

ESTIMATING ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Creating Protective Environments

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

Common essential elements		Why is it essential?	Example: Improve school climate and safety	Example: Modify the physical and social environment
WHAT	Key messages, knowledge, and skills	Typically, educational activities complement environmental changes. Information communicates key messages to increase knowledge and/or teach skills that help prevent violence.	Train and develop a system of teachers and school staff to monitor and address abusive behavior or violence.	Identify designated and intended use of spaces, understand land use and zoning laws and identify community priorities.
		Signage and other visuals may be used to deliver key messages that increase feelings of safety.	Messages on posters communicate that students and staff are in a violence-free zone.	Create signage that communicates the intended use of the space and markers that identify private vs. public spaces.
	Design elements	Modify the physical environment through design elements to deter harassment and violence and promote safe spaces.	Use lighting design to maximize visibility and ensure potential problem areas, including hallways, stairs, and parking areas, are well lit.	Green lots should provide a welcoming look that clearly identifies the space is open to residents. Spaces should include features that promote community connectedness, such as play space, benches, and community gardens.
	Organizational policies and protocols	Organizational policies and protocols can help ensure the physical environment is safe and reinforce expectations for behaviors and school/organizational climates.	A school policy mandates training for all staff and monitors campus hot spots where harassment and violence happen.	Community residents follow regular accountability protocols to maintain greened lots and assess potential improvements, such as lighting and landscaping to enhance visibility, safety, walkability, and social interaction.

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Common Essential Elements		Why is it essential?	Example: Improve school climate and safety	Example: Modify the physical and social environment
HOW	Guiding principles, approaches, and implementation methods	<p>Prevention strategies designed to create protective environments often include guiding principles or approaches that all partners agree on. These principles may be context-specific in designing safer spaces where the community gathers.</p> <p>Environmental changes should be consistent with community values, such as inclusivity and connectedness. Trainings for improving and monitoring physical structures are essential for creating safe environments.</p>	<p>Guiding principles include creating a warm, welcoming environment for all students and fostering a sense of physical and social order through adult monitoring and enforcement of social expectations.</p> <p>Staff receives a half-day training, monitor building hot spots, wear t-shirts, and place posters throughout the school that communicate key messages. Administrators assess the physical environment monthly and perform required maintenance.</p>	<p>Form a resident collective with decision-making authority to plan and implement greening activities. Residents participate in greening activities, such as trash pick-up, landscaping, and maintenance, to build a community instead of outsourcing them.</p> <p>Community members receive training in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) or community greening. Residents assess immediate needs (e.g., quality of life concerns related to walkability, safety, lighting) and monitor ongoing needs and longer-term needs (e.g., commercial development).</p>
WHO	<p>Leaders who can sway opinions or have authority to enforce policies and practices</p> <p>Partners who can lend credibility or expertise</p> <p>Affected community members who may have a role in creating changes, making decisions, and/or providing input on how changes impact their lives and communities</p>	<p>Specific types of people, organizations, and partnerships may be central to the prevention strategy's success, uptake, and sustainability.</p> <p>Involve individuals who are and will be directly impacted by the problem and/or solution in the process and strategy implementation.</p>	<p>Administrators champion school policies and dedicate staff time and resources to implement building monitoring protocol.</p> <p>Students work in partnership with staff to map out school hot spots. Parents and caregivers are involved in shaping programs and policies.</p>	<p>Leaders who organize residents must believe greening increases community connectedness and safety, and they must want to promote green space to cultivate healthy communities.</p> <p>Empower residents to self-organize and commit to cleaning and greening activities that bring together residents for a common goal.</p>

Prevention strategy name:

Names of stakeholders completing worksheet:

Guiding questions		Estimated essential elements
WHAT	What messages or knowledge will be communicated? What skills will be developed?	
	What are design elements and/or organizational policies or protocols essential for creating safe environments?	
HOW	What guiding principles, approaches, and implementation methods are central to the prevention strategy's success?	
WHO	Who are the influential leaders, partners, or community members needed to implement the strategy? What are their characteristics (e.g., ability to sway opinions)? Who can lend credibility or expertise?	
	Who will be most impacted by the strategy, and why is it important to involve them in the process?	