Looking Over the Wall—The Future of Prevention Science and Prevention

Zili Sloboda, Sc.D., President
Applied Prevention Science International
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Defining Prevention Science

• Prevention science identifies:
  • the **determinants of behaviors** that protect or put at risk the social, emotional, and physical health of individuals, families, communities;
  • the **processes** as to how these determinants operate; and,
  • the **strategies** that effectively intervene when trajectories are negative and reinforce those trajectories that are positive.

Sources: Standards of Knowledge for the Science of Prevention, Society for Prevention Research, 2011; APSI, 2019; National Prevention Science Coalition, 2019.
The Wall-The Target

Positive/Protective Behaviors

Negative/Risky Behaviors

Human Behaviors
Looking Over the Wall

**Basic Sciences**
- Epidemiology
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Neuroscience
- Mathematics
- Genetics
- Economics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- ETC.

**Applied Sciences**
- Social Work
- Clinical Psychology
- Biostatistics
- Public Health
- Medicine
- Health Education
- ETC.

**Research**

**Practice**

**Human Behaviors**
Is multi-disciplinary including the epidemiological, social, psychological, behavioral, medical, statistical, and neurobiological sciences.

Requires a TRANSDISCIPLINARY TEAM
Prevention Science in Infancy

• U.S. Society for Prevention Research--1991
• Science of Prevention first noted in a journal article—Coie et al., American Psychologist, 1993
• Standards of Knowledge for the Science of Prevention-U.S. Society for Prevention Research—2011
• EU Society for Prevention Research—2010
• New Groups in Australia, Brazil, Others?--2000→
Prevention Science Growing Up
To Achieve “Adulthood” as a Field Prevention Science Must Be Accepted Internationally

- Prevention Science is multi-disciplinary
- Is delivered by transdisciplinary teams
- Is International

Research and Practice

Global Perspective
Next Steps
The Establishment of the Field of Medicine

- Systematic body of theory;
- Authority to define problems and their treatment;
- Community sanctions to admit and train its members;
- Ethical codes that stress an ideal of service to others;
- A culture that includes the institutions necessary to carry out all of its functions.
History of Medicine as a Framework

- Anatomy
- Biochemistry
- Biomechanics
- Biophysics
- Biostatistics
- Cytology
- Endocrinology
- Epidemiology
- ETC....

Modern Medicine
From 460 BC till the 19th and 20th Centuries (over 2000 years)
Modern Medicine

- 19th century and explosion of science
- 20th century reliable prescription drugs
  - separation from church and the medical field
  - penicillin used to curb sickness
  - modern surgery was coming of age
  - medical curricula and medical schools established
  - modern medicine became an international profession
CAN WE SPEED UP THE PROCESS?
Substance Use Prevention—A Start

✓ Systematic body of theory
  – AND with the knowledge, skills, and competencies
    • European Drug Prevention Quality Standards
    • Universal Prevention Curriculum

• Authority to define problems and their treatment
• Community sanctions to admit and train its members—not systematic

✓ Ethical codes that stress an ideal of service to others
  – Prevention Think Tank (IC&RC)
  – European Drug Prevention Quality Standards

! A culture that includes the institutions necessary to carry out all of its functions
  – International Consortium of Universities for Drug Demand Reduction
Who are the Workers on the Ground?

• Those who self-identify as prevention professionals
  – Diverse educational levels and focus
  – Diverse prevention experiences

• Those who do not self-identify as prevention professionals but are doing prevention-related work
  – Direct service professionals-social workers, psychologists, teachers, family workers, health workers, law enforcement officers, etc.
Reaching Out and Being Inclusive--Formation of an International Workgroup

• The Societies for Prevention Research-U.S. and EU and Others
• Other related organizations-Public Health Associations, societies on related fields such as sociology, social work, psychology, criminology, violence, sexually transmitted diseases, suicide,
Next Steps-Discussion
Thank you!!
zili.sloboda@apsintl.com