



Using Essential Elements to Select, Adapt, and Evaluate Violence Prevention Approaches

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Division of Violence Prevention





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Introduction

How Does the Division of Violence Prevention Support Efforts to Prevent Violence?

The mission of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Division of Violence Prevention is to prevent injuries, deaths, and other health consequences that result from violence. The Division’s efforts focus on factors that place people at risk for and protect them from child maltreatment, youth violence, teen dating violence, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, suicide, and elder maltreatment. The Division’s work involves helping state and local partners plan, implement, and evaluate evidence-based prevention approaches. CDC’s ultimate goal is to stop violence before it begins, and most of CDC’s prevention efforts focus on influencing factors that are associated with violence perpetration.

How Does the Division of Violence Prevention Frame Violence Prevention?

Preventing violence requires understanding the factors that influence it. CDC uses a four-level social-ecological model to better understand violence and the effects of potential prevention approaches. This model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal influences on risk and protective factors. It allows us to understand the range of factors that put people at risk for or protect them from experiencing or perpetrating violence.

CDC’s Technical Packages for Violence Prevention

A technical package is a collection of strategies that represent the best available evidence to prevent or reduce public health problems like violence. They can help improve the health and well-being of communities.

A technical package has three parts. The **strategy** lays out the direction or actions to achieve the goal of preventing violence. The **approach** includes the specific ways to advance the strategy. This can be accomplished through programs, policies, and practices. The **evidence** for each of the approaches in preventing violence or its associated risk factors is included as the third component.

In this guidance we use the terminology from the Division’s technical packages to refer to prevention approaches at the individual, relationship, community and societal levels.

Figure 1A. Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Violence

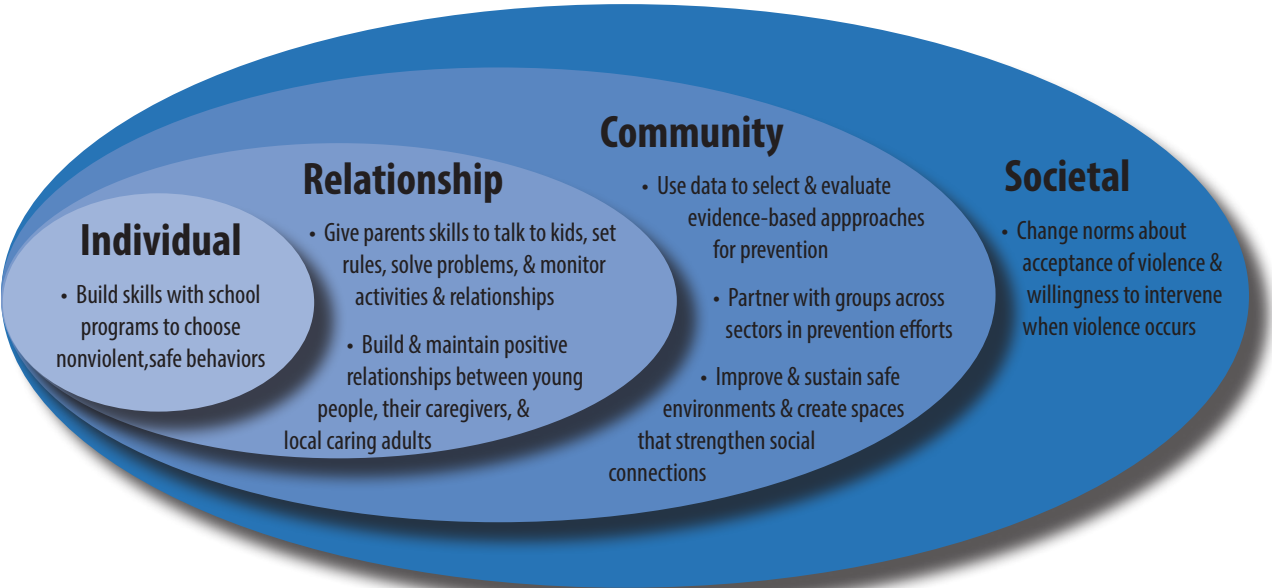


Figure 1B. Risk and Protective Factors for Child Maltreatment

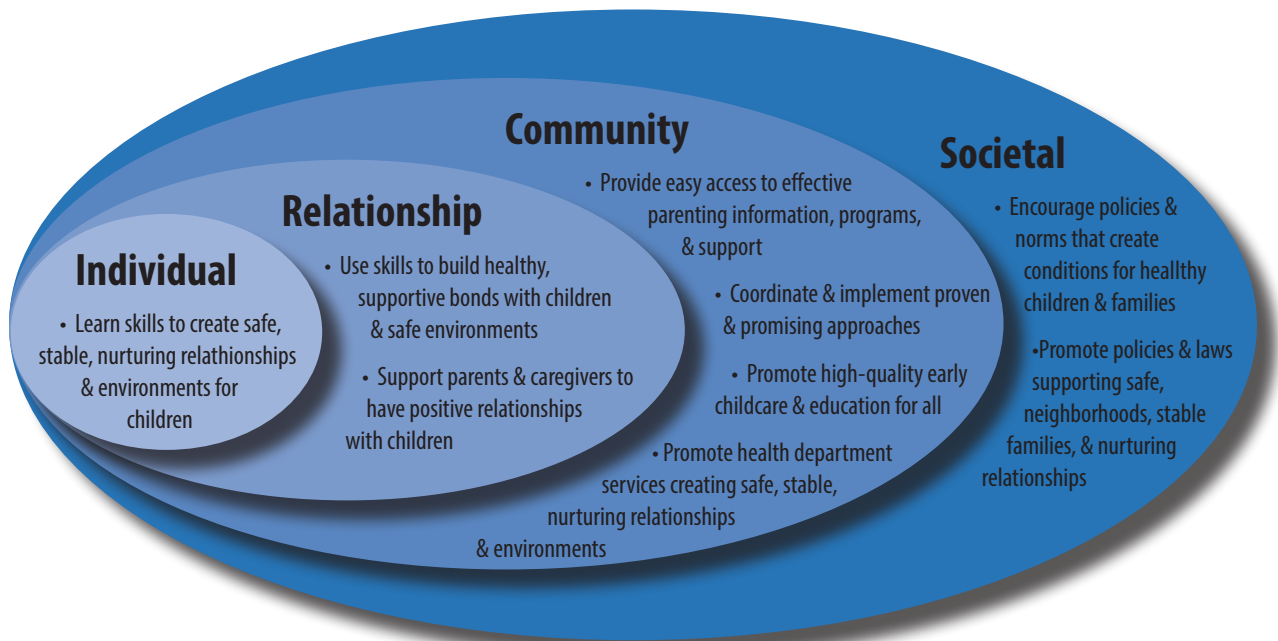


Figure 1A shows risk and protective factors for youth violence at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels, and Figure 1B shows these factors for child maltreatment. *Risk factors* are things that make it more likely that people will experience violence. *Protective factors* are things that make it less likely that people will experience violence or that increase resiliency when they are faced with risk factors. The overlapping rings in the model illustrate how factors at one level influence factors at another level.

Risk and protective factors can affect an entire community. Both can occur in interactions with family and friends and within organizations and systems like schools, faith institutions, and workplaces. Individual experiences or traits can also be risk or protective factors.¹ Learn more about risk and protective factors at www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/connecting_dots.html.

What are Evidence-based Prevention Approaches?

Violence prevention approaches that have been evaluated in one or more research studies and associated with intended changes in outcomes are generally referred to as evidence-based. The term *evidence-based* can refer to a range of evidence from emerging support through a single study to strong support through multiple studies. Evidence-based prevention approaches have promise for creating changes in violence outcomes if they are widely delivered as intended.^{2,3,4}

Why Was this Guidance Developed?

Because each setting is unique, practitioners must often make decisions about how to balance delivering prevention approaches as intended with the reality of their local contexts. The Division of Violence Prevention developed this guidance to support this decision-making process.

How Was This Guidance Developed?

This guidance is based on a review of adaptation guidance from other public health and social service fields, studies exploring the adaptation of evidence-based approaches, and the Division's own study of adaptations in real-world settings. (See page 21 for a complete listing.) Examples and scenarios used throughout the guide are based on practitioners' insights and experiences related to delivering and adapting evidence-based approaches in real-world settings.

Who Is the Intended Audience for This Guidance and How Will It Help?


This guidance is for practitioners and will help explain how evidence-based approaches work and how this knowledge can be used to effectively select, deliver, adapt and evaluate approaches. Although this guidance was designed with *evidence-based* approaches in mind, it may also be useful for approaches supported by promising or emerging evidence.

Although the primary audience for this guidance is practitioners, it may also be useful for individuals and teams who provide training and technical assistance to practitioners who deliver evidence-based approaches and funders who provide resources to organizations and communities to support prevention approaches.

Glossary of Terms

We use certain terms throughout this guidance that are defined in the Glossary of Terms on page 27. Practitioners may use similar or different language to describe their selection, adaptation, and evaluation of prevention approaches, and the Glossary is intended to clarify how these terms are used within this guidance.

For simplicity, the term ***practitioner*** is used throughout the guide to refer to people and organizations delivering evidence-based approaches.



Evidence-based approaches for preventing violence include a range of programs, policies, and practices intended to influence risk and protective factors at the individual, relationship, community and societal levels.

Section 1: Understanding Evidence-based Approaches

What Types of Evidence-based Approaches Are Used to Prevent Violence?

Evidence-based approaches for preventing violence include a range of programs, policies, and practices intended to influence risk and protective factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. One common violence prevention approach uses *programs* that are typically designed to change people’s knowledge, skills, and behaviors and sometimes focus on factors that affect interpersonal relationships. Another set of prevention approaches includes policies, social media, community mobilization, and modifying the social and physical environment to change community and societal level factors that affect violence. We refer to these approaches as “community and societal approaches,” for the purpose of applying key concepts described within the guidance. Programs are often delivered using manualized curricula and training materials. Community and societal level approaches are often guided by a general set of principles, methods, and processes, but do not necessarily have a step-by-step manual.

What Is the Logic Behind Evidence-based Approaches?

At a basic level, most violence prevention approaches follow a logic similar to the one represented in Figure 2. Developers generally design a set of complementary activities—such as key messages, skills-building, design elements, and policy components—to achieve short- and long-term outcomes. The relationship between an approach’s activities and its intended outcomes can be depicted in a logic model (Figure 2). Logic models represent a series of *if, then relationships* (e.g., if I do these activities, then I expect these outcomes) and can be helpful in explaining how a prevention approach fundamentally works to create change.

Getting from activities to outcomes, however, assumes that an approach’s *essential elements* have been delivered fully and in a way that is consistent with the approach’s original design. *Essential elements* are the active ingredients of a prevention approach assumed to be responsible for achieving intended outcomes.

Figure 2. Logic Model





Essential elements are the active ingredients of a prevention approach assumed to be responsible for achieving intended outcomes.

Section 2: Understanding Essential Elements

What Are Essential Elements?

Essential elements are the active ingredients of a prevention approach assumed to be responsible for achieving intended outcomes.^{6,7,8} As shown in Figure 3 below, essential elements include **WHAT** approach content (e.g., messages, skills) and standards (e.g., design elements, policy components) should be delivered, **HOW** they should be delivered, and characteristics of **WHO** should ideally deliver or lead an approach. Essential elements are not discrete activities or components of an approach; rather, they are characteristics of approach activities and components that define how an approach is intended to influence risk and protective factors and violence outcomes. Figure 3 Shows the essential elements—the **WHAT**, **HOW**, and **WHO**—of programs and community and societal level approaches. Estimating essential elements can help practitioners select approaches and guide decisions about program delivery and adaptations that help maintain fidelity and achieve outcomes in a variety of unique local contexts.

Figure 3. Essential Elements

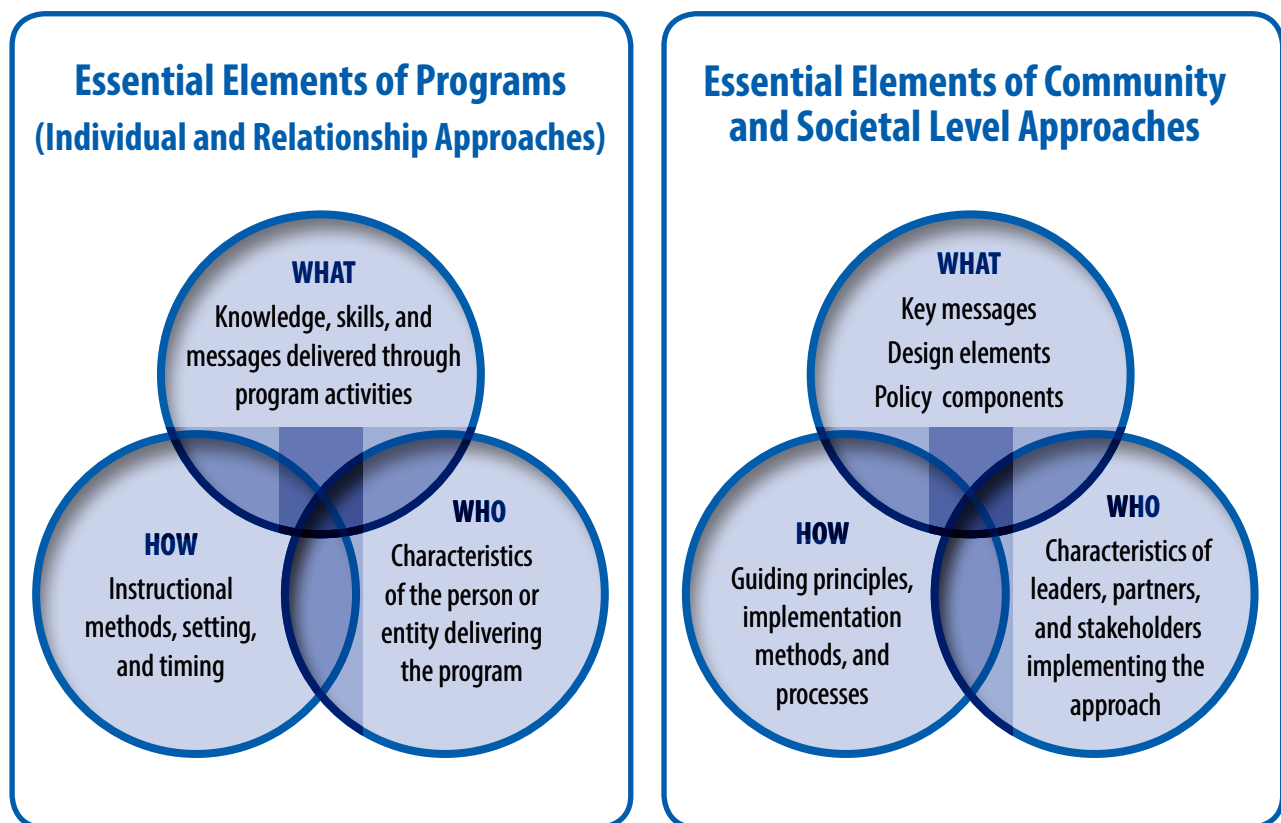




Table 1 provides one example of each type of essential element in a fictional program and an environmental approach designed to prevent youth violence. Approaches generally have a number of essential elements, and the examples below are not intended to be exhaustive.

Table 1. Examples of Essential Elements of a Program and an Approach to Modify the Environment to Prevent Youth Violence

	Examples of Essential Elements in a Program Designed to Prevent Youth Violence by Increasing Nonviolent Problem Solving Among Youth	Examples of Essential Elements of a Prevention Approach Designed to Prevent Youth Violence by Modifying the Environment
WHAT	<p>Knowledge related to nonviolent problem-solving approaches.</p> <p>Skills to solve problems nonviolently.</p>	<p>Applying principles of environmental design (e.g., building fences) to define public and private property and enhance a sense of ownership, well-being, and safety.</p>
HOW	<p>Using interactive teaching methods, like large group discussion and role play to promote youth engagement.</p>	<p>Partners consider a broad array of problems, like poverty, not just crime.</p>
WHO	<p>The Implementer should be creative and flexible and understand tenants of youth empowerment.</p>	<p>Leaders and partners should work or and/or live in the community and be committed to collaborating with local agencies</p>

Section 3: Estimating Essential Elements

Once practitioners identify approach activities and the outcomes these activities are designed to achieve, an approach's essential elements can be estimated. In some cases, the essential elements of an approach have been identified by the approach's developer. If they are not already identified, or if they seem unclear, practitioners can use *Worksheet 1. Estimating Essential Elements of Programs* (see Appendix A, page 30) for programs or *Worksheet 2. Estimating Essential Elements of Community and Societal Level Approaches* (see Appendix A, page 31) to roughly estimate an approach's essential elements. The purpose of estimating essential elements is to understand how a prevention approach is intended to work and the potential consequences of making changes that may affect the **WHAT**, **HOW**, and **WHO** of what makes a prevention approach work.

The following steps can help practitioners complete the worksheet:




-  Review and consider the common essential elements of programs and community and societal level approaches listed in Table 2 and Table 3. Keep in mind that examples listed in the tables are not exhaustive, so you may find that additional examples come to mind while reading through the list.
-  Refer to the approach's logic model, materials, or other documents that identify stated outcomes and how actions lead to outcomes. If no logic model is included, the process of building a logic model may also help identify essential elements. To learn more about building a logic model, visit CDC's VetoViolence resource at <http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov>.
-  Seek input from others who have experience with the approach, including previous program participants, practitioners, technical assistance providers, and funders.

Table 2. Considerations When Estimating Essential Elements of Programs

	Essential Elements	Why these are often essential	Examples
WHAT	Building knowledge of topic areas	Activities in many programs are designed to communicate key messages to increase knowledge and understanding.	Raising awareness that violence is a serious issue and has many negative impacts.
	Building skills	Activities in many programs are designed to teach skills that help prevent violence and promote positive behaviors.	Teaching non-violent problem-solving skills. Training on community engagement
HOW	Using recommended teaching methods	Approaches often recommend specific teaching methods to reinforce concepts.	Lecturing or using interactive methods like group discussion.
	Following sequence and timing	Activities often build on each other, and approaches may recommend delivery over a period of time, for a specified length, and that a minimum number of sessions is completed.	Completing a session that introduces concepts before role playing to practice. Delivering one 60-minute session each week for 10 weeks.
	Delivering in the ideal environment	Delivery in an environment that supports learning may enhance participant outcomes.	A safe, quiet environment in a community-based after-school program.
WHO	Practitioner possesses specific skills and experience	Practitioners who use recommended teaching methods and are comfortable with content are likely to fully deliver a program and clearly convey messages.	Practitioner has experience discussing key topics and working with young people and knows how to manage a classroom.
	Practitioner has credibility	A credible practitioner may increase participant receptivity to content and motivate participants to apply skills.	Practitioner is respected and trusted by participants because s/he shares similar life experiences.

Table 3. Considerations When Estimating Essential Elements of Community and Societal Approaches

	Essential Elements	Why these are often essential	Examples
WHAT	Key messages, design elements, and policy components	Effective social media campaigns, environmental design interventions, and policies often include key messaging, design elements, and components.	A key messages of a social media campaign designed to increase gender equitable norms is “gender stereotypes limit everyone, especially women and girls”; A policy component of a family- friendly work policy is paid parental leave; A design element of an environmental design project includes maintaining green spaces.
HOW	Guiding principles, approach, and methods	Community and social change approaches are often based on a set of principles or approach that partners agree to.	Collaborating with, rather than competing against other social movements; Establishing common measures of success with partners.
WHO	Approach leaders and partners	Specific types of people, organizations, and partnerships may be central to approach success.	Influential champions or opinion leaders who can sway opinion and technical experts who are committed to sharing resources.



Once practitioners understand an approach's essential elements, they can better assess the extent to which the approach is a good fit for their delivery setting or context and identify the types of changes that can be made in the approach to increase fit.

Section 4: Using Essential Elements to Assess Approach Fit and Guide Selection

Using Essential Elements Before and After a Approach Has Been Selected

Once practitioners understand an approach’s essential elements, they can better assess the extent to which the approach is a good fit for their delivery setting or context and identify the types of changes, if any, that can be made in the approach to increase fit. Understanding an approach’s essential elements is important and, as highlighted in Table 4, practitioners can use this information both to help decide which approach to select and to guide delivery once selected.

Table 4. Using Essential Elements to Guide Selection and Implementation

Before an approach has been selected	After an approach has been selected
Practitioners can use essential elements to determine fit between the approach and a delivery setting or context. The better the fit, the more likely that the approach will be successful and sustainable and the less likely organizations will need to significantly adapt the approach.	Practitioners can use essential elements to help guide changes or adaptations, if any, to increase fit. Changes that support essential elements will make it more likely that the approach will be successful and sustainable.

Considerations When Assessing Fit

When considering which approach to select, you may want to examine a number of factors related to the approach itself, including the following:

- The strength and quality of evidence of its effectiveness.
- The availability of implementation guidance and evaluation tools.
- Amount of training and technical assistance needed to successfully deliver the approach.
- The cost of adopting and sustaining the approach.



Online databases, such as the [National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices](#), [What Works Clearinghouse](#), [Youth.gov](#), and the [OJJDP Model Program Guide](#), can also help practitioners learn more about these factors. Many registries focus on programs, so you may need to access additional resources to identify community and social changes approaches. You can also access CDC-developed technical packages that describe violence prevention approaches across the social ecology by violence topic such as [child maltreatment](#), [sexual violence](#) and [youth violence](#).

You also may want to consider a number of characteristics related to approach participants, leaders, supporting organizations, and the setting in which the approach will be delivered. There are many ways to learn about these characteristics, including the three listed in Table 5.




Table 5. Methods for Learning about the Context in Which Approaches are Implemented

Method	General Description
Community needs and strength assessment	A community assessment is a way of asking community members what they see as the most important needs and strengths of that group or community. It can include informal data collection (e.g., conversations with neighbors) and formal data collection methods (e.g., surveys). Generally, the needs that are prioritized are the ones that the selected approach addresses.
Organizational capacity assessment	An organizational capacity assessment can be used as both a diagnostic and a learning tool to deepen an organization's understanding of their human and material resources (e.g., staff skills and experience, budgets, physical space).
Environmental scan	An environmental scan can be used to learn more about ongoing efforts that target similar goals or topic areas. An environmental scan can identify opportunities for supporting or building on these efforts and help avoid duplication.

Does the Approach Fit?

Once identified, considerations related to the approach and the characteristics of the context in which the approach will be delivered can, in turn, be compared with the essential elements of a given approach to assess fit, or the extent to which essential elements are important and can be supported or carried out. Table 6 provides examples of how essential elements can be used to assess fit in a given context.

Table 6. Does the Approach Fit?

W H A T	Knowledge, skills, messages, design elements, or policy components of an approach		Participant or community needs and strengths?
H O W	Teaching methods, guiding principles, setting, or timing		Existing organizational capacity (e.g., staff, time, and resources)?
W H O	Characteristics of who should ideally deliver, lead, or partner during approach delivery		Skills, values, and experience of current or future partners and staff?

Whether an approach has been selected or not, practitioners can use *Worksheet 3. Assessing Fit for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches* (see Appendix A, page 32) to consider the extent to which an approach’s estimated essential elements can be supported in their context and to identify ways to increase fit by making changes, or adaptations, if necessary, that support essential elements. Adaptations are discussed in more detail in the next section.



Using a traffic light framework can help describe whether an adaptation likely supports essential elements or does not.

Section 5: Delivery and Adaptation

Making Adaptations

Whether practitioners are using essential elements to help select an approach or whether the approach has already been chosen, practitioners may need to make some adjustments, or adaptations, to increase the fit of the approach for their setting and respond to local opportunities and constraints. Adaptations refer to changes made to an evidence-based approach, including additions, deletions, modifications, and reordering.

Based on a review of studies exploring local adaptation in approaches designed for substance abuse prevention,^{9,10,11} substance abuse and violence prevention,^{12,13} and family and community strengthening,^{14,15} as well as the Division of Violence Prevention's own study of local adaptations,^{16,17} practitioners make adaptations for a number of reasons, including the following:

- To increase relevancy of material and participant understanding.
- To increase participant participation.
- To create or maintain relationships with participants.
- To respond to limited time and resources.

In some cases, adaptations may support essential elements, and in other cases they may not.

Green and Red Light Adaptations

Using a traffic light framework¹⁸ can help easily describe whether an adaptation likely supports essential elements or does not. For example, an adaptation that is designed to emphasize a key message by extending the length of a discussion likely supports essential elements and is a good, or “green light,” adaptation. An adaptation that shortens or skips an important discussion without integrating it into a subsequent session is likely a poor, or “red light,” adaptation.

Tables 7 and 8 provide examples of adaptations and two possible outcomes of the adaptation. One outcome is green light because it likely supports essential elements, and one outcome is red light because it likely does not support essential elements or changes how they work together.

What About Yellow Light Adaptations?

Whether an adaptation is red or green may not always be clear, so some adaptations may seem like “yellow-light” adaptations. In these cases, you may be able to seek input from fellow practitioners, technical assistance providers, or developers and explore whether research evidence about the outcomes of a particular adaptation exists. As with all adaptations, tracking and evaluating will provide more information about the extent to which a specific adaptation supports essential elements.

An example of a yellow light adaptation for a *program* is adding content to a parenting program intended to promote positive parenting skills and prevent child maltreatment. Practitioners may want to add topics that are not covered in the curriculum to address specific concerns raised by parents in the group. On the one hand, adding topics to address parent concerns may promote their engagement in the group and provide helpful information. On the other hand, adding topics may result in shortening or removing some of the program's essential content and could include information that is inconsistent with essential program messages.



An example of a yellow light adaptation for a *community-level approach* is using adult volunteers in addition to school staff to monitor campus “hot spots” for physical fights to promote a safe school environment. On the one hand, using adult volunteers may provide greater coverage of hot spots and alleviate the burden on teachers and administrators who have competing demands. On the other hand, bringing in adults who do not have a relationship with students and may not know the overall school climate may result in unintended consequences such as undermining students’ sense of school connectedness.

Table 7. Examples of Red and Green Adaptations for Programs

	Essential Elements	Adaptation	May be green light if...	May be red light if...
WHAT	The session should increase understanding that violence is a serious problem.	Implementer changes a brief lecture about violence into group conversation.	Key messages and activities about violence are delivered and the discussion is well managed.	Participants talk over one another and key messages and activities are contradicted.
HOW	Each session should be delivered for 60 minutes.	To develop rapport with participants, the implementer delivers for 90 minutes.	Participants are engaged in activities and become more comfortable with implementer.	Participants express disinterest and discomfort.
WHO	The practitioner should be at ease discussing content and facilitating discussion.	A substitute delivers a session.	The substitute understands and buys into the key messages and delivers them in an engaging manner.	The substitute does not believe in the key messages of the session and reads the curriculum verbatim.

Table 8. Examples of Red and Green Light Adaptations for Community and Societal Approaches

	Essential Elements	Adaptation	May be green light if...	May be red light if...
WHAT	Build and paint fences to define public and private property and enhance a sense of ownership, well-being and safety.	Instead of building fences, partners propose planting fruit trees, bushes, and flowers to delineate public and private spaces.	Partners agree that the boundaries do not have to be immediately visible and can wait 1–2 years for growth.	The types of trees, bushes, and flowers chosen require attention and resources that will not be available in order to thrive.
HOW	Collaborate with, rather than compete against, other social movements.	Partners decide to hold a bake sale to generate revenue to help offset costs for plants.	Baked goods that will be sold are made by a local job skills training center and profits will be split evenly between both groups.	The bake sale is held on the same day as an all-day fundraiser for the local job skills training center.
WHO	Partner with groups that can share resources and are committed to collaboration.	A partnership with local farmers is launched.	Farmers are eager and excited to provide seeds, shrubs, and volunteer time.	Farmers support the idea, but cannot share resources to help.



Adaptation Timing

Adaptations may be made to the approach *prior* to delivery (before the approach is implemented in a local setting) or *during* delivery. In this document, we use the terms *planned* adaptations and *field* adaptations to describe *when* the adaptation was conceived.

Planned adaptations are designed to leverage existing opportunities and respond to existing constraints, and they often apply to the entire approach rather than to a specific activity. Examples of planned adaptations in program and community and social change approaches include:

- Tailoring most or all activities in a program so they are responsive to the culture(s) of the participant group.
- As part of a community and social change approach, working with nontraditional partners, like local farmers, who will provide plants to help delineate public and private spaces.

Activities listed in *Worksheet 3. Assessing Fit for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches* (see Appendix A, page 32) to increase fit may include adaptations that require some thought about whether they should be integrated into an approach. *Worksheet 4. Planning Green Light Adaptations for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches* (see Appendix A, page 33) can be used to assess whether these adaptations should be integrated into an approach and, if so, how to integrate them.

Field adaptations include adaptations made to a specific activity or component in response to opportunities and constraints that *occur during delivery*. Examples of field adaptations in programs and community and societal approaches include:

- Shortening the length of one session because of a fire drill and adding the skipped content to a subsequent session.
- Using newly awarded funding to offer paid summer employment opportunities instead of volunteer opportunities for young people engaged in physical redesign projects.

Worksheet 5. Making Green Light and Avoiding and Red Light Adaptations for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches (see Appendix A, page 35) is designed to help practitioners identify field adaptations that may come up during delivery and group them, using a traffic light framework, according to whether they do or do not support essential elements.





Tracking and evaluating adaptations is important because findings can be used to improve approach delivery or explain approach outcomes.

Section 6: Tracking and Evaluating Adaptations

Tracking and evaluating adaptations involves documenting adaptations and assessing whether they support essential elements and how they impact approach outcomes. Tracking and evaluating adaptations is important because findings can be used to improve approach delivery or explain approach outcomes. Adaptations can be tracked and evaluated in both formal and informal ways.

Tracking Adaptations

Adaptations can be tracked at any time during delivery to provide a snapshot of the kinds of adaptations that are occurring and their immediate impact (e.g., participant responses to adaptations). Informal tracking methods can include meetings with approach leaders, partners, and recipients to learn more about the reasons for and real-time impacts of adaptations. Simple tracking tools can help practitioners highlight and reflect on immediate challenges, successes, and areas for improvement related to adaptations.

Worksheet 6. Tracking and Evaluating Adaptations for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches (see Appendix A, page 36) can be used to informally collect and evaluate planned and field adaptations. Practitioners can use information from completed worksheets to decide whether adaptations should continue, or not, and whether adaptations require additional adjustments.

Evaluating Adaptations

Formal evaluation typically happens at multiple points in time during approach implementation and includes systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of adaptation data. Formal evaluation methods can include conducting focus groups, interviews, and surveys with approach leaders, partners, and recipients to learn more about the reasons for and impacts of adaptations. Adaptations can also be systematically evaluated by conducting observations and asking implementers to self-report on adaptations made during sessions.

Although formal evaluation generally requires dedicated resources like staff time, a computer, and software that can store and analyze the data, it can provide an in-depth assessment of implementation quality. Over time, adaptation data can be linked to outcome data to explain how adaptations impact approach outcomes. Data about adaptations and adherence to essential elements can also be used to address longer-term delivery challenges and opportunities for improvement.

The *Sample Evaluation Tools for Programs* can be used to assess the extent to which essential elements are maintained during each session in an educational approach.

These tools can be used “as is,” or they can be customized to include estimated essential elements from a given approach. They can be used for individual sessions as standalone tools or can be used in combination with other tools in the Sample Evaluation Tools section.



Program Evaluation Tool 1. Tracking and Reflecting on Adaptations

This section can be used by an observer or implementer to track adaptations and record overall impressions during a given session. This section can be copied and used for individual sessions as a standalone tool or, it can be used in combination with other sections in this document.

Observer Name: _____ **Implementer Name:** _____

Session #: _____ **Date:** _____

Activity	Complete?	Describe changes, if any, and general impressions about delivery and participant response.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Program Evaluation Tool 2. Assessing Implementer–Participant Relationship¹⁹

The questions below ask an observer to think about how the implementer delivered the session and his or her relationship with participants. This tool can be used by an observer as is, or it can be tailored to reflect the essential elements of a specific prevention approach. If there is more than one implementer, you can answer the questions about the primary implementer or make additional copies of this tool to assess the participant–implementer relationship across all implementers.

- 1. In your opinion, what was the overall quality of the implementer–participant relationship? Refer to the examples of negative and positive implementer behaviors below to help you rate.**

Examples of POSITIVE group leader behaviors		Examples of NEGATIVE group leader behaviors	
Used respectful language and a warm tone of voice. Encouraged all participants to participate, did not talk over them, and validated contributions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Was rude or short with participants; ignored, dismissed, put down, or embarrassed participants; talked over participants; did not validate participants' contributions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrated genuine interest in helping participants succeed; showed an interest in participants beyond what happened in class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Showed little interest in participants; did not interact with them beyond what was outlined in the session.	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 (Poor)	2 (Good)	3 (Exceptional)
Implementer demonstrated more negative than positive behaviors.	Implementer demonstrated mostly positive behaviors. Few negative behaviors, if any, were noted.	Implementer demonstrated positive behaviors throughout the session.



2. In your opinion, how responsive were participants to the implementer? Refer to the examples of negative and positive participants responses below to help you rate.

Example of POSITIVE participant response		Example of NEGATIVE participant response	
Participants' interaction with the implementer suggested they respected or felt attached to the implementer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participants' interaction with the implementer suggested that they did not respect or feel attached to the implementer.contributions.	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 (Poor)	2 (Good)	3 (Exceptional)
A majority of participants were disengaged or disruptive.	A majority of participants were engaged in most of the activities and appeared to interact positively with the implementer.	Almost all of the participants were consistently engaged in the activities and appeared to have a strong positive relationship with the implementer.

Program Evaluation Tool 3. Assessing Delivery Methods, Timing, and Setting²⁰

Essential elements identified in Worksheet #1 related to WHO delivers the approach and HOW they deliver the approach may include aspects of teaching methods and logistics that are assessed in the tool below. This tool can be used by an observer as is, or it can be edited to include estimated essential elements from Worksheet #1, to help practitioners assess how well these elements are supported and the overall quality of session delivery. This can be copied and used for individual sessions as a standalone tool, or it can be used in combination with other tools in this document.

1. Overall, how well do you think the implementer delivered the session? Refer to the examples of implementer behaviors below to help you rate.

Examples of NEGATIVE group leader behaviors		Examples of POSITIVE group leader behaviors	
Read word for word from the approach.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeared to be comfortable and familiar with the approach.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was frequently lost or did not make connections to session goals or previous content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Was able to relate new concepts to previous learning and connected the session to people in community and events when appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expressed ideas, beliefs, or attitudes that differed from or contradicted the intended messages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Changes made reinforced or enhanced the intended goals and objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did not focus discussion on main messages in the approach.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion was clear and focused most or all of the time.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did not manage time well and did not cover all main activities and concepts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Managed time well and covered main activities and concepts.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did not respond to verbal or visual cues from participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjusted teaching to respond to participants' developmental levels and verbal or visual cues from participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did not check in with participants to ensure they understood main points.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensured all main points were understood by participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changed interactive activities into individual activities, or vice versa, when not appropriate; did not prompt group discussion when appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported and encouraged lively group interaction through hands-on activities and games included in the session.	<input type="checkbox"/>



Examples of NEGATIVE group leader behaviors		Examples of POSITIVE group leader behaviors	
Ignored or had difficulty correcting behavior that violated norms (e.g., leader allowed sidebar conversations, negative comments, and disruptive behavior).	<input type="checkbox"/>	Responded promptly and appropriately to incidences of misbehavior (e.g., redirected participants to established group norms).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Showed little interest in the approach; appeared to be just checking off activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeared to be enthusiastic about approach content and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 (Poor)	2 (Good)	3 (Exceptional)
Implementer demonstrated more negative than positive behaviors.	Implementer demonstrated mostly positive behaviors. Few negative behaviors were present.	Implementer demonstrated positive behaviors throughout the session.

2. In your opinion, to what extent did the setting support learning? Refer to the examples of positive and negative setting characteristics below to help you rate.

Examples of NEGATIVE setting characteristics		Example of POSITIVE setting characteristics	
There were frequent disruptions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	The setting was quiet.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The arrangement of the room (chairs and tables) made it difficult for participants to fully engage with the implementer and with each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	The arrangement of the room supported participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The location of the setting or timing of the session made it difficult for participants to attend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	The setting was accessible and the session was at a convenient time.	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 (Setting did not support learning)	2 (Setting supported learning)	3 (Setting enhanced learning)
The setting had more negative than positive characteristics.	The setting had mostly positive characteristics. Few negative characteristics were present.	The setting included all positive characteristics.

3. To what extent did the implementer follow recommended timing for the session? Refer to the examples of positive and negative timing characteristics below to help you rate.

Examples of NEGATIVE timing characteristics		Example of POSITIVE timing characteristics	
The session was delivered for less than the recommended length of time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	The session was delivered for the recommended length of time.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The session components were delivered out of order.	<input type="checkbox"/>	The session components were delivered in the recommended sequence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The session was delivered too close to or too far apart from the previous session.	<input type="checkbox"/>	The session was delivered in the recommended length of time after the previous session.	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 (Timing did not support learning)	2 (Timing supported learning)	3 (Timing enhanced learning)
The session timing had more negative than positive characteristics.	The session timing had mostly positive characteristics. Few negative characteristics were present.	The session timing included all positive characteristics.



Program Evaluation Tool 4. Assessing Delivery of Essential Knowledge, Messages, and Skills

Practitioners can assess how well essential knowledge, messages, and skills identified in Worksheet #1 were supported in each session by using the template below. An observer can use this section to observe the extent to which the implementer delivered key messages, knowledge, and skills-building activities. A post-test or follow-up survey can be given to participants to assess the extent to which skills were built and knowledge and messages were retained. This tool can be copied and used for individual sessions as a standalone tool, or it can be used in combination with other tools in this document.

If the session was designed to communicate key messages to participants, what were they? (Refer to worksheet #1)	To what extent were key messages communicated?	Not at all	Somewhat	Fully
If the session was designed to increase knowledge among participants, what were participants expected to learn? (Refer to worksheet #1)	To what extent was essential knowledge (facts, ideas) communicated?	Not at all	Somewhat	Fully
If the session was designed to increase certain skills, what were they? (Refer to worksheet #1)	To what extent were skills-building activities delivered?	Not at all	Somewhat	Fully

Glossary of Terms as Used in this Guidance Document

Adaptation: A change made to an evidence-based approach, including additions, deletions, modifications, and reordering.

Approaches Intended to Influence Social and Environmental: Policies, social media campaigns, community mobilization, and modifying the social and physical environment, which are typically designed to influence social and environmental conditions that affect violence.

Community needs and strength assessment: An activity designed to ask of asking community members what they see as the most important needs and strengths of that group or community. It can include informal data collection (e.g., conversations with neighbors) and formal data collection methods (e.g., surveys). Generally, the needs that are prioritized are the ones that the selected approach addresses.

Environmental scan: An activity designed to identify ongoing efforts that target similar goals or topic areas as the approach under consideration. An environmental scan can identify opportunities for supporting or building on these efforts and help avoid duplication.

Essential elements: The active ingredients of a prevention approach assumed to be responsible for achieving intended outcomes. Essential elements include *WHAT* approach actions should be delivered, *HOW* they should be delivered, and characteristics of *WHO* should ideally deliver or lead an approach.

Evidence-Based: Programs and community and societal approaches that have been evaluated in one or more research studies and associated with intended changes in outcomes.

Fidelity: The extent to which 1) program objectives are met, 2) the recommended content of the program is delivered, 2) each program component is delivered using recommended teaching methods, 4) participants are engaged and responsive, and 5) unique and important features of the program are present.

Field adaptations: Adaptations made to a specific activity or component in response to opportunities and constraints that *occur during delivery*.

Fit: The extent to which essential elements are important and can be supported or carried out in a given context.

Formal tracking and evaluation: Activities used to systematically assess implementation quality over time. Adaptation data from formal tracking and evaluation can be linked to outcome data to help explain how adaptations affect approach outcomes.

Green light adaptation: A change that likely supports essential elements and may be made.



Informal tracking and evaluation: Activities used to track implementation at any time during approach delivery. Adaptation data from informal tracking and evaluation can provide a snapshot of adaptations that are occurring and their immediate impact.

Organizational capacity assessment: A diagnostic and learning tool used to deepen an organization's understanding of its human and material resources (e.g., staff skills and experience, budgets, physical space).

Planned adaptation: A change that is conceived and designed *prior to approach delivery* to leverage existing opportunities and respond to existing constraints. Planned adaptations often apply to the entire approach rather than to a specific activity.

Practitioner: Individuals and organizations delivering evidence-based approaches.

Program: Typically designed to change people's knowledge, skills, and behaviors; sometimes focuses on factors that affect interpersonal relationships. This approach is often delivered using manualized curricula

Protective factors: Characteristics that directly increase the likelihood or provide a buffer against risk to decrease the likelihood of a person becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

Red light adaptation: A change that likely does not support essential elements and should not be made.

Risk factors: Characteristics that increase the likelihood of a person becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

Social-ecological model: A 4-level model used to help us better understand violence and the effects of potential prevention approaches. This model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors.

Yellow light adaptations: An adaptation that is not clearly a red or green light.

Appendix: Worksheets



Worksheet 1. Estimating Essential Elements of Programs

Practitioners can use this worksheet to estimate essential elements of educational approaches. If the WHAT and HOW sections vary considerably by session, consider filling out one worksheet per approach session.

WHAT	Questions for Practitioners	Estimated Essential Elements
HOW	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What messages will be communicated? 2. What knowledge will be increased? 3. What skills will be developed? 	Session # _____
WHO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the recommended teaching methods? 2. How many sessions should be delivered, for how long, and over what period of time? 3. What setting and environment will best support learning? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What skills and experiences will help facilitators deliver essential content clearly? 2. What other characteristics, like credibility with participants, values, and buy-in, will help a facilitator successfully deliver the approach?

Worksheet 2. Estimating Essential Elements of Community and Societal Approaches

Practitioners can use this worksheet to estimate essential elements of community and social change approaches.

	Questions for Practitioners	Estimated Essential Elements
W H A T	What are the key messages, design elements, media, and policy components?	
H O W	What guiding principles, approaches, and processes are central to the approach's success?	
W H O	Which leaders and partners are central to the success of the approach, and what are their characteristics (e.g., technical expertise, ability to sway opinions)?	



Worksheet 3. Assessing Fit for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches

Practitioners can use this worksheet to consider the extent to which an approach fits a given context and actions that may increase fit.

	Estimated elements from worksheet #1	Consideration for fit	Is it a good fit?	If applicable, what actions that support essential elements can be taken to increase fit?*
W H A T		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The risk and protective factors the approach targets may not address all identified needs and strengths of the community or participants. 		
H O W		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The groups with which the approach has been evaluated may have different characteristics (e.g., language, culture, age) than current participants. The resources (space, time, supplies) recommended to deliver the approach sometimes differ from the resources available. The settings in which the approach was evaluated may have different characteristics (e.g., rural, urban, after-school) than the current delivery setting. 		
W H O		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The training, experience, and values of implementing staff or partners may vary from what the approach recommends. 		

*Actions may be adaptations to the approach. Read Section 5. *Delivery and Adaptation* to learn more about making adaptations.

Worksheet 4. Planning Green Light Adaptations for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches

This worksheet is designed to help practitioners plan green light adaptations that can increase the fit of a given approach. It asks practitioners to think about whether planned adaptations listed in *Worksheet 3. Assessing Fit for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches*, are green light. Considerations for designing and integrating these planned adaptations into an approach are listed below the worksheet.

If applicable, what activities that support essential elements can be conducted to increase fit? (From Worksheet #3)	Is the adaptation green light? (Use the questions on the next page to explain why.)	What steps should be taken to ensure that the adaptation is successfully integrated into the approach? (Refer to the considerations on the following page.)
W H A T		
H O W		
W H O		



Is the Adaptation Green Light?

Use these questions to explain why:

1. How will the adapted activity/component address the same risk and protective factors as the original activity or component?
2. If an activity or component will be skipped or abbreviated, how will the same risk and protective factors be addressed?

Consideration for Designing and Integrating Green Light Adaptations

- Is it culturally and developmentally appropriate?
- Based on what you know about participants, will this adaptation be acceptable among participants?
- If successful, can the adaptation be sustained and replicated by other practitioners?
- Does integrating this adaptation leverage or drain existing resources?
- Is additional training required to carry out the adaptation?
- Does it take more time to implement the activity or component if the adaptation is made?
- Are additional materials required?
- Are additional participants, partners, or facilitators needed?
- Is authorization to adapt required (e.g., by a funding agency) If so, from whom and how?

Worksheet 5. Making Green Light and Avoiding Red Light Adaptations for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches


This worksheet is designed to help practitioners identify potential field adaptations during delivery, given opportunities and constraints in a particular setting. The “green light” and “red light” columns allow practitioners to group adaptations according to whether they do or do not support essential elements. Once completed, this worksheet can be used to help practitioners make adaptations during delivery that support essential elements and avoid adaptations that do not.

Given what you know about the opportunities and constraints that might occur *during delivery*, and the approach’s essential elements...

	Estimated elements from worksheet #1	...what are some green light adaptations that are o.k. for practitioners to make?	...what are some red light adaptations practitioners should avoid?
W H A T			
H O W			
W H O			



Worksheet 6. Tracking and Evaluating Adaptations for Programs and Community and Societal Approaches

Describe the adaptation.	What happened that led to the adaptation? <small>(If it was planned, describe why it was planned.)</small>	 Is this red or green light and WHY?	Will you keep, change, or omit this adaptation?





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For more information

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