Putting the "Positive" in Substance Use Prevention

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Session Objectives

01
Explore various concepts associated with positive substance use prevention.

02
Examine the advantages of positive versus negative prevention components.

03
Review an evidence-based model for creating and providing positive substance use prevention.

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What is Positive Prevention?

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What does "Positive" mean?

1. Consisting in or characterized by the presence or possession of features or qualities rather than their absence.

2. Constructive, optimistic, or confident.

- "There needs to be a positive approach to youthful offenders."

https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/

- It's the opposite of negative.

What is Positive Prevention?

- Nurturing strengths and talents to support thriving and wellbeing.

- Central to positive psychology, Positive Prevention emphasizes identifying and fostering an individual's strengths and talents to enhance their overall well-being, rather than solely focusing on fixing deficits.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272078973_Positive_Psychology_Positive_Prevention_and_Positive_Therapy

Positive Prevention Focuses on Empowerment & Wellbeing

1. Doesn't use scare tactics
2. Doesn't rely solely on negative consequences
3. Builds protective factors
4. Promotes healthy behaviors and actions
5. Promotes life skills
6. Goal: To empower youth to make informed, responsible choices

Asset-Based Prevention

- Focus on empowering individuals and communities to utilize their existing strengths and resources to improve their health and well-being.

- Seeks to identify and build upon the assets within individuals, communities, and environments to enhance resilience and promote health.

Resilience-Based Prevention

1. Focus on strengthening individuals' ability to cope with adversity and overcome challenges, rather than just addressing issues after they arise.

2. These programs aim to build internal and external resources that help people navigate difficult situations.

3. Emphasizes individual strengths, protective factors and promoting wellbeing.

https://www.massgeneral.org/psychiatry/treatments-and-services/resilience-program#:~:text=Resilience%20Training%20on%20the%20College,if%20such%20an%20illness%20arises.

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SAMHSA's Wellness Initiative

- **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**.

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Positive Health (Healthy) Behaviors

1. Actions that promote good health and well-being.

2. Practices like regular exercise, healthy eating, adequate sleep, avoiding smoking, and limiting alcohol consumption, to promote a longer and healthier life.

3. To transition from a health care system to a "System for Health;" to move from patient-focused to person-focused.

4. A system that focuses on improving personal decisions.

Healthy Alternatives to Self-Medicating with Alcohol & Drugs

1. Get enough sleep

2. Exercise regularly

3. Learn breathing, mindfulness or meditation techniques

4. Eat regular, healthy meals

5. Express gratitude

6. Take short breaks

7. Ask for support

https://lagunatreatment.com/support-for-women/alternatives-to-drug-abuse/

Positive vs. Negative Prevention

Risk vs. Protective Terminology

Risk = Threat or danger, i.e., something negative.

- The implication is to avoid or prevent risk.

- A negatively phrased statement uses negative words and outcomes, e.g., don't use drugs, say no to drug use, never drive drunk.

Protective = Protection or shield, i.e., something positive.

- The implication is to pursue or seek something protective.

- A positively phrased statement uses positive words and outcomes, e.g., increase healthy habits, practice resiliency skills, and improve your wellness.

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Positive vs. Negative Framed Health Communication

- In health communication, positive (gain) framing focuses on the benefits of healthy behaviors, while negative (loss) framing highlights the consequences of unhealthy behaviors.

- Research suggests that positive framing may be more effective and increases more motivation for changing health behaviors than negative framing.

Examples:

- **Positive:** "Eating a balanced diet can help you feel your best and have more energy."

- **Negative:** "Not eating a balanced diet can lead to weight gain and a higher risk of heart disease."

https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8276605/

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Positive vs. Negative Self-Images

1. "Self-image" is how you perceive yourself.

2. Positive self-images give a person confidence in their thoughts, feelings and actions, and negative self-images make a person doubtful of their capabilities and thinking.

3. Positive self-images are our assets and potential, e.g., active, fit, healthy, successful, smart, kind, resilient, etc.

4. Negative self-images are our perceived faults and weaknesses.

5. A healthy self-image is a balance of emphasizing your strengths but working on self-growth while accepting our shortcomings.

https://health.clevelandclinic.org/positive-self-image

Positive vs. Negative Future Thinking & Self-Images

1. Research shows people have a bias towards positive vs. negative thinking of future vs. past events and self-image.

2. This suggests we use future thinking as a means toward self-enhancement.

3. It also suggests future thinking and self-images are more motivational than past or negative thinking/images.

https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31037451/

The Teen Brain: Positive vs. Negative Behaviors

1. The **prefrontal cortex** is still developing so that **decision-making and impulse control can lead to** <u>risky behaviors like substance use</u>.

2. *Plasticity allows it to change, adapt and respond to its environment, including <u>physical activity and other healthy lifestyle behaviors and other pro-social activities</u>.*

https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-teen-brain-7-things-toknow#:~:text=The%20teen%20brain%20has%20lots,the%20brain%20mature%20and%20learn.

Bi-Directional Relationships Between Health Behaviors & Mental Health

Substance use/misuse ⬅➡ Mental health

(**Negative association**)

Healthy behaviors ⬅➡ Mental health

(**Positive association**)

Substance Use Prevention is Too <u>Negative</u>

Overly focused on risk factors, **rather than protective factors influencing substance use and wellness more broadly.**

Substance use prevention and intervention should expand to be more inclusionary in it's targeting **of protective health promoting behaviors** that will advance the **wellbeing, performance, and happiness** of youth, families, and communities.

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Modeling Health Behaviors

1. Modeling is a fundamental aspect of social learning theory.

2. Modeling, or observational learning, plays a significant role in shaping health behaviors.

3. Individuals learn new behaviors by observing and imitating others, particularly those they perceive as role models.

4. This can influence the adoption of both healthy and unhealthy habits, depending on the model's behavior.

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK43749/#:~:text=5Individuals%20and%20Families:%20Models,and%20outcomes%20of%20chronic%20disease.

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Modeling as Physical and Electronic Images

1. Individuals are more likely to imitate behaviors displayed by those they admire, trust, or perceive as credible.

2. This can include family members, peers, celebrities, health professionals, or **electronic or virtual models on social media, TV, or magazines (print).**

3. Observational learning can influence a wide range of health behaviors, including diet, exercise, substance use, and sexual health.

4. Modeling can also shape perceptions of **social norms**, which can influence health behaviors.

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK232688/#:~:text=Modifying%20perceived%20social%20effects%20may,Maibach%20and%20Murphy%2C%201995).
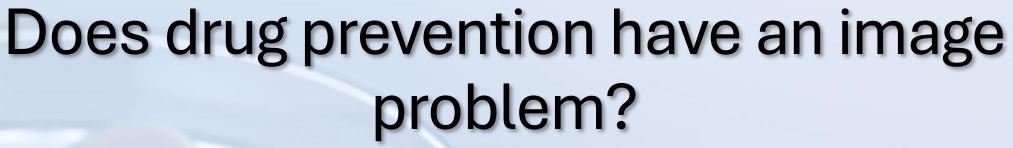
Positive vs. Negative Image Modeling

- Positive modeling in a learning context refers to observing individuals exhibiting desired behaviors and actions, while negative modeling involves observing behaviors to avoid.

- Positive models can be more motivating for **achieving positive outcomes or success,** while negative models can be effective for motivating **avoiding negative consequences or failure**.

https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12144-025-07572-x#:~:text=The%20study%20of%20negative%20role,.%2C%202002%2C%202004)

Does drug prevention have an image problem?

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SAY NO TO DRUGS

Teach Teens...

VariationsPsychology.com/blog   © 2019

DRUGS

The Challenge of Negative Image-based Modeling

*Can you describe, or picture in your mind, what a drug-free youth looks like?

*Difficult to imagine and communicate a negative or absent behavior.

Youth Engagement in Health Promotion

12 TIPS TO BE HEALTHY

1 EAT A HEALTHY DIET

2 BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, EVERY DAY, YOUR WAY

3 GET VACCINATED

4 DON'T USE ANY FORM OF TOBACCO

5 AVOID OR MINIMIZE USE OF ALCOHOL

6 MANAGE STRESS FOR YOUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

7 PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE

8 DON'T SPEED, OR DRINK AND DRIVE

9 WEAR A SEAT-BELT WHEN DRIVING AND HELMET WHEN CYCLING

10 PRACTICE SAFE SEX

11 REGULARLY CHECK YOUR HEALTH

12 BREAST FEEDING: BEST FOR BABIES

World Health

9th Global Conference

Substance Use Modeling on Social Media

1. A 2020 study analyzing the top 400 YouTube videos related to e-cigarettes found that 41.5% were "vaping-warning" videos, **47.3% were "provaping" videos**, and 11.2% were neutral.

2. A 2021 study found that 808 vaping-related videos on TikTok were viewed over 1.5 billion times.

3. A 2023 study found that **98% of TikTok videos promote vaping**, with many of these videos featuring young people using vapes or promoting vaping-related products.

https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/tobacco-pop-culture/juul-youtube#:~:text=JUUL%2Drelated%20videos%20increased%20dramatically,%2C%E2%80%9D%20demonstrating%20their%20growing%20popularity.&text=Between%202016%20and%202018%2C%20JUUL,8%2C083%20videos%20and%205%2C135%20channels.

https://respiratory-therapy.com/public-health/smoking/vaping-ecigarettes/tiktok-videos-exposing-youth-to-positive-portrayals-of-vaping/#:~:text=Videos%20categorized%20as%20'comedy%20and,restrictions%20to%20reduce%20youth%20uptake.%E2%80%9D

Health Behavior Modeling on Social Media

1. Research suggests a significant portion of physical literacy content on YouTube promotes physical activity and health topics like the **risks of sedentary behaviors**.

2. For example, a study on YouTube physical literacy content found that **72.7% of videos promoted physical activity.**

3. Much of TikTok content is **user-generated** and may not be evidence-based or verified.

4. Studies suggest that **content promoting unhealthy behaviors, such as diet culture, is prevalent and highly engaging.**

https://www.universalwisdomschool.in/blog/top-10-youtube-channels-for-kids-fun-education-and-creativity

https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9624392/#:~:text=Conclusions,frequently%20viewing%20weight%2Dnormative%20content.

Evidence-Based Positive Prevention Model

Behavior-Image Model (BIM)

- BIM is a **wellness**-based theoretical map for developing (brief) programs that use **positive** images to **connect healthy behavior promotion with substance use or other risk behavior prevention.**

- BIM has been used to create a wide-range of multi-health behavior prevention programs for youth, young adults, adults, parents and media campaigns.

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Positive Components of the Behavior-Image Model

1. Communicating positive, aspirational peer/social and future images as benefits/values and substance use as harmful/costs to **connect and increase motivation** to change diverse health behaviors,

2. Using multiple behavior goal setting/contracting to **initiate action and increase self-control, self-efficacy and self-image,** and

3. Provide resources and opportunities supporting youth **positive behavior choices.**

4-Step Evidence-Based Screening & Brief Intervention Model Using BIM

1. **Screening:** Increase behavioral reflection AND identify youth at risk

2. **Positive Prevention Communication:** Integrate & motivate behavior change to prevent & reduce SU and promote healthy behaviors **for all youth**

3. **Goal Setting:** Initiate **multiple behavior** change **for all youth**

4. **Follow-up:** Promote continued goal setting **for all youth** AND referral to services **for high-risk youth**
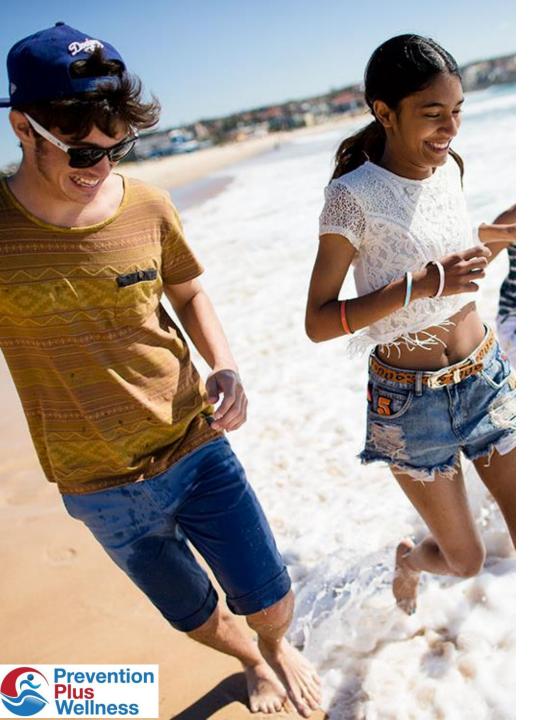
Message Framing: Prospect Theory

Information presented in terms of either positive gains (benefits) or negative losses (costs/risks) influences behavioral decisions differentially.

Using primarily positive- and some negative-framed messages in health communications may be relevant and appealing for all targeted participants.

Image-based strategies that have emphasized appearance and performance enhancement benefits (gains) or costs (losses) of health promotion behaviors have shown promise.

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Support for Targeting Positive Images in Interventions

1. Image has **conceptual** support in multiple health behavior theories, e.g., Possible Selves Theory, Social Learning Theory.

2. Image has **research** support in self-concept, prototype images, possible selves and positive identity linked to youth health.

3. The use of appealing images has **practical** support in image advertising.

4. A positive, strengths-based focus on **wellness habits** is more **acceptable & interesting** to youth, parents & organizations.
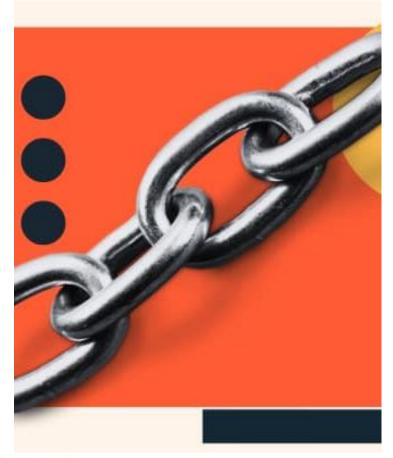
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Image in Shaping Health Behavior

1. Research has supported the importance of addressing prototypes/stereotypes in predicting health-promoting behaviors such as exercise.

2. Other research has indicated that images of future or possible self are important to predicting health behavior.

3. The processes of social and self-comparison together may be key mechanisms of action explaining the efficacy of feedback-related interventions.

Coupling Positive & Negative Behaviors

1. **Assumption:** To achieve positive health and improve personal performance, as well as to prevent and mitigate declines in health status, **multiple health-risk and health-promoting behaviors** must be considered across the lifespan.

2. A behavior coupling is a conceptual, empirical or logical relationship drawn between **two health behaviors**.

3. **Opposing behavior couplings** are framed as a health-risk behavior (e.g., substance use) counteracting or weakening the gains of a health-promoting behavior (e.g., physical activity), leading to reductions in health and personal development.

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2-Step Messaging Integrating Multiple Behaviors Using Images to <u>Increase Motivation</u>

- Goal: Trigger a mental picture of the healthy behavior and SU as harmful using:

a) Vivid image terms, and

b) Representative, positive illustrations (models).

Positive Goal Setting and Image Relationship

Emphasizing the selection of self-concordant goals that reflect one's desired image (i.e. a prototype or future positive self-image) has been shown to facilitate behavioral change.

A major reason for failing at attaining personal goals is that they are adopted for external reasons instead of reflecting one's personal interests and values.

Interventions which tap into commonly desired images may result in more goal commitment and, subsequently, greater behavior change.

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How Goal Setting Works with the Behavior-Image Model (BIM)

1. **Programs based on BIM provide feedback on health behaviors and their images.**

2. **The discrepancy between current behaviors and future images are possible goals.**

3. **Goal setting includes avoiding substance use <u>and</u> increasing wellness habit(s).**

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Simplified BIM Logic Model

Screening for current healthy & substance use habits increases their awareness and self-reflection

Communicating behavior-image messages integrating healthy habits & risk behaviors (i.e., substance use)

This cues unconscious positive future & peer healthy behavior images

Thes increases awareness of healthy behavior images as values & substance use as undesirable

And which also enhances motivation to set & monitor multiple health behavior goals

Setting & monitoring goals initiates behavior change & leads to increased self-regulation skills & self-efficacy

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Conclusions

1. There is a relatively wide-range of concepts associated with "positive" prevention, including strengths, wellness, healthy behaviors, protective factors and self-images.

2. There are significant advantages to using positive substance use prevention content and components versus only negative ones in terms of effectiveness and desirability.

3. The Behavior-Image Model (BIM) is a wellness-based theory for creating and providing positive substance use prevention by targeting healthy habits, future images and multiple behavior goal setting.

For more information…

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- **Learn more about Prevention Plus Wellness Programs & Training:**
  https://preventionpluswellness.com/blogs/news/sport-alcohol-drug-prevention-plus-wellness-brief-interventions

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