

WEB CONFERENCE SUMMARY

By exploring and understanding the underlying factors of sexual and domestic violence, practitioners can begin to move upstream towards preventing sexual and domestic violence before it occurs. This topic reviews the fundamentals of a public health approach to preventing violence and highlights promising strategies and innovative prevention practices using the [Spectrum of Prevention](#).

PRACTITIONERS & ADVOCATES FEATURED

- **Jeffrey Tangonan Acido, PhD**, Community Education/Civic Engagement, [Kokua Kalihi Valley](#)
- **Kelli McCannell, MS**, President of [Hardy Girls Healthy Women](#)

KEY FINDINGS

A. There are community-level factors, such as social norms, that contribute to domestic and sexual violence. While individuals have a role to play in ending sexual and domestic violence, a public health approach recognizes that individuals are directly impacted by their environments and that changing factors in the community environment can help prevent sexual and domestic violence. Sexual and domestic violence are, in part, products of societal and community-level factors that coexist and together contribute to rates of sexual and domestic violence. Social norms contribute in many ways to

multiple forms of violence. Norms around violence, masculinity, power and control, limited opportunities for women, as well as privacy and silence all contribute to the likelihood of sexual and domestic

“If you have a packet of seeds, it will give you the hardiness zone for that plant. If you ignore those directions and put a plant that needs a lot of sun and space in a dark corner, it won’t grow. Young girls are being planted in toxic environments and then we are shocked when they don’t flourish and grow.”

Kelli McCannell

Hardy Girls Healthy Women

violence. Norms play out in various aspects of daily life including through media marketing practices,

EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS & LINKAGES

workplace environments, neighborhoods, and more. It is also important to note that while these norms are framed within the gender binary, they impact LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) communities as well. In fact sexual and domestic violence disproportionately affects LGBTQ+ individuals, people of color, and individuals facing poverty.

- B. Sexual and domestic violence is preventable by addressing underlying factors.** A public health approach to preventing violence begins with the recognition that all forms of violence are preventable. By addressing risk and protective factors for sexual and domestic violence, such as the physical environment or economic and educational opportunities, we can change the community context in which violence occurs and reduce the likelihood of sexual and domestic violence.
- C. A comprehensive approach is necessary to prevent sexual and domestic violence.**

Education or policy change alone are insufficient to prevent sexual and domestic violence. Addressing the underlying factors through a diverse and interlocking set of strategies can effectively prevent violence. The Spectrum of Prevention outlines six key levels of activities for prevention that, when applied together, have a greater effect than would be possible from a single activity or initiative.

RESOURCES:

- [Web Conference Link](#)
- [Web Conference Slides](#)
- [National Sexual Violence Resource Center \(NSVRC\) Prevention Assessment: Year 2 Report Innovations in Prevention](#)
- [Transforming Communities to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse, Prevention Institute](#)
- [Preventing Intimate Partner and Sexual Assault Violence Against Women, World Health Organization](#)

FROM FOUNDATIONS TO THE FUTURE: A PREVENTION APPROACH TO SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Spectrum of Prevention: The table below shows the six layers of strategy that comprise the Spectrum of Prevention, with examples to illustrate each level:

Influencing Policy & Legislation	<p>ReThinkers – A group of elementary schoolers in New Orleans studied restorative justice practices and made recommendations to their school district officials to adopt restorative justice practices and policies. Restorative justice offers non-punitive approaches to resolve conflicts through mediation and can promote social cohesion, positive norms, and community sanctions, all factors that are associated with sexual and domestic violence prevention.</p>
Changing Organizational Practices	<p>Ramsey County Health Department: The health department’s Wakenza project looked at harsh parental interactions in three public spaces: a public library, a domestic violence shelter, and a children’s art museum, and considered whether changes to the physical space and staff response to these incidents could prevent future incidents from occurring. By providing staff with a new lens and creating family-friendly spaces (e.g. play spaces for children and coffee stations for visitors), the health department has taken steps toward reducing harsh parenting, a factor associated with domestic violence.</p>
Fostering Coalitions & Networks	<p>Hardy Girls Healthy Women: Hardy Girls Healthy Women is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting health and safety for young women through a variety of projects that not only empower individuals, but help build healthy, safe, and strong communities. More specifically, the organization creates opportunities for coalition-building through their Girls Coalition Groups and their Girls Advisory Board, which brings together older and younger participants and fosters lasting social connections within the groups.</p>

<p>Educating Providers</p>	<p>Peaceful Paths: This domestic violence services organization worked with faith leaders in Gainesville, Florida, to integrate themes related to sexual and domestic violence into church materials. This included infusing messages about safe relationships into sermons, Sunday school lessons, and a handbook that was created specifically around the subject. By training faith leaders so they can spread knowledge and information to their congregants, Peaceful Paths promoted safe and healthy relationships among more people.</p>
<p>Promoting Community Education</p>	<p>Kokua Kalihi Valley: This community center works with working-class youth of color who have been exposed to violence and trauma. Kokua Halihi Valley uses “culture circles” to bring young people together to discuss and address the violence that they have experienced in a culturally-sensitive and competent way. Using the traditional Nakem Methodology (Nakem means soul consciousness in the Ilokano language), the program allows participants to name their own experiences and decide on the correct “prescriptions” for addressing the different forms of oppression they face and their own healing. This process allows community-based knowledge and expertise to serve as the main guide for community and individual healing and prevention.</p>
<p>Strengthening Individual Knowledge & Skills</p>	<p>Boston Public Health Commission – Sound Relationships: This scorecard allows young people to analyze the lyrics of their favorite songs in order to find examples of either healthy or unhealthy relationships. By defining aspects of unhealthy relationships and contextualizing them within the lyrics of popular songs, this tool educates young people about safe relationships in an innovative and engaging way, and helps young people recognize unhealthy norms in popular culture and their media environment.</p>

Tip: Use the Spectrum of Prevention to implement strategies across various levels. Changing organizational practices and influencing policy and legislation can be particularly impactful, and fostering coalitions and networks is necessary to bring the full range of partners to work together.