

How does the *Preventing Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Disorders Among Young People: Progress and Possibilities* report relate to urban public education?

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“...most schools do not prepare their staff to screen for risk factors, nor do they adopt universal measures to decrease risk or enhance protective factors.”

- Mary Boat, p. 367

Prevention Matters

- Take action now: need for fundamental paradigm shift (Rec. 13-1)
- Prioritize promotion of MH of young people (Rec. 13-1)
- Prioritize what will be good for each student 5, 10, or more years from now; go long-range with our goals and objectives
- Prioritize the reduction of barriers to learning in schools; develop interventions based on solid scientific theory
- Prioritize research into praxis; teacher preparation (Rec. 12-6, 7, 8)
- Prioritize the potential that prevention work has on reducing generational poverty
- Prioritize implementation research – increase effectiveness
- Prevention helps promote school settings that are physically and emotionally safe for every student and adult (ASCD, 2009)
- Mental health is dependent on good physical health & vice versa; both are required for academic achievement

Prevention Curriculum Matters

- School: where kids are and where kids need MEB competence to achieve
- Provides opportunities to develop cooperative social relations and prosocial skills; increased skills = increased potential for success
- Prioritize research on adaptation of EBIs to context
- Use advances in neuroscience in developing curriculum
- Considering time sensitivity of prevention curriculum in order for prevention to “take”; which curriculum at which ages; early childhood is critical
- Need organized system for classifying specific interventions - preventive, selected, indicated
- Comprehensive programming – impact multiple risk and protective factors
- Development of more efficient prevention programs

Funding for Prevention Matters

- Ensure institutions (schools) & communities have necessary resources to implement and sustain prevention strategies (Rec.12-1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Invest up front; cost savings in the long-run
- Fund universal prevention, not just intervention (Rec. 13-4)
- Include prevention as a line item in general education budgets
- Create targeted and networked funding streams for prevention

Collaboration in Prevention Efforts Matters

- Networked systems (Rec. 13-2, 13-3)
- Cross-institution perspective and relationships
- Cross-training; shared learning (Rec. 12-6)
- Greater gains
- Better use of resources
- Coordination of community level systems to support young people
- Include prevention scientists, clinical developers, neuroscientists, educators, community members, parents...and politicians; research, policy, and practice to prevent MEB disorders

Evaluation of Prevention Efforts Matters

- Need for gold standard evidence based screenings
- Measure risks, protective factors and prevention outcomes
- User-friendly and efficient measures for classroom use
- Develop measures of youth competencies
- Test for mediating and moderating effects
- Importance of data collection and data analysis in schools
- Scaling up quality of implementation of prevention curriculum
- Effect of school leadership on prevention

Policies for Prevention Matter

- Government responsible to promote behavioral health and healthcare (MH) as benefit to society as whole
- Focus not only on risk factors, but also on protective factors and resilience; identify how protective factors affect success
- Provide training for all adults who work in schools
- Moderate genetic and environmental factors that promote MEB outcomes; strengthen families, reduce poverty through prevention
- Focus on family well-being and competence
- Prevention of MEB disorders in early childhood education
- Adopt learning standards for promotion of MH that includes use of evidence-based prevention curriculum
- Adopt certification credentials for “prevention specialists”

“...the school setting represents one of the best opportunities for prevention interventions, whether universal, selective, or indicated...transformational changes will be needed in school systems to respond (p. 367)”