

Health Promotion Strategies and Determinants of Health

Health Promotion Strategies

Health promotion is process of making it possible for people to take control over and improve their health. We can improve our health when we use a combination of health promotion strategies.

In developing your wellness project please make certain that you use one or more of the following health promotion strategies:

Create supportive environments: Create safe and satisfying environments in which to live, work and play.

Strengthening community action: Encourage people to get involved and take action in decisions that affect their community's health.

Develop personal skills: Provide support, education and information to help people build skills and make healthier choices.

Re-orient health services: Create services which change the focus from illness to wellness.

Build healthy public policy: Make public laws and rules that keep health in mind

Determinants of Health

There are many factors that can affect our well being that fall outside the health care system. These are commonly referred to as **determinants of health** and should be taken into consideration when you are developing your project. They include:

Income and Social Status: Research indicates that income and social status are the single most important factors determining health.

Social Support Networks: Better health is associated with support from families, friends and communities.

Social environments: Societal values and rules affect the health and well being of individuals and populations. Social stability, recognition of diversity, safety, good human relationships and community cohesiveness provide a supportive social environment with mitigates risks to optimal health.

Education: Health status improves with the level of education and literacy,

including self-ratings of positive health or indicators of poor health such as activity limitation or lost work days.

Employment and Working Conditions: Meaningful employment, economic stability and healthy work environment are associated with good health and well being.

Physical Environments: Factors such as air and water quality, the type of housing and the safety of our communities have a major impact on health and well being.

Healthy Child Development: The effect of prenatal and early childhood experiences on health in later life, well-being, coping skills and competence is very powerful.

Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills: Personal practices such as smoking, use of alcohol and other drugs, health eating, physical activity and other behaviors, affect health and well being. Effective coping skills enable people to be self-reliant, solve problems and make choices that enhance health and well being.

Biology and genetics: Inherited predispositions influence the ways individuals are affected by particular diseases and health challenges.

Health Services: Health services, especially those designed to maintain and promote health, prevent disease and injury, and restore health, contribute to population health.

Gender: It is well documented that differences exist between life expectancy of males and females and in their patterns of illness, and that these differences determine health and the need for health care. While gender is inseparable from the physical differences between the male and female body, gender is a social and cultural, rather than a physiological phenomenon.

Culture and Ethnicity: Come from both personal history and wider situational, social, geographic and economic factors.