



What Does Not Work In Prevention

June 27, 2023 | 3:15-4:30 p.m.



Erin Ficker
Prevention Project Director
Prevention Solutions, EDC



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This training is based on a webinar that was originally created by Kris Gabrielsen and Erin Ficker for the Great Lakes Prevention Technology Transfer Center and delivered on March 2, 2022.

Material from the original webinar can be found on the [Great Lakes PTTC website](#).

Resource link: <https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/great-lakes-pttc/product/what-does-not-work-prevention>



Objectives

- Identify at least 5 interventions that have been shown through research to NOT be effective in preventing substance misuse
- List evidence-based approaches that can be used as effective alternatives to the ineffective/counterproductive strategies
- Describe strategies to address resistance to discontinuing ineffective and/or counterproductive prevention strategies

AGENDA



Welcome and
introduction

History of the
evidence base

Ineffective and
effective
prevention
strategies

Strategies for
promoting
effective,
evidence-based
strategies

DISCUSSION

What is your greatest fear or hope when you hear, “What does NOT work in prevention?”



A HISTORY OF EVIDENCE:

The importance and role of evidence-based strategies in substance misuse prevention



A TIMELINE OF PREVENTION

TIME	STRATEGY	ACTIVITIES
1950s and 1960s	Scare tactics	Films and speakers
Early 1970s	Drug education	Curricula based on factual information
Mid-/Late-1970s	Affective education and alternatives to drug use	Curricula based on communication, decision-making, values clarification, and self-esteem
Late-1970s to early 1980s	Affective education, alternatives to drug use and training	Social skills curricula, refusal skills training, parenting education



A TIMELINE OF PREVENTION

TIME	STRATEGY	ACTIVITIES
Late-1980s to mid-1990s	Parent, school, and community partnerships	Research-based curricula, peer programs
Mid-1990s to 2010	Replication of research-based models and application of research-based approaches	Environmental approaches, comprehensive programs targeting many domains and strategies, evaluation of prevention programs, media campaigns
2010s to today	Expansion of research based-models with a focus on more diverse audiences through continued evaluation and research	Cross sector prevention efforts, public health focus, community-based strategies for greater impact, focus across the lifespan and on diverse population groups

CONTINUUM OF EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS



Well Supported | Supported

- Found to be effective

Promising Direction | Emerging

- Some evidence of effectiveness
- Expected preventive effect
- Effect is Undetermined

Unsupported | Harmful

- Ineffective
- Practice constitutes risk of harm

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/continuum-chart-a.pdf>



Implementing effective, evidence-based programs ensures that prevention programs and policies do no harm

Ineffective/counterproductive prevention strategies can increase the risks of drug misuse

KEEP IN MIND





STRATEGIC PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

Good
Planning Is
The Key To
Success



WHERE IS PROGRAM SELECTION IN THE SPF?





SPF STEP 3: PLANNING



- Prioritize risk/protective factors
- **Select effective, evidence-based program**
- Develop comprehensive, data-driven plan

COMPARING EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

A review of strategies with a focus on what research and evidence shows about effectiveness



Education



Appeals



**Information
Sharing**

INEFFECTIVE EDUCATION STRATEGIES



- One-time events
- Assemblies



- Personal testimony from people in recovery



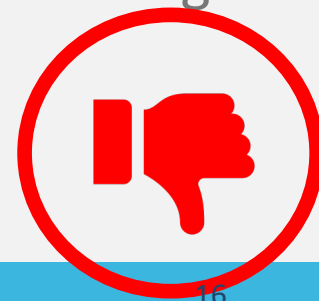
- Mock car crashes
- Drunk goggles



INEFFECTIVE: ASSEMBLIES



- Often involves scare tactics and other ineffective appeals
- One-time presentation of information
- Impact is not lasting



INEFFECTIVE: PERSONAL TESTIMONIES

- Youth and young adults perceive themselves as “indestructible”
- Understanding of connection between behavior and consequences is still developing in youth
- Often feature extreme stories that can undermine the prevention message and messengers if the message does not match the experience





INEFFECTIVE: MOCK CAR CRASHES

- Sensationalizes
- Little to no lasting impact
- Can be traumatizing





INEFFECTIVE: “DRUNK” GOGGLES

- Little to no long-term impact
- Research has shown no evidence of effectiveness
- Often part of one-time events



EFFECTIVE EDUCATION

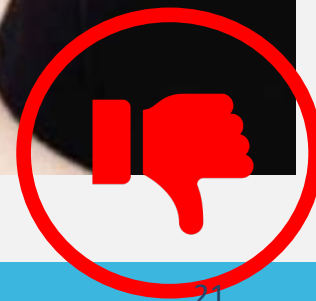
- Social emotional learning curricula in school
- Parenting programs focused on talking to and supporting youth
- Curricula proven to address risk and protective factors
- Age-appropriate information delivered over time
- Long-term education campaigns with a focused goal and audience





INEFFECTIVE APPEALS

- Fear-based campaigns
- Grotesque images
- Long-term consequences
- Exaggerated dangers
- Moralistic appeals



INEFFECTIVE: FEAR-BASED CAMPAIGNS

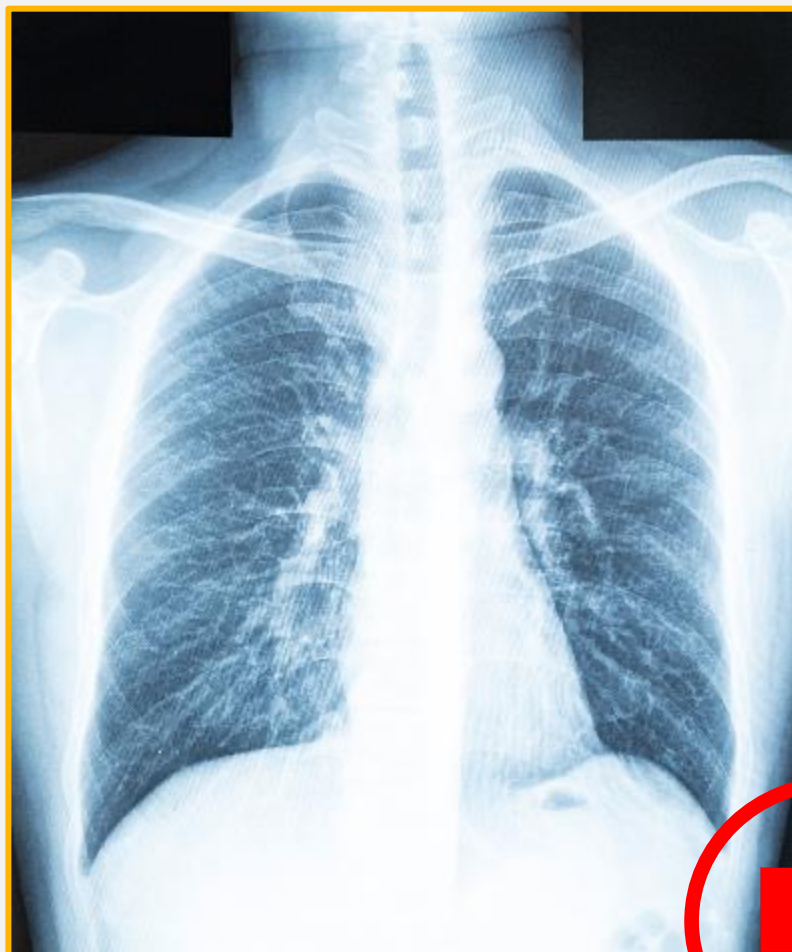
- Shown to be ineffective with most audiences
- Messages not developmentally appropriate
- Can backfire if experiences are contrary





INEFFECTIVE: LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

- Shown to be ineffective
- Outcome too far in the future to influence
- “It won’t happen to me”





INEFFECTIVE: EXAGGERATED DANGERS

- Loss of trust in prevention messages
- Can be counter to personal experiences
- Attitude of “indestructability” among youth and young adults



of 5 Panthers DO NOT drink alcohol

Join the Crowd!

Powered by Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Office of Prevention Services and Programs.

I got this!

I make my own choices. Like not drinking until I'm older. That's my choice for me. And it keeps me from doing something dumb. For more information on waiting to drink, visit IGotThisChicago.org

paact
PREVENTING ALCOHOL ABUSE
IN CHICAGO TEENS

Ann & Robert H. Lurie
Children's Hospital of Chicago

This campaign is supported by the Strategic Prevention Framework for the State of Illinois, funded by the Federal Government, the Illinois Department of Health, and the Illinois State Board of Education, in partnership with the Illinois Department of Health.

EFFECTIVE APPEALS

- Normative messages regarding peer use and actions
- Short-term impacts of use
- Positive effects of no use



INEFFECTIVE INFORMATION SHARING



- Knowledge-based interventions:
 - Drug fact sheets
 - Effects of drugs
- Myth busting





EFFECTIVE INFORMATION SHARING

- Education related to risk and protective factors
- Action-focused information





DISCUSSION

WHAT DRIVES CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF INEFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

- Perception that the interventions are “liked” by the audience
- Partners not open to change
- Partners insist on implementing despite evidence
- Individuals feel the strategy “worked for me”
- Concern regarding capacity and/or cost



QUESTIONS?
CLARIFICATIONS?

MOVING FORWARD...





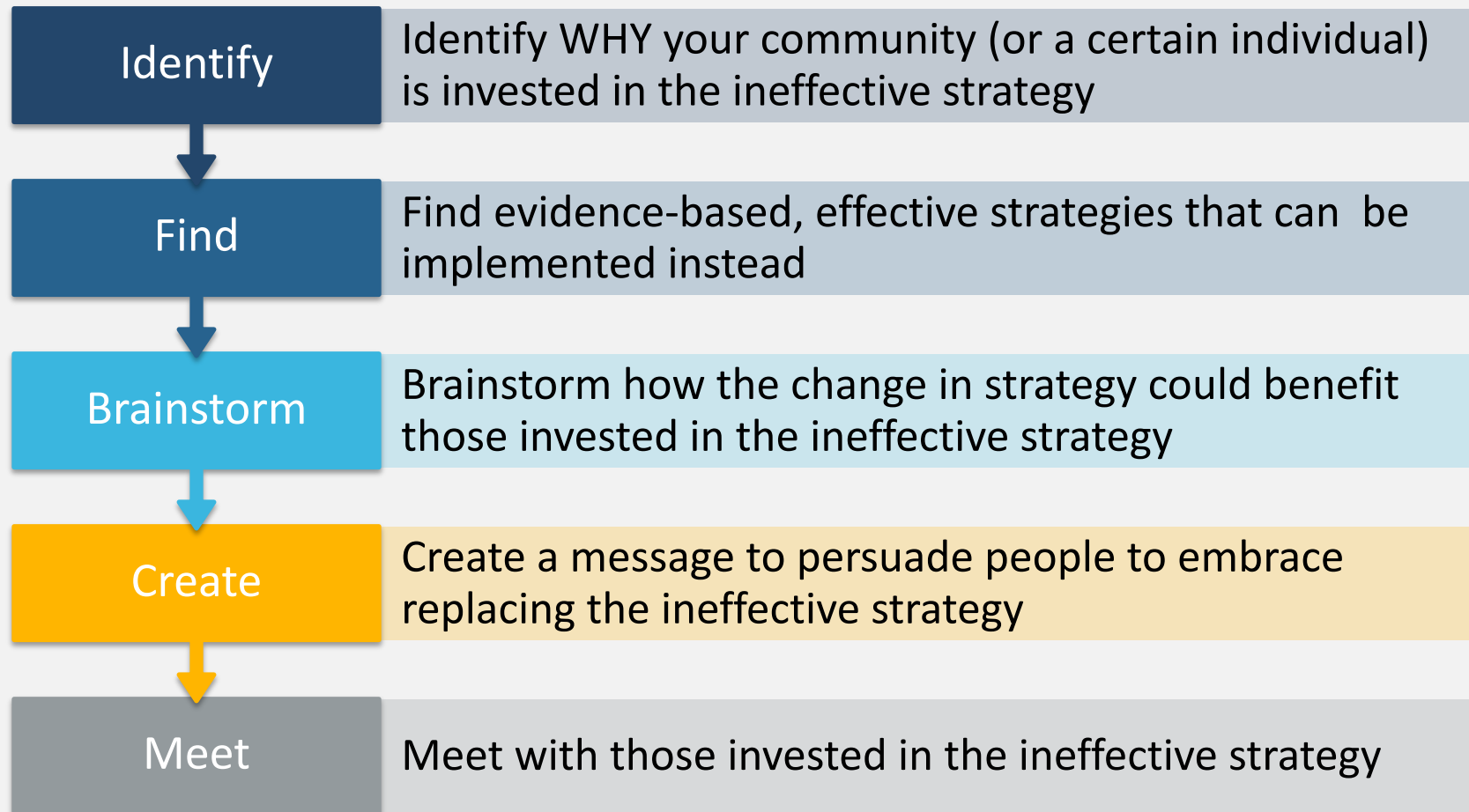
BUILDING AN UNDERSTANDING OF EFFECTIVE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Review your strategic plan, including the priority problems, risk/protective factors
- Provide training on logic models
- Identify evidence-based strategies that are a good fit for your community





STEPS TO MOVING TOWARD EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES





QUESTIONS?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Continuum of Evidence of Effectiveness

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/continuum-chart-a.pdf>

Guide to Online Registries for Substance Misuse Prevention

Pacific Southwest Prevention Technology Transfer Center

<https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/pacific-southwest-pttc/product/guide-online-registries-substance-misuse-prevention-evidence>

Ineffectiveness of Fear Appeals in Youth Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention Prevention First

[https://www.prevention.org/Resources/348ad797-5165-4695-885f-](https://www.prevention.org/Resources/348ad797-5165-4695-885f-1e958b8f5591/IneffectivenessofFearAppealsinYouthATODPrevention-FINAL.pdf)

[1e958b8f5591/IneffectivenessofFearAppealsinYouthATODPrevention-FINAL.pdf](https://www.prevention.org/Resources/348ad797-5165-4695-885f-1e958b8f5591/IneffectivenessofFearAppealsinYouthATODPrevention-FINAL.pdf)

Not Your Mother's Scare Tactics – Brief

Prevention Solutions@EDC

https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Not-Your-Mothers-Scare-Tactics-Brief-The-Changing-Landscape-of-Fear-based-Messaging_0.pdf

Prevention Tools: What Works, What Doesn't

Washington State Health Care Authority

<https://theathenaforum.org/best-practices-toolkit-prevention-tools-what-works-what-doesnt>

Webinar: Online Registries for Evidence-Based Substance Misuse Prevention: How to Conduct a Successful Search

Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) Network Coordinating Office

<https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/pttc-network-coordinating-office/product/online-registries-evidence-based-substance-misuse>

Webinar: What Does NOT Work in Prevention

Great Lakes Prevention Technology Transfer Center, March 2022

<https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/great-lakes-pttc/product/what-does-not-work-prevention>



THANK YOU

