

Primary Prevention: Community Level



Primary prevention prioritizes stopping sexual violence before it ever has the chance to occur.

- Primary prevention efforts can be implemented on the individual, relationship, community, or societal level.
- Primary prevention shifts the responsibility from individuals protecting themselves from harm (such as carrying pepper spray or using the phones at blue lights on campuses) to society addressing factors that make violence more or less likely to occur. These are also known as risk or protective factors.

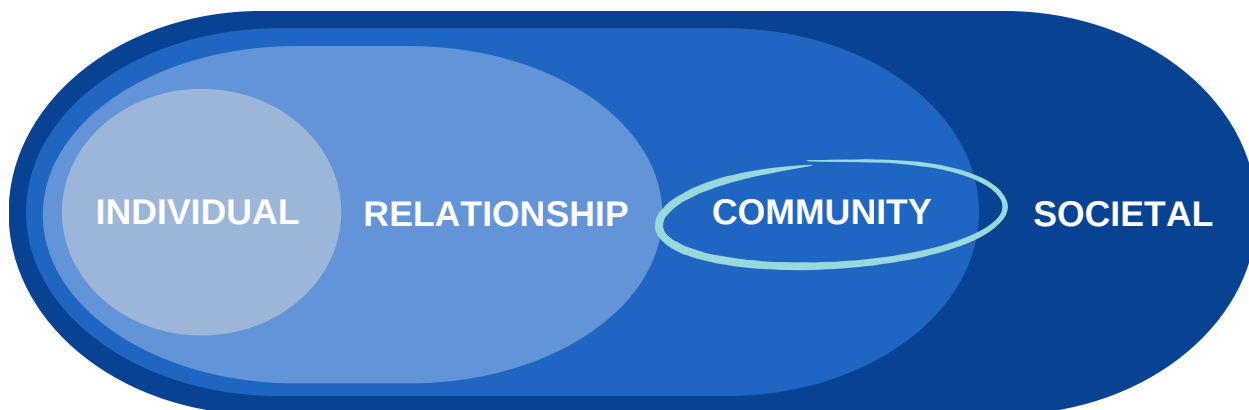
WHAT IS COMMUNITY LEVEL PREVENTION?

Community level prevention addresses risk and protective factors at the community level, with the intention of reducing the likelihood of violence at the individual and relationship levels.

It also lends itself to a culture of societal transformation that promotes equity, consent, and autonomy.

Community level prevention “focus[es] on improving the physical and social environment in these settings ... and ... addressing other conditions that give rise to violence in communities (e.g., neighborhood poverty, residential segregation and instability, high density of alcohol outlets.” (CDC, 2022)

SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL MODEL



NJCASA'S APPROACH TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

CENTERING ANTI-OPPRESSION AND ANTI-RACISM

We understand that historical inequities such as racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and others increase instances of sexual violence within certain populations, and this is compounded when people have multiple marginalized identities. This is why NJCASA recommends an **intersectional approach that centers on the lived experience of folks from historically marginalized communities** when making recommendations for the anti-sexual violence movement.

PRIORITIZING HEALTH EQUITY:

- Focuses on the health and well-being of entire populations.
- Is multi-disciplinary.
- Identifies risk and protective factors.
- Is informed by the lived experience of individuals in the community.

"[A] health equity framework can prevent sexual violence by addressing root causes of violence and inequity, expanding partnerships, and addressing systems that exacerbate inequities." (Valor, 2021)



RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS:

characteristics that increase or decrease the likelihood that an individual will be the "victim or perpetrator of violence." (CDC, 2022)

EXAMPLES OF THE COMMUNITY LEVEL APPROACH:

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| • Poverty | ➔ | • Create a coalition with local food banks, schools, and trade schools. |
| • General tolerance of sexual violence in the community | ➔ | • Organize a social media campaign focused on areas with high levels of street harassment. |
| • Weak community sanctions against perpetrators of sexual violence | ➔ | • Work with local survivor-led groups to create a transformative justice model to address harm. |

REFERENCES

Aldridge L, Bhat M, Orton S & Levy-Peck, JY (2021), *Collective Power: A Practical Blueprint for Sexual Assault Programs to Create Community Partnerships and Collaborations*. Sacramento, CA: ValorUS.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, January 18). *The social-ecological model: A framework for prevention | violence prevention | injury Center | CDC*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention