

Using Change Theory to Address Problem Gambling

Change theories are crucial in public health for understanding and influencing behavior change to improve population health. Theories provide frameworks for designing, implementing, and evaluating interventions aimed at promoting healthy behaviors. These theories help identify factors that influence behavior, guide the selection of appropriate intervention strategies, and ultimately contribute to more effective and sustainable public health programs.

How Change Theories are Applied in Public Health:



Program Planning: Change theories provide a foundation for developing evidence-based interventions by guiding the selection of appropriate strategies and tailoring interventions to specific populations and contexts.



Intervention Design: Theories help identify key factors influencing behavior and inform the design of targeted interventions that address those factors.



Evaluation: Change theories provide a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of public health programs by specifying expected outcomes and mechanisms of change.



Community Engagement: Theories help understand community dynamics and involve community members in the design and implementation of interventions.



Policy Development: Change theories can inform policy development by identifying factors that influence policy adoption and implementation.

Examples of Applications:

Promoting Physical Activity:

Social Cognitive Theory can be used to design interventions that increase self-efficacy for exercise and provide opportunities for social support.

Preventing Substance Abuse:

The Stages of Change model can be used to tailor interventions to individuals' readiness to quit smoking or drinking.

Prevent Problem Gambling:

The Health Belief Model can be used to address misconceptions about vaccines and promote their acceptance.

Addressing Chronic Diseases:

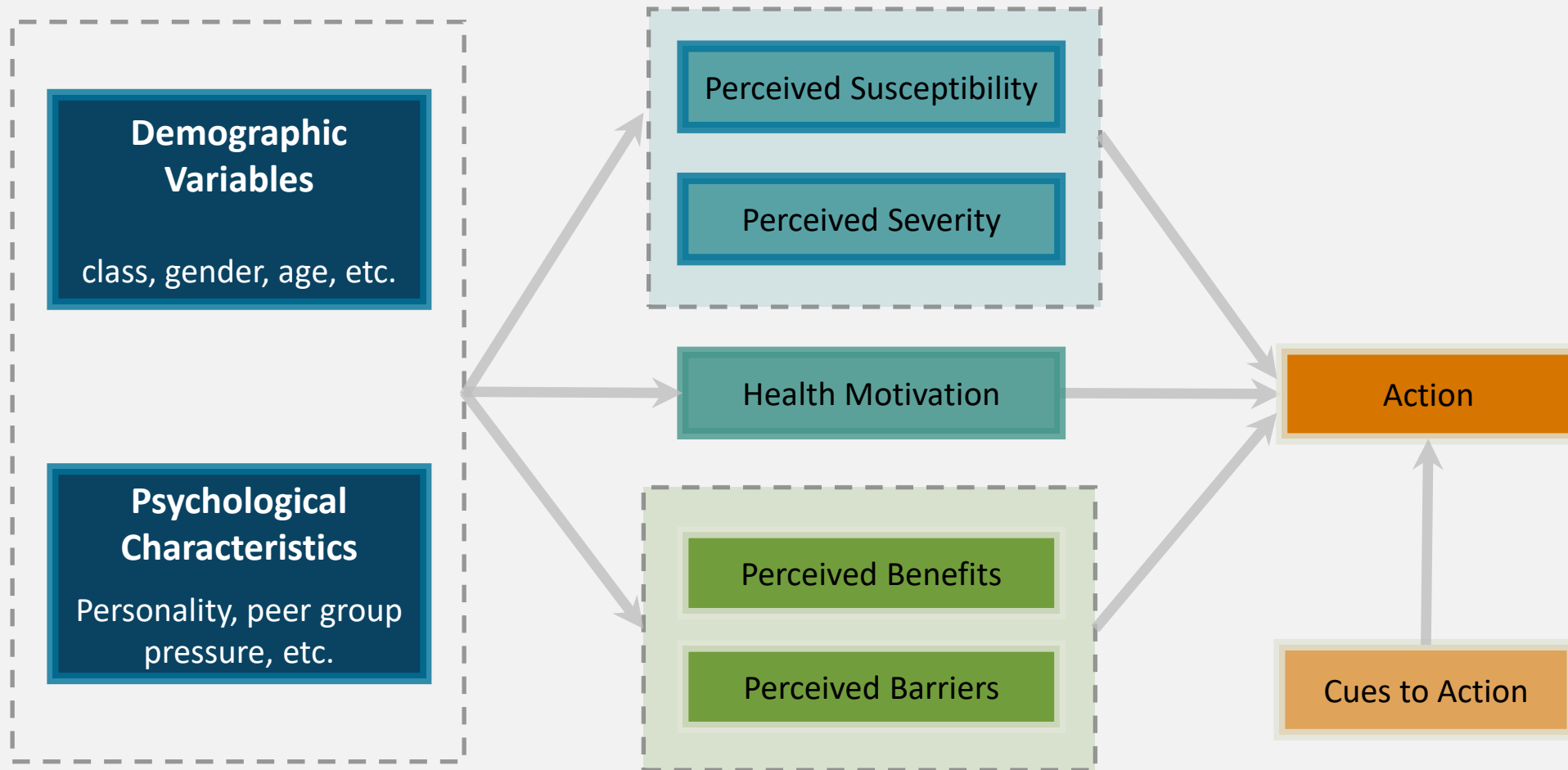
Theory of Health Behavior Change (ITHBC) can help manage chronic conditions through behavior changes related to diet, exercise, and medication adherence.

Change theories are essential tools for public health professionals to understand, predict, and influence behavior change to improve population health. By using these theories to inform program planning, intervention design, and evaluation, public health practitioners can develop more effective and sustainable interventions that promote positive health outcomes.

Using Change Theory to Plan Multilevel Interventions

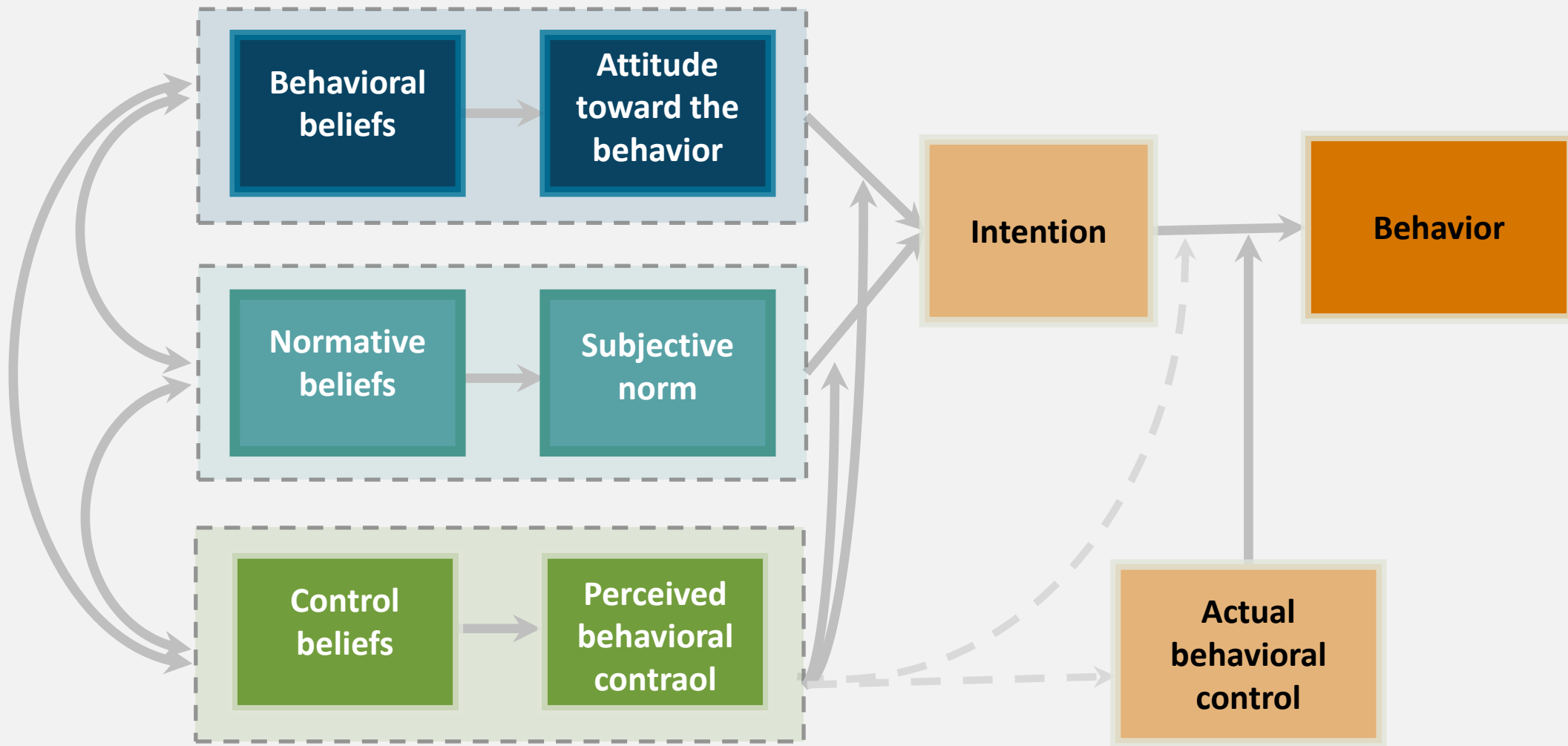


The Health Belief Model



Bourne, Paul & Sashane, Smith & Jhanelle, Peterson & Geraldine, Wynter & Danielle, Foster & James, Fallah & Campbell, Calvin & Foster, Clifton & McLean, Caroline & Russell, Parkes & Muchee, Tabitha. (2022). Fear and its Influence on the Healthcare Seeking Behaviour of Jamaicans during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic. Insights of Anthropology. 6. 10.36959/763/523.

The Theory of Planned Behavior



Martin, R. J., Usdan, S., Nelson, S., Umstattd, M. R., LaPlante, D., Perko, M., & Shaffer, H. (2010). Using the theory of planned behavior to predict gambling behavior. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 24(1), 89.

Change Theory as Applied to Problem Gambling

Stages of Change (Transtheoretical) Model describes individuals' motivation and readiness to change a behavior.

← *The behavior change model has been applied when trying to change all sorts of behaviors, including changing one's relationship with gambling. ^{1, 2}*

The Health Belief Model (HBM) addresses the individual's perceptions of the threat posed by a health problem (susceptibility, severity), the benefits of avoiding the threat, and factors influencing the decision to act (barriers, cues to action, and self-efficacy).

← *The HBM has been successfully applied to different health behaviors in many contexts, including clinical settings for problem gambling. ³*

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) examines the relations between an individual's beliefs, attitudes, intentions, behavior, and perceived control over that behavior.

← *Studies on TPB find that subjective norms can have a negative impact on gambling intention and that gambling intention directly affects problem gambling severity. ⁴*

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) describes a dynamic, ongoing process in which personal factors, environmental factors, and human behavior exert influence upon each other.

← *SGT can shed light on how gambling exposure in various forms of media can affect attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. ⁴*

Communication Theory describes how different types of communication affect health behavior. It investigates how messages are created, transmitted, received, and assimilated. How do demonstrate or illustrate healthy skills; communication processes contribute to, or discourage, behavior change.

← *Gambling messaging is one potential component of a public health approach towards reducing gambling-related harm. Health communication use communication strategies to inform and influence individual behaviors have applied health communication to gambling. ^{5, 6}*

Diffusion of Innovations Theory addresses how new ideas, products, and social practices spread within an organization, community, or society, or from one society to another.

← *DOI can help us in developing evidence to support the widespread adoption of behavioral health innovations and in promoting the diffusion and implementation of evidence-based innovations ⁷*

Community Organization (CO) and Other Participatory Models (PM) emphasize community-driven approaches to assessing and solving health and social problems

← *CO approaches that involve mobilizing the entire community tend to be more effective for gambling than outside-imposed approaches. PM focuses on the context and environment where gambling is taking place through a broad range of strategies. ^{8, 9, 10}*

References from Change Theory

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3. Tong, K. K., Chen, J. H., & Wu, A. M. (2019). Application of health belief model to practice of responsible gambling. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 35(3), 1047-1062.
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Resources



Theory at a Glance: Application to Health Promotion and Health Behavior (Second Edition), describes influential theories of health-related behaviors, processes of shaping behavior, and the effects of community and environmental factors on behavior. Health promotion is broadly defined as the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. Thus, the focus goes beyond traditional primary and secondary prevention programs.

Theory at A Glance: A Guide for Health Promotion, available at [11-0218 NCI Theory Book.1c](#)