental Health and Well-Being for the Prevention of Substance Use Disorders

1. There is a **clear relationship between problematic substance use and poor well-being** across different age groups.
2. The **pathways** that influence the risk of **developing mental health issues overlap with** those that build **resilience and well-being**.
3. **Universal interventions**, which include **multiple components, such as nutrition, physical exercise, and self-regulation** are likely to have greater effects on well-being and mental morbidity.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10911324/>





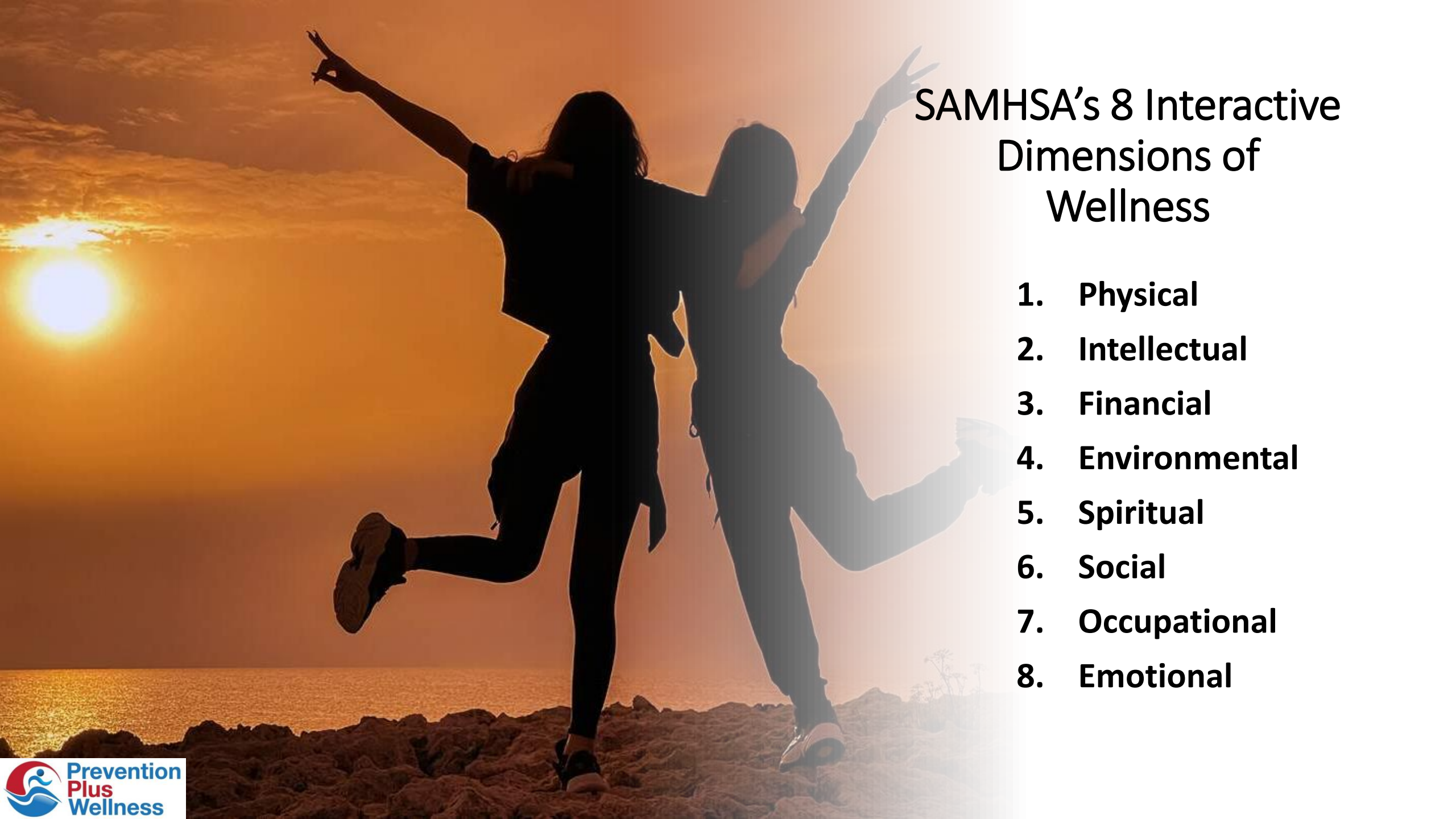
Wellness and Drug Use Prevention

1. **Research** indicates that **wellness, or well-being, is clearly linked to substance use and mental health.**
2. **Programs promoting wellness are important for preventing problematic substance use and mental health issues.**
3. **Wellness-promoting lifestyle behaviors** like regular physical activity, healthy nutrition, sleep and self-care **promote mental health and less substance use.**

<https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/lifestyle-to-support-mental-health>

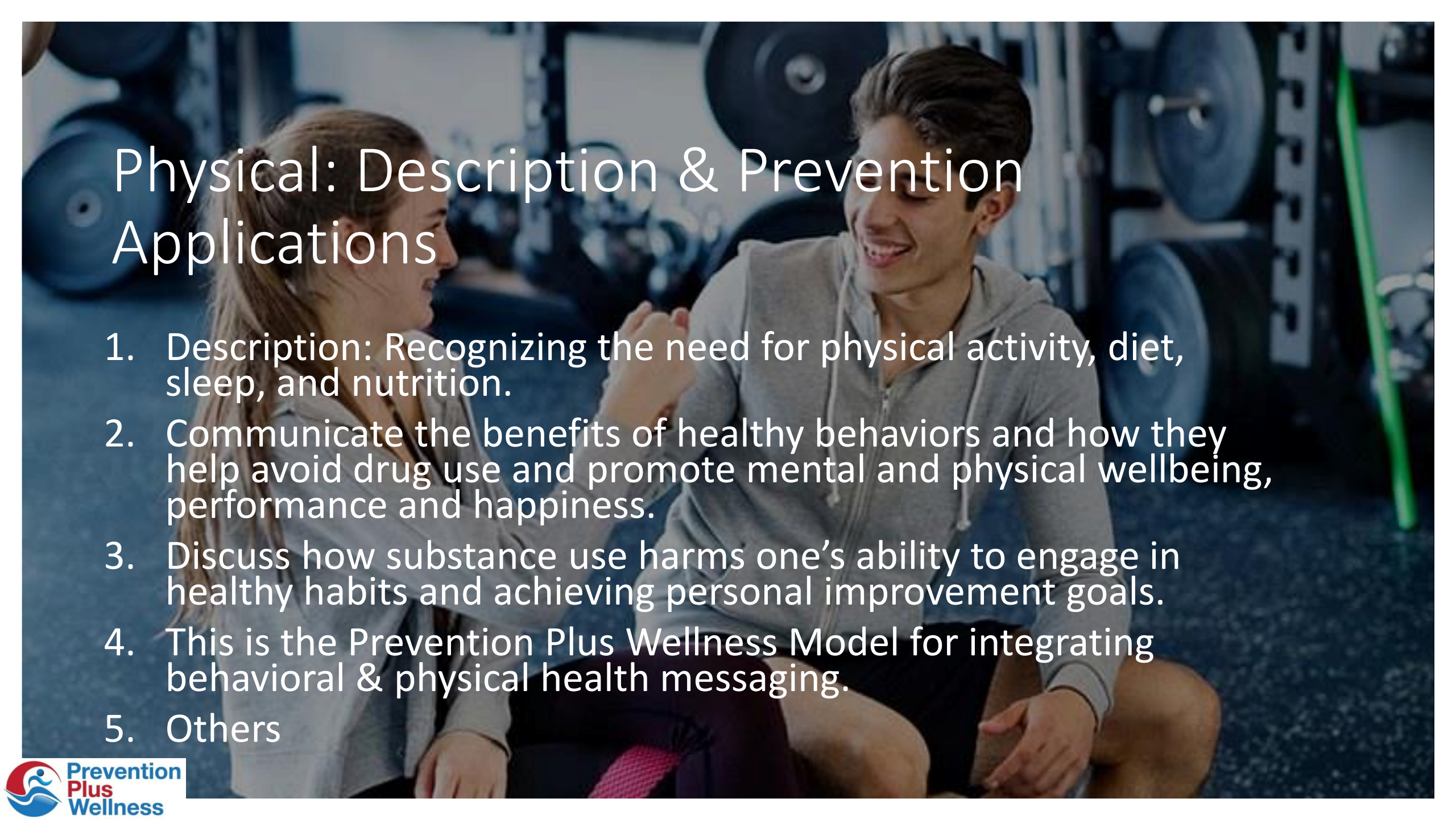


SAMHSA's 8 Interactive Dimensions of Wellness

The background of the slide features a vibrant sunset scene. Two individuals are silhouetted against the bright orange and yellow sky, captured in mid-air as if jumping or dancing joyfully on a rocky shoreline. The sun is a large, glowing orb on the left side of the frame, casting a shimmering reflection on the water below. The overall mood is one of freedom, happiness, and well-being.

SAMHSA's 8 Interactive Dimensions of Wellness

1. **Physical**
2. **Intellectual**
3. **Financial**
4. **Environmental**
5. **Spiritual**
6. **Social**
7. **Occupational**
8. **Emotional**

A young man and woman are sitting on the floor in a gym, smiling and talking to each other. The man is wearing a grey hoodie and the woman is wearing a grey jacket. They are both looking at each other and smiling. The background shows gym equipment like weights and racks.

Physical: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition.
2. Communicate the benefits of healthy behaviors and how they help avoid drug use and promote mental and physical wellbeing, performance and happiness.
3. Discuss how substance use harms one's ability to engage in healthy habits and achieving personal improvement goals.
4. This is the Prevention Plus Wellness Model for integrating behavioral & physical health messaging.
5. Others

Intellectual: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.
2. Have youth explore new hobbies, experiences and activities that interest them and promote mental and social development.
3. Discuss how drug use harms brain development, thinking, learning and educational success.
4. Others

Financial: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.
2. Share resources with students about local opportunities for part-time work and opportunities to make money.
3. Have youth create a prioritized list of what they'd like to spend their money on and show how the cost of drug use and addiction would significantly reduce their purchasing options.
4. Others

Environmental: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.
2. Encourage youth and give them opportunities to get outside in nature or visit a park to walk, play sports, exercise, meditate or relax.
3. Have students identify an indoor space where they can go to experience quiet and contemplate, relax, listen to quiet music or nature sounds and experience peace and calm to promote mental health and reduce stress.

Others

Spiritual: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning in life.
2. Give youth opportunities to meditate, practice deep breathing or pray to enhance inner peace, reduce daily stress and find meaning in their lives.
3. Provide students with resources and opportunities to act on their values by volunteering to help others in their school and community, such as serving on a youth drug prevention coalition.

Others

Social: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Developing a sense of connection, belonging, a well-developed support system.
2. Have students make a list or a chart showing their relationships and communication patterns (direction, amount of time) with friends and family members, and how they'd like them to change in the future.
3. Have youth set a goal to go places or do things to make new friends, especially those that would support their goal to live an active, healthy lifestyle.

4 Others

Occupational: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived through one's work.
2. Share resources with students about available local, regional and state careers and work options and have them make a list of possible careers/work they would like to learn more about and report on one of them.
3. Introduce youth to careers in the substance abuse, prevention and mental health fields.
4. Others

Emotional: Description & Prevention Applications

1. Description: Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.
2. Have students make a list of their strengths to positively express emotions and feelings and handle stress in their lives, and those emotions/feelings/stress aspects they'd like to improve.
3. Have youth set a short-term goal to improve their ability to identify and express their emotions or reduce stress in their lives, including avoiding substance use which increases stress and blunts emotional expression.

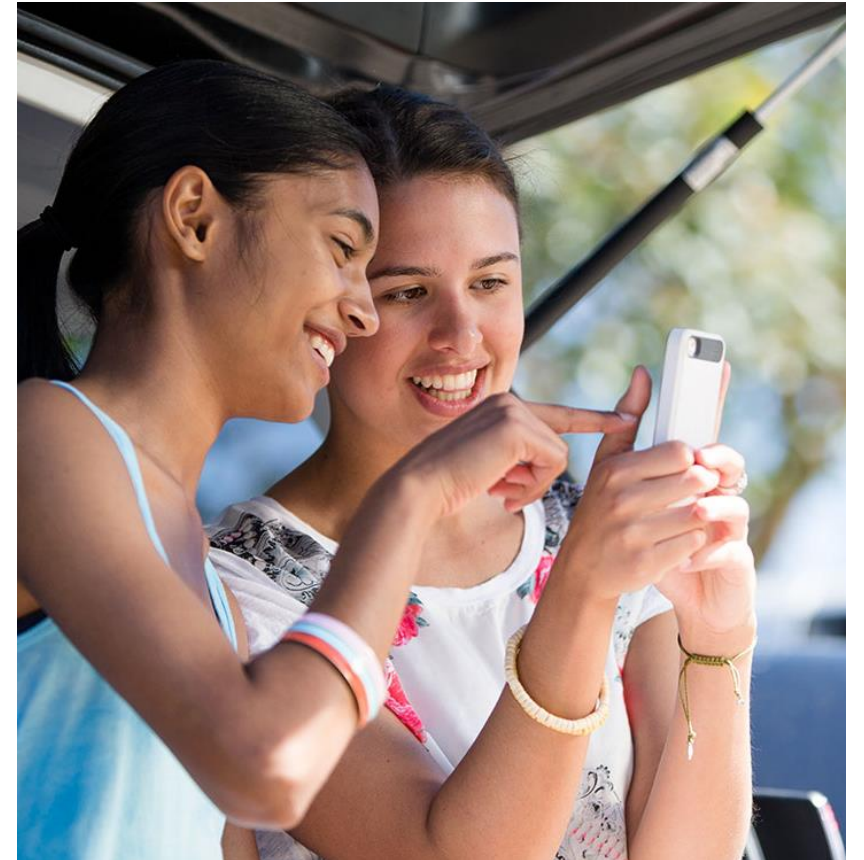
Others

Conclusion

- While **wellness** is often identified as a **critical component of successful recovery**, it is also **essential for preventing substance use and improving the mental health** of young people.
- Substance use prevention professionals and others who work with youth and young adults should **use the dimensions of wellness to develop creative strategies for integrating wellness and prevention for improving well-being.**

Adolescent Well-Being

- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “Adolescence is a time of rapid physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, and the **experiences of those aged 10-19 years have profound impacts on their well-being both in the shorter and the longer term.**”
- In an apparent response, WHO and the Partnership for Material, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH) developed the **Adolescent Well-Being Framework (AWF).**



What is Adolescent Well-Being?

- The **AWF** defines well-being as “**Adolescents have the support, confidence, and resources to thrive** in contexts of secure and healthy relationships, realizing their full potential and rights.”
- Specifically, the AWF includes **five interrelated domains** that constitute well-being:
 - 1) **Good health and optimal nutrition,**
 - 2) **Connectedness, positive values and contribution to society,**
 - 3) **Safety and supportive environment,**
 - 4) **Learning competence, education, skills and employability, and**
 - 5) **Agency and resilience:**

Well-Being, Wellness & Prevention

1. Like overlapping notions of wellness, **well-being is defined here as an interactive, multi-dimensional concept.**
2. This means that for youth to thrive and be able to achieve their full potential necessarily **entails a combination of various elements to contribute toward making a “whole person.”**
3. *Prevention specialists and their organizations can learn from broader well-being and wellness concepts to strengthen their practices and programs and ultimately impact broader positive youth development.*

Domain #1: Good Health and Optimum Nutrition, Prevention Implications

1. This domain includes the sub-domains of: 1) Physical health and capacities, 2) Mental health and capacities, and 3) Optimum nutritional status and diet.
2. Providing **information, education, resources and services** aimed at **motivating youth to engage in drug use and mental health protective healthy behaviors**, including regular physical activity and sports, eating breakfast and other nutritious foods (especially fruits and vegetables), getting adequate sleep, and using regular strategies to control stress and increase mindfulness, while limiting recreational screen time.
3. **Sharing information about local resources for family, school and community services and events** supporting each of these healthy behaviors and **implementing drug use prevention programs that promote youth and parent healthy lifestyle behaviors** and mental health, e.g., Prevention Plus Wellness programs.

Domain #2: Connectedness, Positive Values and Contribution To Society, Prevention Implications

- This domain includes the sub-domains of: 1) Connectedness, 2) Valued and respected by others, 3) Attitudes, 4) Interpersonal skills, 5) Activity, and 6) Change and development.
- **Offering youth opportunities to become a part of positive social networks to develop meaningful relationships and friendship skills.** Giving youth opportunities to **become involved in decision-making, personal responsibility, develop empathy, and engage with others by participating on prevention coalitions or youth leadership groups.** Offer opportunities could be provided for youth to **set personal and professional goals to learn self-regulation skills and self-efficacy and improve themselves and their schools and communities.**

Domain #3: Safety and Supportive Environment, Prevention Implications

- This domain includes the sub-domains of: 1) Safety, 2) Materials conditions, 3) Equity, 4) Equality, 5) Nondiscrimination, 6) Privacy, and 7) Responsive.
- **Offering programs that prevent nonviolence, exploitation, and bullying in schools, communities and online.** Help create and support school policies and rights for all youth to participate in and equally receive information, opportunities, and services that promote personal safety, physical security, nondiscrimination and privacy. This domain suggests **providing opportunities for youth to experience free time for relaxation as well as exploring pro-social extracurricular activities.**

Domain #4: Learning Competence, Education, Skills and Employability, Prevention Implications

- This domain includes the sub-domains of: 1) Learning, 2) Education, 3) Resources, 4) Skills, 5) Employability, and 6) Confidence.
- Providing in school and out of school education and training both generally and more specifically in **evidence-based programs that promote self-regulation skills, self-efficacy, motivation, and self-esteem to avoid alcohol and drug use but also to identify and achieve desired future goals regarding education, career, relationships, and healthy lifestyles, e.g., Prevention Plus Wellness.**

Domain #5: Agency and Resilience, Prevention Implications

- This final domain of well-being includes the sub-domains of: 1) Agency, 2) Identity, 3) Purpose, 4) Resilience, and 5) Fulfilment.
- **Giving youth opportunities to reflect upon their current substance use and other health behaviors** that may either help or hinder their **achieving future goals, desired purpose and positive self-images** for enhancing their mental and physical health, success, fulfilment and happiness. In addition, this domain suggests providing youth **opportunities and experiences to reflect upon and make choices that would empower them in the future and feel more comfortable about who they are and want to be in the future**, physically, socially, emotionally, economically, and spiritually.



Conclusion

- **Prevention specialists and organizations can use well-being and wellness concepts to enhance and expand their programs and practices toward achieving broader outcomes for improving the whole-health, positive development and full potential of youth.**

6 Reasons Why Prevention Should Include Wellness

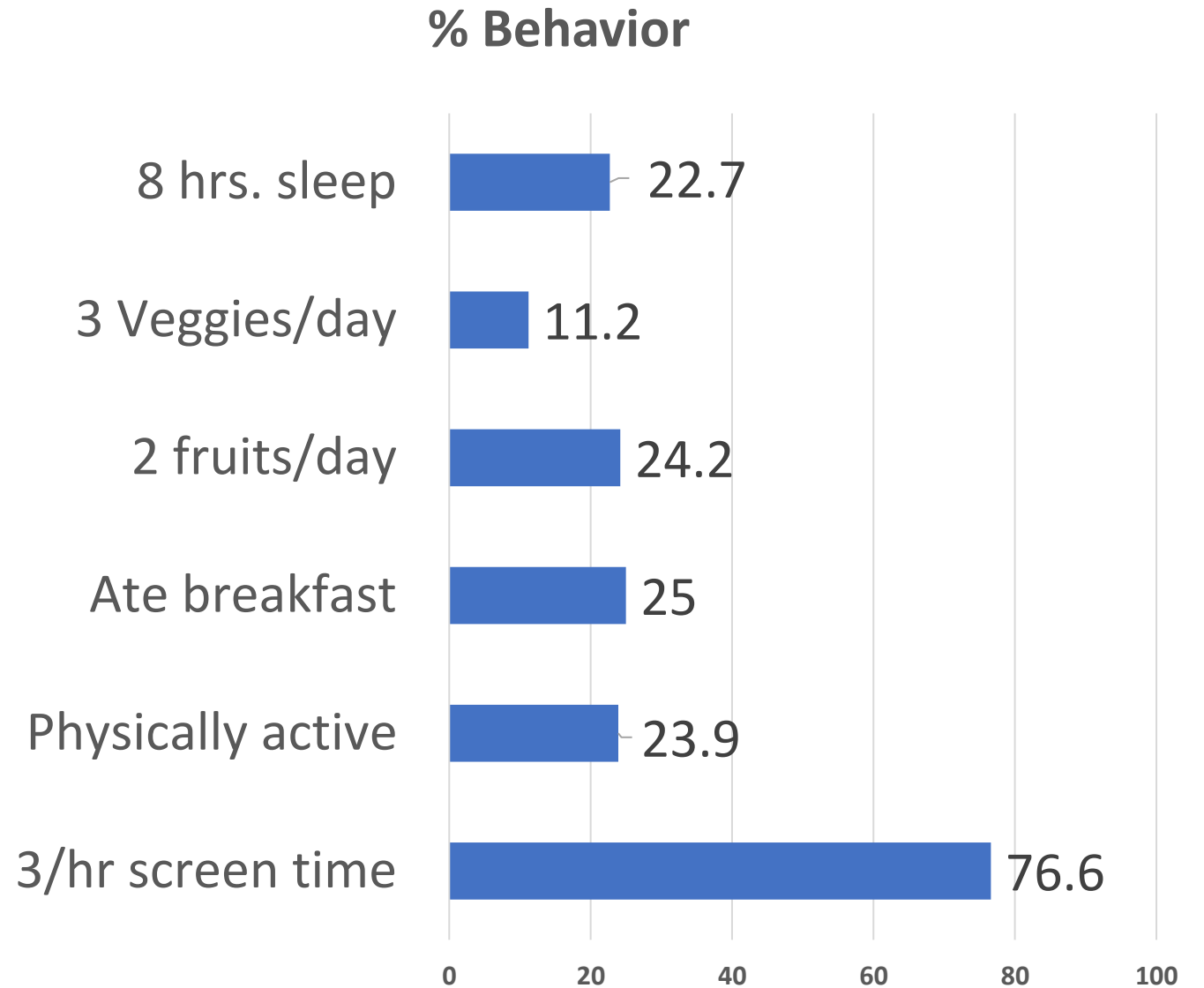
1. Youth are exposed to multiple health risks
2. Health risks are interconnected and influence each other
3. Wellness protects against substance use/misuse
4. Wellness protects and improves mental health
5. Wellness fits with and completes prevention
6. Wellness empowers youth to choose positive identities and behaviors



#1: Youth Experience Multiple Health Risks

- Youth are at risk not only of substance use and misuse, but physical inactivity and excessive screen time, skipping breakfast and other unhealthy eating habits, lack of sleep and uncontrolled daily stress requiring a holistic approach.

US HS Adolescent Healthy Behaviors (YRBS, 2021)



#2: Healthy Behaviors Protect and Improve Mental Health

1. **Research shows that wellness-promoting behaviors protect against mental illness and promote mental health.**
2. **In other words, the mind and body are connected and physical and behavioral health are one.**
3. For example, a review of research published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* (2020) found **that greater physical activity, less sedentary time and greater sleep duration were associated with better mental health indicators for children and adolescents:**
<https://ijbnpa.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12966-020-00976-x>

#3: Wellness Empowers One To Choose Positive Identities and Healthy Habits

1. **Wellness emphasizes having positive goals, learning self-regulation skills, and choosing a healthy identity and habits.**
2. **Providing youths and young adults with knowledge of the benefits of engaging in healthy behaviors, offers young people empowering images for adopting future identities.**
3. **These images include choosing to engage in healthy behaviors to be more fit and active, healthy and strong, energetic and rested, and calm and stress-free.**
4. **The *Behavior-Image Model* indicates that wellness-based positive images of ourselves in the future and of our peers motivate youth to set health behavior goals to achieve desired identities and healthy behaviors, and in doing so, increase self-regulation skills and self-efficacy.**

#4: Wellness Is The Ultimate Goal For All Youth and Adults

1. **Wellness is not just about reducing health risks, but promoting good physical and mental health, performance, and happiness.**
2. **As professionals and parents, we all want our youth to develop to their maximum capabilities, to live healthy and successful lives, have joyous relationships and work, to contribute positively to society, and to be happy.**
3. **Therefore, the ultimate goal for prevention is healthy youth development and wellness, not just the absence of addiction.**



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#5: Promoting Wellness and Healthy Behaviors Protects Against Substance Use/Misuse

1. **Wellness-promoting behaviors work to counter substance use initiation and addiction, just as they support successful treatment and recovery.**
2. For example, a study published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* (2012) found that **sleep patterns and duration predicted adolescent's cigarette, alcohol and marijuana use:**
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10964-012-9784-5>
3. Another study published in *Prevention Science* (2005) found that a **brief multi-health behavior intervention (SPORT PPW) that targeted fitness and other wellness habits prevented multiple substance use behaviors** while increasing healthy habits among adolescents: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11121-005-0012-3>

#6: Health Risks are Interconnected and Influence Each Other

1. Wellness-promoting behaviors interact with each other and together promote optimal health or wellness.
2. **Engaging in wellness-enhancing behaviors while also avoiding substance use/misuse permits healthy youth development and promotes overall wellbeing.**
3. *Providing one without the other limits possible health outcomes and the level of wellness achieved for youths and young adults.*





Conclusion

- In conclusion, there are important reasons why wellness should be the true aim and focus of substance use prevention programs and strategies for youths and young adults.
- Wellness promotion is an essential component of substance use prevention and ensures that prevention efforts result in broader and more holistic outcomes for young people.



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for more information...



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- (904) 472-5022
- **info@preventionpluswellness.com**

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