My First Year in Prevention:
A Guide to Learning the Field

for the Vermont prevention professional

The use of affirming language inspires hope.
LANGUAGE MATTERS.
Words have power.
PEOPLE FIRST.

The PTTC Network uses affirming language to promote the application of evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

This tool uses language that is the most affirming and culturally appropriate within the current standards of our field. However, language is always evolving. The best way to evolve with it is to consistently listen to and consult the choices and needs of your community. Not every term you use will work for every person, but if you approach the work with respect and center the voices of the people most impacted, your approach can help further inclusivity. When the need for a change is brought to your attention, approach it humbly and be open to learning to help our field continue to grow and to do good work that supports the whole community.

Table of Contents

This toolkit was developed for new professionals working in the field of prevention to support learning of key concepts proven to help preventionists improve policies, practices, programs, and environments that make it easier for people to thrive.

Your Role as the Prevention Professional

Welcome to the substance misuse prevention field!
Our field relies on having a well-trained, ethical, and professional workforce to successfully prevent substance misuse. A substance misuse prevention professional, sometimes called a prevention specialist, helps identify, select, and implement strategies to reduce rates of substance misuse and associated negative impacts.

Substance misuse and dependence is a public health crisis affecting everyone. The factors that contribute to individuals developing a substance use disorder are complex, and substance misuse issues will not be solved by any one program or strategy. However, a long history of science and research have proven that **substance misuse is both preventable and treatable**. Perhaps you are coming to this work because you have an understanding of the important ways in which local policies, practices, and the built environment can support healthy behaviors and reduce substance misuse. Perhaps you are interested in providing education to help people make informed choices about substances, or maybe you want to improve access to healthy choices in your community. Wherever your interests begin, it will be important to continue to enhance your learning to keep up with research and developments in the field, both to increase the effectiveness of your work and to provide services in a way that supports increased health equity and social justice in the community you serve.

In your role you will likely be in spaces where you are the subject matter expert, and you can bring an important connection to the research and evidence-informed strategies that guide prevention work. The general public often have an easier time conceptualizing programs and strategies that support individuals (eg. mentor programs, school counseling). Your expertise can help connect people to strategies that have the potential to have greater impact on reducing substance misuse rates by impacting the whole community.

This guide will connect you to many of the amazing resources developed for the substance misuse prevention field. We focused on general resources to help understand key concepts, definitions, resources, and language that guide the work. This is by no means an exhaustive list. You will likely come across many other great resources in your position. There will be places for you to write down all the great things you find that we did not include!

"Upstream" Prevention

Imagine a river flowing toward a waterfall. You are walking along the bank of the river near the bottom of the waterfall with a friend. You notice that someone is in the water and is drowning. You and your friend pull the person out of the river to safety, but as soon as you do, you notice that there is another person drowning in the river. This happens over and over and you call to more rescuers to help assist and pull people out. It is hard work and you are unable to save everyone.

A **downstream strategy** is to place more rescuers at the bottom of the waterfall. To save more people you might work to improve the rescuers skills and provide them with better equipment. It would save more people but you are unlikely to reduce the number of people who need to be saved.

Upstream prevention strategy: You realize the drowning people are coming from further upstream at the top of the waterfall. You discover an overlook there with a slippery path that is causing people to slip and fall into the river. You talk to community leaders and bring systems together to add guardrails and warning signs at the overlook that help prevent people from falling into the river.

If we put the right resources and structures in place <u>before</u> there is a problem, and reduce things causing risk, fewer people will fall in and need help downstream.

Substance Use Prevention Field Orientation - One Year Timeline

The follow pages include links to trainings and information that are helpful for all professionals working in the field to be familiar with. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Your supervisor may assign additional learning specific to your particular position or to the community you are working with.

Months 1 to 3

Done	Date	Task
☐	_____	**Subscribe** to prevention e-newsletters/listservs (suggested list on page 13)
☐	_____	**Watch** *What is Prevention?* video series from Addiction Policy Forum
☐	_____	To get to know the field and the role of a prevention professional **Read** pages 1- 20 of the *South Southwest PTTC Prevention Specialist Onboarding Roadmap* • For a shorter reference read *How Do We Prevent and Reduce Substance Misuse Issues?* (Appendix A, page 17)
☐	_____	**Take** *Introduction to Substance Abuse Prevention: Understanding the Basics* training (Pre-SAPST Online Course)

Think About

What questions do you have about what you are learning?
_____
_____
_____

What risk factors have you witnessed in the community you serve?
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What protective factors have you witnessed in the community you serve?
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_____
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Are there populations that are more significantly impacted by the risk factors?
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Months 3 to 6

Done	Date	Task

☐ _____ **Watch** PTTC *Prevention Domain Video Series* (about the science and practice of the field from Certified Prevention Specialists)

☐ _____ **Take** *SPF Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST)*

☐ _____ Increase your knowledge and skills to recognize, address, and communicate about **health inequities.** This area of the field is continually developing. It is important to know where to find information and to continually find ways to enhance your understanding. Spend some time to **explore resources**. Below are a few links to get you started.
- Gateway to Health Communication | CDC
- Advancing Health Equity: A Guide to Language Narrative & Concepts I AMA
- Addictionary I Recovery Research Institute
- Talking About Health Equity I Frameworks Institute

☐ _____ **Attend** a training on health equity and/or inclusion. (Ask your supervisor for recommendations)

Health inequities are differences in health that are avoidable, systematic, measureable and/or unjust.

Think About

What questions do you have about what you are learning?

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How has your work connected with the Prevention Domains?

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With your increased understanding of prevention, have you recognized areas where you need more training or support?

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When you looked at the equity resources what stood out to you? What did you learn that is helpful to your position?

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Commitment to Furthering Equity & Accessibility in Your Work

As a professional in this field you are encouraged to make a commitment to...

☑ Regularly spend time in the community you are working in.

☑ Intentionally engage community voices that have often been systematically silenced, ignored, and/or unheard.

☑ Consistently challenge your assumptions and perspectives to explore for unconscious bias.

☑ Use affirming and culturally appropriate language, by listening to and consulting the language choices and needs of your community. Commit to approaching the work with respect and centering the voices of the people most impacted to further inclusivity.

☑ Continually working to reduce barriers to participation in prevention meetings, programs, events, etc (e.g providing interpretation, childcare, food, etc.)

☑ Making spaces you host or are a part of accessible to disabled individuals and materials and information you create ADA compliant.

☑ Trusting community members to be the experts of their community needs.

☑ Being a learner first, and a teacher second.

Add statements of your own specific to your community/org/work.

☑ _____

☑ _____

☑ _____

Months 6 to 9

Done	Date	Task
☐	_____	**Take** _Introduction to the Prevention Core Competencies_ (online training)
☐	_____	**Complete** a community scan. • Suggested tool for training: _Community Scan: Does my community support healthy decisions about substance use?_ from the My First Year in Prevention guide (Appendix B, pages 19-21)
☐	_____	**Learn** where to find information on prevention strategies. Suggested activity: _Strategy Resource Scavenger Hunt_ • Go to _What Works for Health_ and look for alcohol policy strategies. Identify a few you think might be a good fit for your community or your work. • Go to SAMHSA's _Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center_ and, 1) find a resource to adapt evidence-based practices for under-resourced populations, 2) find a resource to prevent/reduce cannabis/marijuana use • Go to _CADCA Resource Center_ and 1) find an infographic about a substance use topic, and 2) find a "Strategizer" or "Practical Theorist" publication on addressing Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems
☐	_____	**Learn** about community readiness. • Suggested learning tool: _Community Readiness for Community Change_ by Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research ◦ One page overview: PTTC _South Southwest Prevention Specialist Onboarding Roadmap_ (page 14 on "Community Readiness")

Think About

What questions do you have about what you are learning?

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_____

How is your professional work aligning with what you are learning?

_____
_____
_____

Do you think there is community readiness for the interventions you are working on?

_____
_____
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_____

for Vermont professionals only

☐	_____	Go to VT Health Policy Clearinghouse and find: • A resource that explains risk and protective factors • An example of a substance use policy for schools

Months 9 to 12
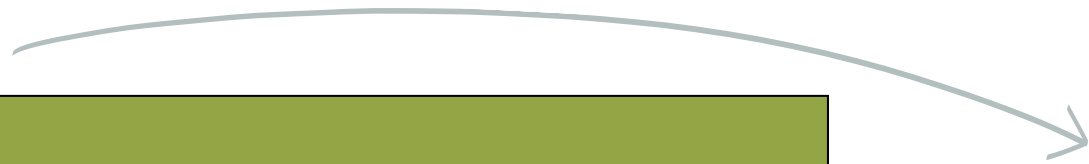
Done	Date	Task

☐ _____ **Learn** effective ways to talk about public health issues.
- Suggested tool for training: Frameworks Institute *Fast Frames* Video Series. Each of the 6 videos in the series shares a specific tip to help advance your effectiveness to communicate and impact social change. Video list:
  - Intro video
  - Solutions-Oriented Framing
  - Framing Data
  - Alternatives to Vulnerability Framing
  - Use Visuals to Spark Big-Picture Thinking
  - How to Tell More Effective Stories About the Success of Your Work

☐ _____
- Suggested tool for training: Frameworks Institute *Reframing Adolescent Substance Use and Its Prevention: a Communications Playbook*

☐ _____ **Learn** about advocacy and lobbying and the boundaries for your position.
- Suggested learning tools: *CADCA's Advocacy Toolkit* and *CADCA's Strategizer 31 – Guidelines for Advocacy: Changing Policies and Laws to Create Safer Environments for Youth*
  - Take a training on Advocacy 101. Ask your supervisor for help to find one relevant to your position.

☐ _____ **Attend** a Prevention Ethics training.

Think About

What questions do you have about what you are learning?

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_____
_____

Think of a story from your work this year that you think might be compelling for the community. How would you use it to impact change?

_____
_____
_____

What ethical issues have come up in your work that you would like to talk through with someone?

_____
_____
_____

you did it!

One Year Reflection & Next Steps

Reflection

1. **What are the areas of the field where you feel confident about your knowledge?**

1. **In what areas do you still feel like you need more knowledge, skills, and/or training?**

1. **What areas of the field or your position do you feel are driving your motivation for the work?**

At this stage you've learned a lot about the prevention field! You are probably starting to identify areas of the field you are passionate about and that your skills are well suited for. Our field is regularly evolving, and continuing to take time to increase your knowledge of prevention science will be important for you to be effective and do good work. Likewise, it is important for professionals in our field to obtain Prevention Specialist credentialling to help ensure communities are being informed and led by knowledgeable people who are connected to the most current science to support effective change.

The goal of this section is to help you think about your professional and career goals and growth in the prevention field.

Identify your personal career goals

Action step	Timeline	Plan
Explore credentialing for Prevention Specialist certification (Learn more <u>here</u>).		
Identify areas where you need more training, learning or skill development.		
Identify short term professional goals (next 6 months).		
Identify long term professional goals (2-5 years).		

"The goal of education is to enable individuals to continue their education." - John Dewey

More Resources to Explore
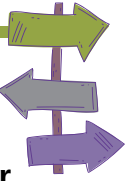
PREVENTION SPECIALIST CREDENTIALING

- New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) Network
- Connecticut: ctcertboard.org
- Maine: mainepreventioncertification.org
- Massachusetts: mbsacc.com/
- New Hampshire: nhpreventcert.org/
- Rhode Island: ricertboard.org/
- Vermont: preventionworksvermont.org/vermont-certified-prevention-specialist/

LEARNING ABOUT PREVENTION SCIENCE

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - cdc.gov

Frameworks Institute - frameworksinstitute.org

Public Health Institute - phi.org

Search Institute - searchinstitute.org

What Works for Health - tool to examine evidence ratings for specific strategies for impacting health outcomes. countyhealthrankings.org/strategies-and-solutions/what-works-for-health

TOOLKITS ABOUT COMMUNITY PREVENTION

Handbook for Community Anti-Drug Coalitions | CADCA
Community Readiness for Community Change by Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research
New England Prevention Specialist Onboarding and Orientation Roadmap
South Southwest Prevention Specialist Onboarding Roadmap

LEARNING ABOUT THE PREVENTION FIELD

New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center pttcnetwork.org/centers/content/new-england-pttc

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America Resources Center - cadca.org/resources-center

The Community Toolbox - Resources related to organizing or healthy community development - ctb.ku.edu/en

SAMHSA Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center - samhsa.gov/resource-search/ebp

RESOURCES I FOUND

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_____
_____
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### VERMONT SPECIFIC

Green Peak Alliance Health Policy Clearinghouse resources, examples, and information to develop policies that support healthy communities. trorc.org/healthpolicyclearinghouse

Healthy Lamoille Valley Community Planning Toolkit healthylamoillevalley.org/community-policy-toolkit/

Prevention Works VT - network for VT prevention professionals. preventionworksvermont.org/

Follow These E-newsletters!

FOLLOW
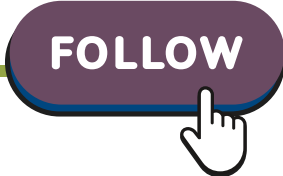
New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) Network - a federally funded resource center that supports development for the field, such as; trainings, TA, and learning cohorts.

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America - a resource to connect, train, and provide resources for substance misuse coalitions around the globe.

ChangeLab Solutions - great resource for big picture information related to changing public health policy.

ReThink Health - They share articles and blog posts that help with engaging influential partners and improving health outcomes.

Drugfree.org - they post new research and info relevant to the field, usually through a parent/caregiver focused lens.

Join Together - a recovery focused arm of drugfree.org that posts news and research, usually through a recovery focused lens.

Rescue Agency - campaigns and message development to drive health behavior change.

Frameworks Institute - they share language and framing to help to communicate and engage people in thinking differently about complex public health issues.

VERMONT SPECIFIC

Vermont Prevention Listserve - listserve for prevention professionals in VT. You can post questions on a topic or project you need help with or share resources with others. Vermont Dept. of Health will post updates here. To join email VermontPrevention-request@list.state.vt.us and write "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject heading.

Prevention Works VT - network for VT prevention professionals. preventionworksvermont.org/

Common Good Vermont - non-profit training and TA

Center for Health and Learning - training center

Vermont Afterschool

MY NOTES

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What Did You Say? Common Acronyms Heard in the First Year

Common in the US Substance Use Prevention Field (with affiliation when necessary)

BRFSS	Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance Survey (CDC Survey)
CADCA	Community-Anti Drug Coalitions of America
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CPS	Certified Prevention Specialist
CSAP	Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (SAMHSA)
DFC	Drug Free Communities Grant (from SAMHSA)
DOJ	Department of Justice
EBPRC	Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center (within SAMHSA)
HHS (or DHHS)	US Department of Health and Human Services
ICRC	International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium
MADD	Mothers Against Drunk Driving
NIDA	National Institute on Drug Abuse (from NIH)
NIH	National Institute of Health (within HHS)
NOMs	National Outcome Measures
NPN	National Prevention Network
NSDUH	National Survey on Drug Use & Health (SAMHSA Survey)
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs

ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy
PFS	Partnerships for Success Grant (from SAMHSA)
PIRE	Pacific Institute for Research & Evaluation
PTTC	Prevention Technology Transfer Center
SADD	Students Against Drunk Drivers
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse & Mental Health Service Administration
SAP	Student Assistance Professional/Student Assistance Program Counselor
SAPST	SPF Application for Prevention Success Training
SHIP	State Health Improvement Plan
SPF	Strategic Prevention Framework
STOP Act	Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act Grant (from SAMHSA
YRBS	Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CDC Survey)
YRBSS	Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (by CDC)

What Did You Say? Common Acronyms Heard in the First Year...continued

General	
ACES	Adverse Childhood Experiences
AOD	alcohol and other drugs
ATOD	alcohol, tobacco, & other drugs
BAC	Blood Alcohol Content
BAL	Blood Alcohol Level
BIPOC	black, indigenous, and people of color
CEU	Continuing Education Unit
DUI	Driving Under the Influence
DWI	Driving While Intoxicated
ELL	English language learner
ENDS	Electronic Nicotine Delivery System
LEP	limited English proficiency
LGBTQIA+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and more
MOA/MOU	Memorandium of Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding

MOUD	Medication for Opioid Use Disorder
NOA	Notice of Award
OPC	Overdose Prevention Center
RFP	Request for Proposal
Rx	Prescription
SBIRT	Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment
SHS	Secondhand Smoke
SUD	Substance Use Disorder
Tx	Treatment

Vermont	
AHS	Agency of Human Services
AOE	Agency of Education
CCB	Cannabis Control Board
CHL	Center for Health & Learning

Vermont	
DCF	Department for Children and Families
DLL	Department of Liquor and Lottery
DSU	Division of Substance Use Programs
HPDP	Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention
IDRP	Impaired Driver Rehabilitation Program
LPO	Lead Prevention Organization
PC	Prevention Consultant
PW	Prevention Works! VT
RPP	Regional Prevention Partnership
SMPC	Substance Misuse Prevention Oversight and Advisory Council
TCP	Tobacco Control Program
VADIC	Vermont Alcohol & Drug Information Clearing House
VAMHAR	Vermont Association of Mental Health & Addiction Recovery
VDH	Vermont Department of Health
VPMS	Vermont Prescription Monitoring System
WIC	Women Infant and Children

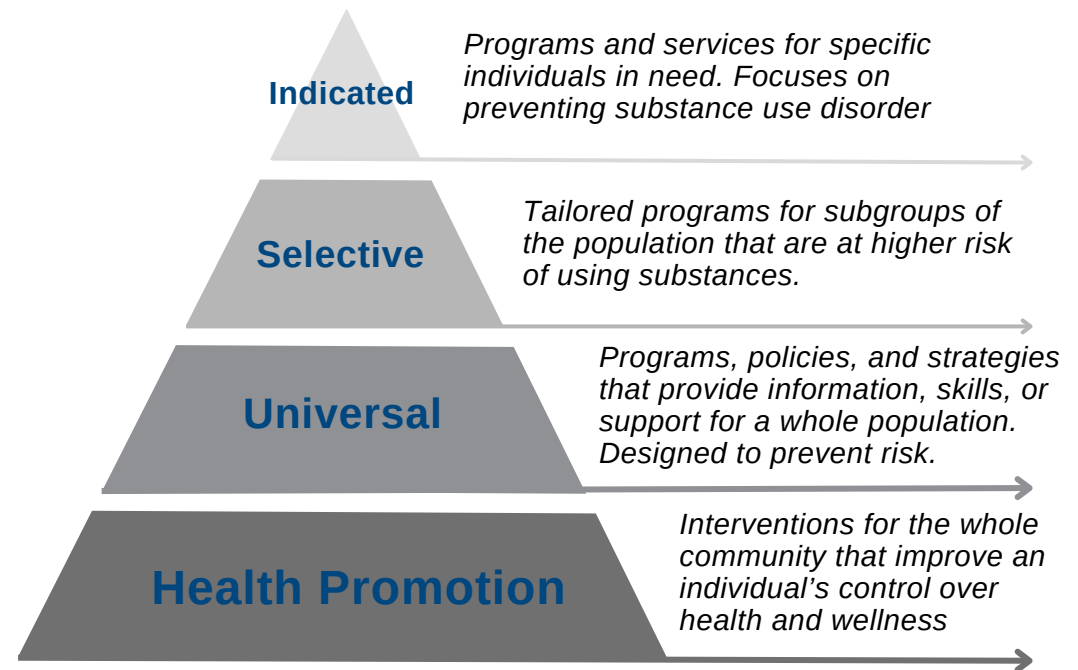# Appendix

How Do We Prevent & Reduce Substance Misuse?

Risk and protective factors help to explain why a problem exists or is likely to occur. These factors suggest why certain individuals, groups, or communities are more or less likely to have substance related issues.

Risk factors are negative influences in the lives of individuals or communities. The more risk factors a community has the more likely the community is to experience substance related problems.

Protective factors are positive influences that can improve the lives of individuals or the safety of a community. They can also reduce a risk factor's impact. Another term used for protective factors is "assets." "Asset-based" approaches put the emphasis on the positive (protective), not the negative (risk), factors that contribute to outcomes. As with risk factors, research suggests that the greater the number of assets, the more likely there will be positive outcomes.

THE PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

Prevention is part of a larger continuum of care for the substance use field. This triangle represents the level of impact of strategies that can improve outcomes, ranging from services for specific individuals in need, to health promotion for an entire population.

Indicated
Programs and services for specific individuals in need. Focuses on preventing substance use disorder

Selective
Tailored programs for subgroups of the population that are at higher risk of using substances.

Universal
Programs, policies, and strategies that provide information, skills, or support for a whole population. Designed to prevent risk.

Health Promotion
Interventions for the whole community that improve an individual's control over health and wellness

PREVENTION TAKES MANY FORMS

Prevention can be as targeted as providing education or building skills for one specific group of people to something broad like a new policy that impacts the environment where a whole community of people live. There are tools and frameworks to help identify the most appropriate strategies and activities to impact the risk factors or protective factors you want to address. ***Let's take one level of impact and look at this in more detail on the next page.***

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COMMUNITY-LEVEL Risk & Protective Factors

There are factors in the community where people live - their church, their neighborhood or town, and the larger community that influence substance use. These include the social environment, such as, the behaviors and attitudes among family, friends, and others that are accepted or normalized, as well as the physical environment. Below are examples of community-level factors:

Risk Factors (reduce these)	Protective Factors (enhance these)
- Alcohol/drugs are readily available - Laws/ordinances are unclear or inconsistently enforced - Norms are unclear or encourage use - Residents feel little sense of community connection - Neighborhood disorganization or rapid changes in neighborhood populations - High unemployment - Residents at or below the poverty level - Lack of strong social institutions - Lack of monitoring youths' activities - Misleading media/ads - Pro-use messages in community	- Opportunities exist for community involvement - Laws and ordinances are consistently enforced - Informal social control - Policies and norms encourage non-use - Community service opportunities available for youth - Resources (housing, healthcare, childcare, job etc.) are available - Risk focused programs available for youth and families - Widely supported community prevention efforts are available

The best outcomes are achieve when all 7 strategies are implemented at once.

However, the most lasting behavioral change happens when interventions are focused on 5, 6, and 7 to impact community systems, policies, and local conditions.

Seven Effective Strategies for Community Change

① **Providing Information –** Educational presentations, workshops or seminars or other presentations of data (e.g., public announcements, brochures, billboards, community meetings, forums, web-based communication).

② **Enhancing Skills** – Workshops, seminars or other activities designed to increase the skills of participants, members, and staff needed to achieve population level outcomes (e.g., training, technical assistance, distance learning, strategic planning retreats, curricula development).

③ **Providing Support** – Creating opportunities to support people to participate in activities that reduce risk or enhance protection (e.g., providing alternative activities, mentoring, referrals to community resources, support groups or clubs).

④ **Enhancing Access/Reducing Barriers –** Improving systems and processes to increase the ease, ability and opportunity to utilize those systems and services (e.g., assuring access to: healthcare, childcare, transportation, housing, justice, education, safety, special needs, cultural and language sensitivity).

⑤ **Changing Consequences (Incentives/Disincentives) –** Increasing or decreasing the probability of a specific behavior that reduces risk or enhances protection by altering the consequences for performing that behavior (e.g., creating incentives such as increasing public recognition for deserved behavior, individual and business rewards, or disincentives such as taxes, citations, fines, revocations/loss of privileges).

⑥ **Physical Design** – Changing the physical design or structure of the environment to reduce risk or enhance protection (e.g., parks, landscapes, signage, lighting, outlet density).

⑦ **Modifying/Changing Policies** – Formal change in written procedures, by-laws, proclamations, rules or laws with written documentation and/or voting procedures (e.g., workplace initiatives, law enforcement procedures and practices, public policy actions, systems change within government, communities, and organizations).

COMMUNITY SCAN

DOES MY COMMUNITY SUPPORT HEALTHY DECISIONS ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE?

Substance misuse has been an issue in many Vermont communities. One thing that helps to reduce early use among kids is how they perceive adult use and the norms in their community. Things like lots of advertising for alcohol or cannabis at stores or smoking at public events, and can give kids the misperception that use of alcohol, tobacco, and cannabis are safe and everyone does it. If we are aware of the messages our community is sending to youth it can help us think about changes that could improve outcomes for everyone!

This tool can be used to help identify things in your community that may have an impact on substance use and misuse problems, such as underage drinking, binge drinking, tobacco use, marijuana use, prescription drug misuse, etc. The more you are aware of the community norms and influences around you, the better people get at making their own healthy choices in spite of outside influences.

This is not meant to be done at home! Don't try to answer the questions from memory. Walk, bike, drive, whatever works for you - but get out and really look closely at the community as you fill in your answers. You may be surprised by things you never noticed before.

If you have a big community and can't get to all of it, challenge yourself to go to at least 3 different types of areas in the community (e.g: a residential area, a commercial area, and around a school).

This is just a starting place. There are MANY additional community factors that influence substance use and abuse rates. We encourage you to think more about what they are and add in additional things you noticed on your own at the end!

BRIEF COMMUNITY SCAN
Does My Community Support Healthy Decisions Around Substance Use?

Answer the questions below about the community you work in

Community:_____

Date:_____ Scan completed by:_____

	bars	restaurants	liquor stores	convenience stores	pharmacy	cannabis retailer	tobacco retailer	other
check the locations where alcohol is sold								
check the places where tobacco is sold								
check the places where cannabis with THC is sold								

	Yes	No	Other
Does the community have tobacco or vape shops? (A tobacco or vape shop specializes in selling tobacco products/paraphernalia). If yes, how many?			
Are there cannabis retail shops? (A cannabis retail shop specializes in selling cannabis products, either with or without THC).			
Does the community have stores that carry a large number of products that can be used for alcohol or drug use (e.g. glass pipes) or have products with drug related references or images (e.g. clothing with cannabis leaves or pill bottles on them, large shot glass display, etc.)			
Do the alcohol outlets sell alco-pops? (An "alco-pop" is a flavored malt-beverage, usually with high sugar content, often with a similar design to soda/juice.)			
Are the alco-pops displayed near other similar non-alcoholic beverages, candy, or gum?			
Are the tobacco, alcohol, or cannabis products (including e-cigarettes/vaping devices) within 3 feet of candy or gum?			
Are there locations where there are 3 or more places that sell alcohol, tobacco or cannabis in a 1 block area?			
Are there community events where alcohol or other drug use is largely promoted (e.g. festivals, parades, sporting events) or the event is sponsored by an alcohol or cannabis business? If yes, what are they?			

	Yes	No	Other
Are there open community events where alcohol, cannabis or other drug use is prohibited?			
Is there town/city owned property, such as a public park or beach, where alcohol, tobacco, or cannabis is sold? If yes, where?			
Is there town/city owned property, such as a public park or beach, where alcohol use is prohibited? If yes, does it have clear signage?			
Is there town/city owned property, such as a public park or beach, where smoking or vaping is prohibited? If yes, does it have clear signage?			
Are there alcohol, tobacco, vape or cannabis outlets located within 1000 feet of a school or youth center? If yes, do they have advertising outside? Does it light up? *If yes, go inside. Does it also have a lot of promotion or advertising for these products inside? Is any of it 3 feet or less from the floor? Also note the height of ads on the front door.*			
Are discarded alcohol cans/bottles, cigarettes, vape cartridges, needles or other drug paraphernalia often seen in public places (e.g., parks, trails, parking lots)?			
Does the community have a Prescription Drug Disposal site? (A place you can dispose of unused or expired prescription medications for free. Usually at police departments, pharmacies, or health care centers.)			
Do you see alcohol, tobacco, cannabis or other substance-related advertisements often in the community (e.g. on kiosks, in the local paper, on public transportation?			

Notes: What else did you notice while doing this scan that you think is important to take note of?

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What comes next?

Did you learn anything that was a surprise for you?

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_____

Is there anything you would like to see change about the community that would support healthy choices related to substance use?

_____
_____
_____

INTRODUCTION

This section of this guide is for the person supervising the new prevention professional using this toolkit of resources. This guide was designed to help train staff new to the field of prevention. This is just a guide. Please adapt these materials as necessary to meet the needs of the individual staff person and your organization.

There is also a Canva template and Google Drive of documents from this guide available for editing linked at the end.

Substance Use Prevention Field Orientation For Your New Employee - One Year Timeline

This document in the guide links to general trainings and information relevant to the substance misuse prevention that are helpful for professionals working in the field to be familiar with. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. As their supervisor, you may decide to add additional learning specific to that professional's position or to the community they work in.

We encourage you to support opportunities for ongoing reflection while your supervisee is learning. Learning is enhanced when the learner has the opportunity to practice the information by engaging in meaningful reflection and dialogue. This will help the new staff to synthesize the information and learn to reflect it back in their professional relationships. Over time, they should be able, on their own, to recognize the next steps they should take in their learning and professional growth in the prevention field.

The next pages include summaries of the key concepts in the trainings and resources listed in each part of the **Substance Use Prevention Field Orientation - One Year Timeline** in this guide. For each phase of their learning there are sample questions that you, as their supervisor, can use to talk with them about what they are learning and help them reflect on it.

MONTHS 1 to 3

talking points for check-ins or supervision at this stage of learning:

Things they will be learning about:
- risk and protective factors
- socio-ecological models for prevention
- the continuum of care
- evidence-based practices
- community readiness
- the steps of the Strategic Prevention Framework
- brain development and the impacts of substance use on the brain.

1. **What questions do you have about what you have been learning?**
2. **What did you learn that was a surprise to you?**
3. **What risk factors have you seen in the community our organization serves? What protective factors? Are there parts of our community, or populations in our community, that you are seeing the risk or protective factors have a more significant impact for?**
4. **Can you tell me about how you like to learn new information?**

talking points for check-ins or supervision at this stage of learning:

MONTHS 3 to 6

1. **What questions do you have about what you have been learning?**
2. **Where do you see your work connected with the Prevention Domains?**
3. **Talk about professional growth.** Now that they have a clearer picture of prevention concepts, ask what additional training needs or support they have identified for themselves.
4. **In the health inequity resources, what new information did you learn? What did you learn that will be helpful for your position? What thoughts do you have about how to improve your position's work to better support health equity?**
5. **Here is a** <u>list of resources</u> **developed by the PTTC's Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Practices Work Group to help understand the impact of culture and identity in prevention efforts. Pull out a few that are relevant for your supervisee to read. Or look at some of them together.**

Things they will be learning about:
- overview of what it means to work in the substance misuse prevention field and a deep dive into the 6 IC&RC Prevention Performance Domains
- health equity and how to talk a about it

Substance Use Prevention Field Orientation

MONTHS 6 to 9

talking points for check-ins or supervision at this stage of learning:

Things they will be learning about:
- **r**epetition of key concepts and prevention science they were introduced to in other materials
- the risk and protective factors specific to the community they are serving
- where to find materials and resources they will need for their work
- community readiness

1. **What questions do you have about what you have been learning?**
2. **How have you seen your work in the community be connected to or informed by what you've been learning?**
3. **When you completed the Resource Scavenger Hunt did you find any new resources that might be useful to your work?**
4. **What do you think about the community's readiness for the strategies our work is focused on?**

MONTHS 9 to 12

talking points for check-ins or supervision at this stage of learning:

1. **What questions do you have about what you have been learning?**
2. **Share a success story or a community issue from your work this year that you think might be compelling for the larger community. Let's talk through how to frame it using the tips you learned from Frameworks.**
3. **What are the differences between advocacy and lobbying? Let's talk about the boundaries for our organization and your position. (Share specific parameters for your organization.)**
4. **Are there ethical issues that have come up in your work that we can spend time to think and talk more about together?**

Things they will be learning about:

- **e**ffective ways to talk about public health issues
- the differences between advocacy and lobbying and the boundaries for nonprofit employees
- prevention ethics

At this stage your employee has hopefully started to become passionate about some areas of prevention, and you both have identified skills they have that are well suited for areas of the work. They should be given learning opportunities to continually increase their knowledge of prevention science, health equity, as well as the latest trends and research to help them be effective and do good work.

Now is a good time to encourage them to start thinking about working toward a Prevention Specialist Certification. Our field must be informed and led by knowledgeable people who are connected to the most current science to support effective work.

Prevention Specialist credentialing by state:

Connecticut: https://ctcertboard.org/
Maine: https://mainepreventioncertification.org/
Massachusetts: https://www.mbsacc.com/
New Hampshire: https://nhpreventcert.org/
Rhode Island: https://www.ricertboard.org/
Vermont: https://preventionworksvermont.org/vermont-certified-prevention-specialist/

One Year +

talking points for supervision at this stage of learning:

1. **What are the areas of the field where you feel confident about your knowledge?**
2. **In what areas do you still feel like you need more knowledge, skills, and/or training?**
3. **What areas of the field or your position are driving your motivation for the work?**
4. **How can I support you at this stage in your learning and professional growth?**
5. **How can I support you to work toward a Prevention Specialist credential?**

Additional Suggestions

Work to understand your supervisee's learning style and learning preferences.

In the one year timeline for learning in this toolkit, the suggested learning materials often contain information that is repeated from a resource suggested in an earlier phase. This is intentional. Both because repetition is a helpful strategy to retain information, and also because many of the materials we've listed use different formats and ways of engaging the learner to help connect with each individual's particular way of sifting through and interpreting new information.

Your supervisee may not be someone who benefits from a traditional sit down meeting to reflect on the materials they are reading. You may need to try more creative approaches, like talking while going for a walk together, or having a discussion over a menial task, like folding program brochures. Sometimes this can provide the atmosphere and comfort for a person to engage in more thoughtful reflection. Whatever you try, it will be important to get to know them well enough to understand what will work best for them.

This list of resources from the Prevention Technology Transfer Center's *Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Practices Work Group* can help individuals understand the impact of culture and identity in prevention efforts:
Cultural Responsiveness - Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) Network

There are many resources to help with supporting diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural competency in prevention efforts. However, there are very few resources specific to the prevention field to help supervisors and management engage in meaningful work for themselves and their organization to support their own employees and supervisees. The **new products developed by the 2024 New England PTTC Research & Design Prevention Fellowship** may help with your own professional development in this area:

Actively work on your own cultural competence and awareness of how to support diverse experiences and needs

1. **CENTERING CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC EQUITY IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH: A GUIDE TO INCREASING HISPANIC AND LATINO REPRESENTATION IN COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTION**
2. **DISARMING MICROAGGRESSIONS & MACROAGGRESSIONS TO PROMOTE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE PREVENTION WORKFORCE**
3. **LGBTQIA+ HIRING PRACTICES FOR THE PREVENTION WORKFORCE**
4. **TOOLS: FOR A WORKING MEETING**
5. **PUTTING THE HUMAN BACK INTO HUMAN SERVICES: EMBRACING A MORE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION**

MAKE THIS RESOURCE WORK FOR YOU!

This guide was designed in 2024 to help train staff new to the field of prevention. However, our field is constantly evolving and we will need to evolve with it. If what is included in this guide does not work for your needs we encourage you to adapt these materials to as you need to.

General Canva TEMPLATE available at: **https://shorturl.at/e0UEZ**

Vermont Canva TEMPLATE available at: **https://shorturl.at/lJVAy**

Google Drive documents from this guide are available to edit at: **https://shorturl.at/J67H2**

9 OUT OF 10 people who develop substance use problems started using by age 18

PREVENTION MATTERS.

About the Author

Mariah Flynn, CPS
Vermont Fellow

Mariah Flynn is a Certified Prevention Specialist who has worked in the substance misuse field in Vermont for 23+ years as a counselor, a case manager, and for the last 16 years as the Director of the Burlington Partnership for a Healthy Community, a substance misuse prevention coalition serving Burlington, Vermont. She is a founding member of Prevention Works! Vermont, the Chittenden Prevention Network, and the Northwest Regional Prevention Network; statewide and regional efforts to coordinate substance use prevention resources and strategies for the areas. Mariah serves on the Steering Committee for Prevention Works! Vermont. Mariah also served as the Coordinator of the Tobacco Free College Campus Initiative for the state of Vermont for many years. She completed three Fellowships with the New England Prevention Technology Center to develop resources for the prevention field. Mariah is passionate about building communities that provide youth and families with the skills and environment to support healthy choices.

If you have questions or need help with this resource reach out to Mariah at mariah@burlingtonpartnership.org.

Did you find this guide useful? Check out another resource Mariah developed here:

HEALTHY COMMUNITY, HEALTHY PEOPLE: Community Cannabis Policy Toolkit for the Vermont Prevention Professional

New England (HHS Region 1)

PTTC Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration