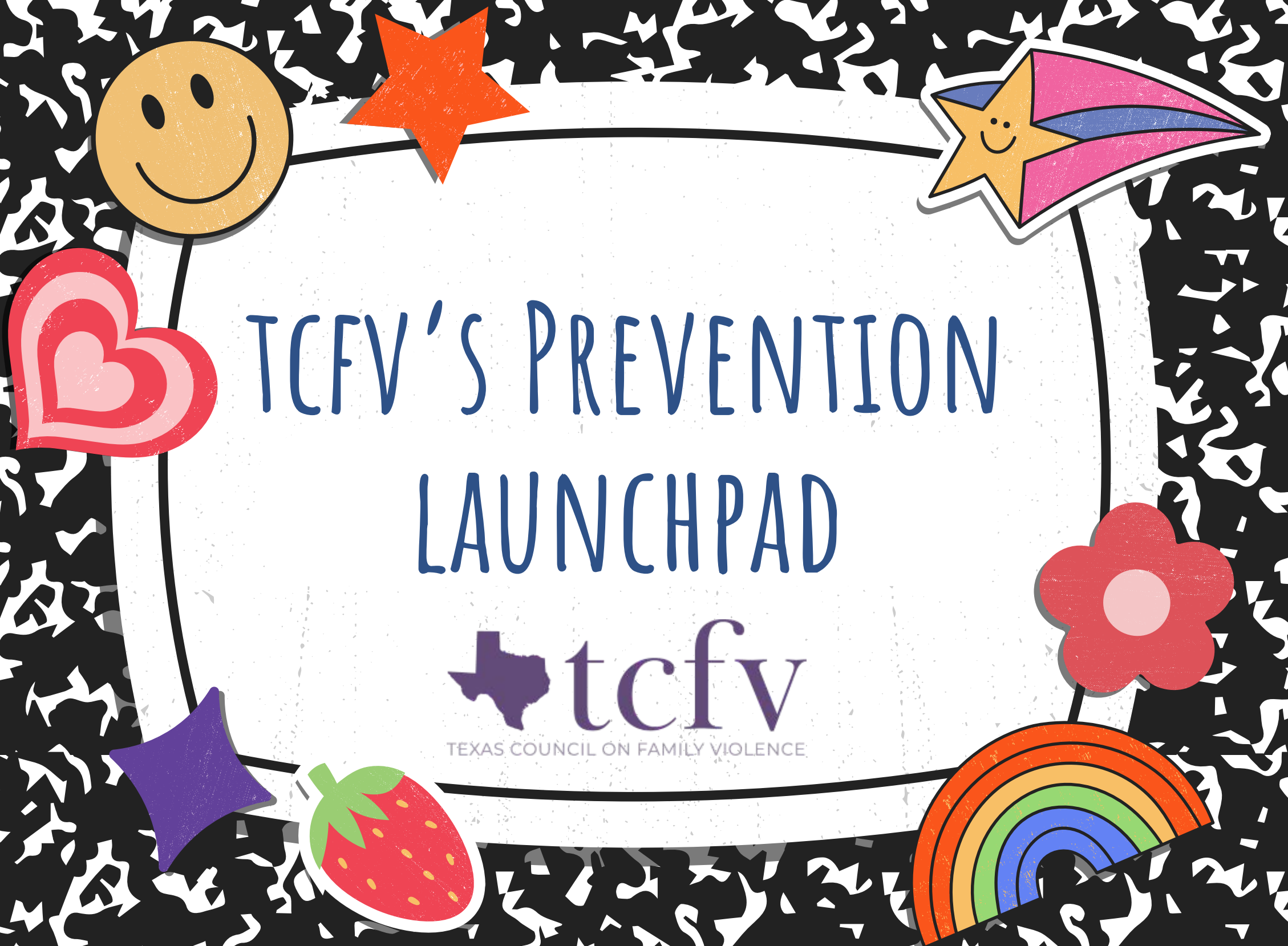




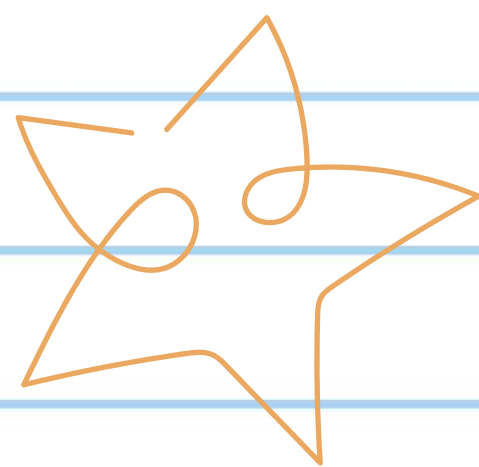
TCFV'S PREVENTION LAUNCHPAD



TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

Rooted in the Texas Council on Family Violence's mission to create safer communities and advance freedom from violence through education, collaboration, and advocacy, this resource is meant to grow with you. Prevention LaunchPad is designed to support both new and experienced advocates across Texas in strengthening their domestic violence prevention work.

Prevention is more than a program or presentation, it is a long-term, community-centered approach to reducing violence by promoting safe, healthy, and respectful relationships. Grounded in the idea that prevention is essential, LaunchPad brings together foundational concepts, trauma-informed strategies, and practical facilitation tools to help advocates translate prevention theory into meaningful action.



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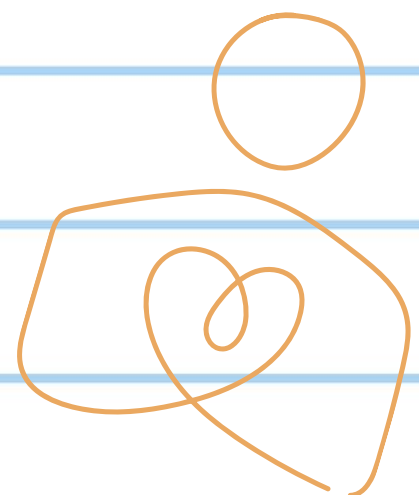


Organized so it works both as a foundational training for new prevention advocates and a practical refresher + reference for experienced advocates

What Do We Mean by Prevention?

In the domestic violence field, prevention refers to efforts that stop violence before it begins. Prevention focuses on promoting healthy, respectful relationships; strengthening protective factors; and shifting social norms that tolerate or perpetuate harm. Rather than reacting after violence has occurred, prevention work moves upstream to address root causes such as rigid gender norms, inequitable power structures, and social isolation.

Prevention is not crisis response, survivor advocacy, or awareness alone. While those efforts are critical and life-saving, prevention asks a different set of questions: What conditions make violence more likely? What supports make healthy relationships possible? How do communities create safety before harm occurs? Prevention is not about "fixing" individuals; it is about changing environments, systems, and norms so violence is less likely to happen in the first place.



Why Prevention Belongs in the Domestic Violence Movement



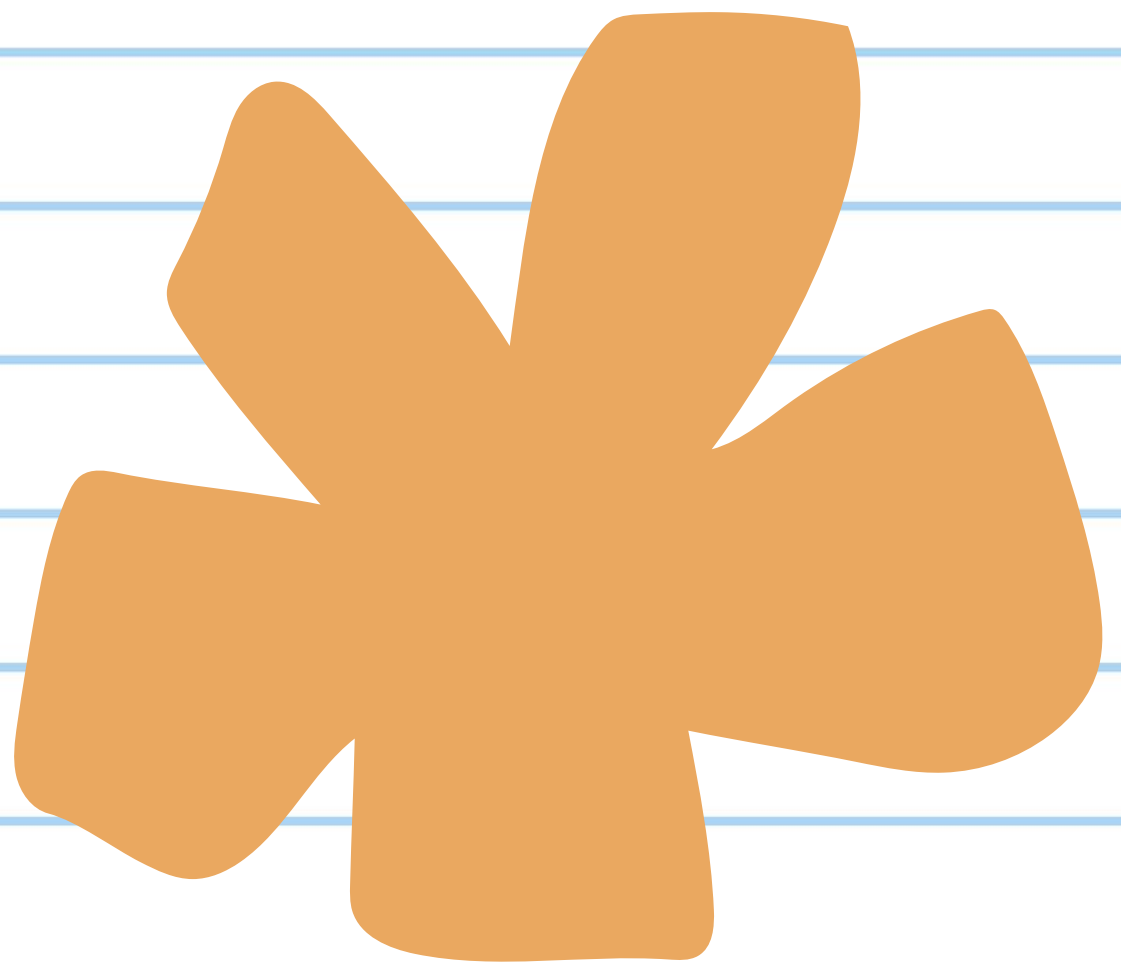
The domestic violence movement has long centered survivor safety and crisis intervention, and that work remains essential. Prevention and direct services for survivors compliment each other. Both are necessary to achieve the shared goal of reducing harm and increasing safety.

Prevention helps ensure that fewer people ever need crisis services by addressing violence at its roots.

Prevention also aligns with a public health approach to domestic violence, recognizing that violence impacts not only individuals but entire communities. When prevention efforts are effective, they support healthier families, stronger schools, safer workplaces, and more connected neighborhoods. Prevention invites advocates to imagine a future where domestic violence is not inevitable, and to take intentional steps toward that future.

THE RIVER OF RISK

The River of Risk metaphor is a powerful, visual way to explain how risk and protective factors influence someone's likelihood of experiencing or perpetrating domestic violence. It's especially useful for prevention advocates to shift conversations upstream, from reaction to prevention.



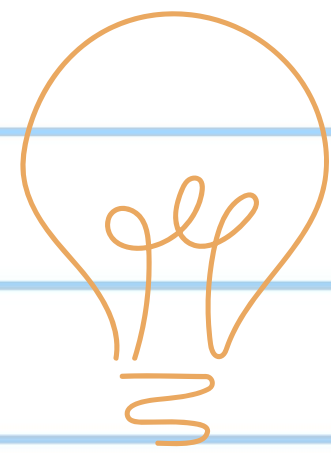
Draw a river. Label it with the different risk and protective factors you see in your community.



- Where is your current prevention work located in the river? What would it look like to move further upstream?
- How do we ensure our prevention strategies don't just throw life preservers, but also work to change the conditions of the river itself?

Where are the 'rocks,' the 'currents,' and the 'life preservers'?

Discuss what upstream interventions could look like based on what you drew.



Prevention Across the Continuum

Prevention exists on a continuum that includes primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. While all three are important, prevention advocates primarily focus on primary and secondary prevention.

- Primary prevention stops violence before it begins by addressing root causes and strengthening protective factors.
- Secondary prevention reduces risk and harm among people who may be at higher risk of experiencing or using violence.
- Tertiary prevention responds after violence has occurred and focuses on survivor safety and accountability.

In Texas, prevention definitions emphasize upstream approaches that promote healthy relationships and community well-being. Understanding this continuum helps advocates clearly articulate their role and avoid role confusion.

Where does most of your current work fall on the prevention continuum?

How do you explain primary prevention to partners or community members?

Prevention Focus in Domestic Violence

Prevention focuses on root causes, not individual blame. Root causes of domestic violence include rigid gender roles, inequitable power structures, norms that condone violence, economic stressors, and social isolation. These root causes are reinforced by systems and structures such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and economic inequality.

Addressing root causes means prevention work must move beyond individual behavior change and engage communities in examining norms, values, and systems. This is why prevention often involves conversations that feel broader than domestic violence alone, like discussions about respect, consent, belonging, and equity

What root causes feel most visible in your community?

Which root causes feel hardest to talk about? Why?



THE SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL

The Social Ecological Model helps prevention advocates understand how violence is influenced at multiple levels: individual, relationship, community, and societal. Effective prevention strategies often work across more than one level at a time.

For example, teaching communication skills (individual), engaging peer norms (relationship), partnering with schools (community), and advocating for policy change (societal) all reinforce one another. This model reminds advocates that lasting change happens when multiple levels align.

Risk factors increase the likelihood of violence, while protective factors reduce risk and support healthy relationships. Prevention work aims to reduce risk factors (such as social isolation or norms supporting violence) while strengthening protective factors (such as connectedness, emotional regulation, and equitable norms).

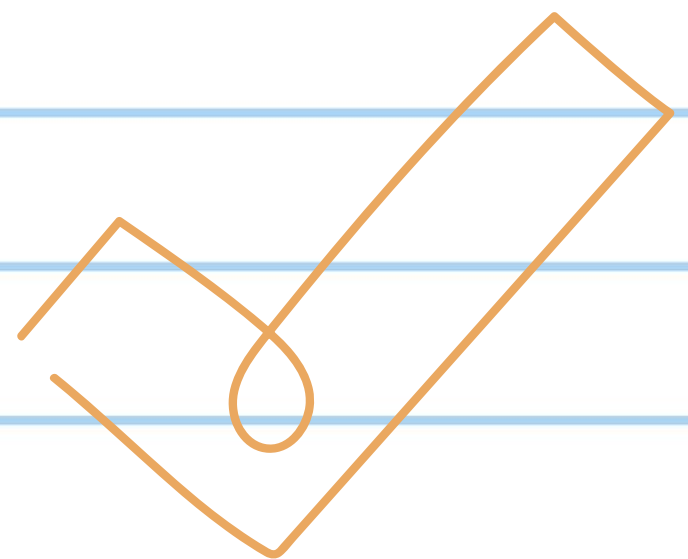
Protective factors exist at every level of the Social Ecological Model and often already live within communities. Prevention advocates help identify and build upon these existing strengths.

Which levels of the Social Ecological Model do you work in most often?

Which levels feel under-addressed in your community?

What protective factors already exist in your community?

How can prevention work build on those strengths rather than replace them?



THE PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO PREVENTION

The public health approach views domestic violence as a preventable issue that affects population-level health and well-being. This approach typically includes four steps: defining the problem, identifying risk and protective factors, developing and testing strategies, and ensuring widespread adoption.

For prevention advocates, this approach reinforces the importance of using data, evidence-informed strategies, and continuous learning. It also emphasizes that prevention success is often measured at the community or population level, not through individual outcomes alone.

Prevention Takes Time:

Public health prevention focuses on long-term impact. Immediate results may be subtle, but long-term change is powerful.

THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

How does a public health lens shift how success is measured?

What kinds of data or feedback feel most useful in your prevention work?

BETTERING THE WORK

Domestic violence does not occur in a vacuum. It is shaped by social, cultural, and structural conditions that influence power, access, and opportunity. Prevention efforts that do not intentionally address this can be reinforcing the very conditions that allow violence to persist. Community centered prevention recognizes that different communities experience violence, and access support, differently, and that effective prevention must be responsive to those realities.

Prevention is about more than representation. It is about ensuring that prevention strategies are accessible, relevant, and grounded in the lived experiences of the communities they are meant to serve. This requires ongoing reflection, humility, and a willingness to adapt.

What does equity mean to you in the context of prevention work?

How might prevention efforts unintentionally exclude or overlook certain communities?



Intersectionality is the understanding that people's experiences are shaped by multiple, overlapping identities. These identities can impact both vulnerability to violence and access to resources and support.

For prevention advocates, intersectionality helps shift the focus from "one-size-fits-all" approaches to more nuanced, inclusive strategies. It encourages advocates to ask: Who is being centered in our work? Who is missing?

Two people may experience domestic violence differently based on their identities. Prevention must reflect those differences to be effective.

Which identities are most centered in your current prevention work?

Who may be unintentionally left out or underserved?

Community centered prevention prioritizes the voices, leadership, and experiences of communities most impacted by domestic violence and systemic inequities. This includes underserved populations, such as rural communities or people with disabilities, and many more. Prevention work should not ignore or reinforce harmful systems.

Changing individual behavior without addressing systems, limits the impact of prevention.

How do harmful norms show up in your community?

What feels possible for you to address within your role?

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Prevention does not happen in isolation. It is built through relationships, trust, and shared responsibility. Community engagement is the foundation of effective prevention work because it ensures that strategies are relevant, responsive, and sustainable. When communities are meaningfully engaged, prevention efforts are more likely to reflect local values, address real needs, and create lasting change.

Community engagement is not just outreach or recruitment, it is an ongoing process of building relationships, listening, and working alongside others. Prevention advocates play a key role in fostering these connections and helping communities see themselves as part of the solution.

Outreach is sharing information.

Engagement is building relationships and shared ownership.

How do you currently engage with your community beyond delivering presentations?

What relationships feel strongest in your prevention work? Which need more attention?

Strong partnerships are rooted in trust, consistency, and mutual respect. Building authentic relationships takes time and cannot be rushed. Prevention advocates can begin by identifying shared goals, showing up consistently, and listening more than speaking.

Authentic partnerships recognize that community members and organizations bring valuable knowledge and expertise. Rather than approaching partnerships as a way to "deliver services," prevention advocates work collaboratively to co-create solutions.



Start with Listening

Before offering programming, ask: What does this community need? What is already working here?

How do you approach new partnerships?

What does trust-building look like in your community?

Effective engagement includes identifying partners who:

- Share aligned values or goals
- Have access to the populations you hope to reach
- Are trusted within the community

Prevention partnerships can include a wide range of individuals and organizations, such as:

- Schools and youth-serving organizations
- Healthcare providers
- Faith communities
- Local businesses
- Community leaders and grassroots groups

In Texas, where communities vary widely in size, culture, and resources, partnerships may look different depending on the context. In rural areas, partnerships may rely on fewer organizations with deeper relationships, while in urban areas, they may involve larger networks.

Think Beyond "Traditional" Partners

Prevention can happen anywhere—barbershops, libraries, community centers, and workplaces are all potential spaces for engagement.

Who are the trusted leaders or organizations in your community?

Which partnerships could expand your reach or impact?

The ultimate goal of community engagement is shared ownership. Prevention is most effective when communities see it as their work, not just the responsibility of advocates or organizations. This shift happens when community members are involved in decision-making, leadership, and implementation.

How can you create more opportunities for community leadership?

What might it look like to "step back" in your role while still offering support?

Community engagement is essential to effective prevention.

PREVENTION IN TEXAS

Prevention in Texas is shaped by state laws, education standards, funding structures, and statewide priorities. In Texas, domestic violence prevention is influenced not only by public health frameworks, but also by education policy and legislative requirements that impact how advocates engage with schools and youth.

Understanding this context helps prevention advocates align their work with state expectations while still adapting to the unique needs of their local communities. Advocates often balance compliance with creativity, meeting requirements while ensuring prevention efforts remain meaningful, inclusive, and responsive.

Prevention advocates often navigate both compliance and creativity, meeting state expectations while adapting to real community needs.

How familiar are you with school-based requirements for prevention in Texas?

Where do you feel confident, and where do you want more clarity?

In Texas, prevention is now formally recognized within state guidance and administrative frameworks, including the Texas Administrative Code. These frameworks define prevention and community education as essential components of domestic violence programs.

Prevention in Texas emphasizes:

- Primary prevention: Stopping violence before it occurs
- Secondary prevention: Addressing risk and early signs of harm
- Promotion of healthy relationships and community wellness

Using these definitions consistently helps ensure prevention work is accurately represented in reporting, funding, and communication with partners.



How do you currently explain primary and secondary prevention in your work?

What challenges have you experienced in aligning practice with definitions?

Working with Schools: TEKS & Legislative Context



Schools are a key setting for prevention work in Texas, and advocates often partner with school districts to provide healthy relationship education and violence prevention programming. This work is shaped by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state standards that guide what students are taught, as well as legislative changes such as Senate Bill 9.

Aligning prevention programming with TEKS helps advocates:

- Increase buy-in from schools
- Ensure content is age-appropriate and relevant
- Support integration into existing curricula

Senate Bill 9 introduced additional requirements for schools related to safety, including increased focus on prevention, reporting, and coordination around student well-being. For advocates this means building relationships with your local SHACs, understanding the parental opt-in, and realizing that partnerships may require clearer alignment with school policies and priorities. SB 9 has influenced how schools approach safety, partnerships, and external programming.

How do you currently align your programming with school standards or priorities?

What challenges have you experienced when working with schools?

Texas is geographically and culturally diverse, and prevention efforts must reflect that diversity. School-based prevention may look very different across communities depending on:

- District size and resources
- Community values and priorities
- Access to health education
- Existing partnerships

Effective prevention in Texas is adaptable and grounded in local context while still aligned with statewide frameworks, including education standards and legislative requirements.

State guidance provides direction while local communities shape how prevention comes to life.

How do school partnerships differ across communities you serve?

What adaptations have you made to fit local context?

ADVOCACY & SYSTEMS CHANGE

Prevention in Texas is also connected to broader advocacy efforts. Policies, systems, and education requirements all shape the conditions that influence domestic violence. Prevention advocates can support systems change by:

- Building relationships with schools and districts
- Sharing insights from prevention programming
- Supporting policies that promote student well-being and healthy relationships

Advocacy may include helping schools understand the value of prevention and how it supports student safety, learning, and overall wellness.

Prevention Supports School Safety:

Prevention education is one part of creating safer school environments, alongside policies, relationships, and supports.

- How can prevention be framed as part of school safety and student success?
- What opportunities exist to strengthen collaboration with schools?

PREVENTION RESOURCES

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

- Toolkits, training materials, prevention frameworks, and campaigns

VAWnet

- Research library, applied tools, and prevention guidance

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Evidence-based strategies, risk & protective factors

VetoViolence

- Interactive trainings, tools, and community strategies

PreventIPV

- Peer-driven tools and community-level prevention strategies

Texas Council on Family Violence

- Training, technical assistance, and prevention guidance for Texas

Futures Without Violence

- Prevention in healthcare, workplaces, and policy

Prevention Institute

- Community-level prevention strategies

Prevention is collective work, these resources are here to support you, not replace your knowledge, creativity, and connection to your community.

Questions? Thoughts?

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