Welcome, this web conference will begin soon

SMALL TOWNS, BIG IDEAS:

prevent connect

Innovative Approaches to Prevention in Rural Communities (Part 1)



Tuesday, November 17, 2026 | 11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET

prevent connect

Meet the PreventConnect Team



Ashleigh Klein-Jimenez
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she/her/hers



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she/her/hers



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Project Coordinator
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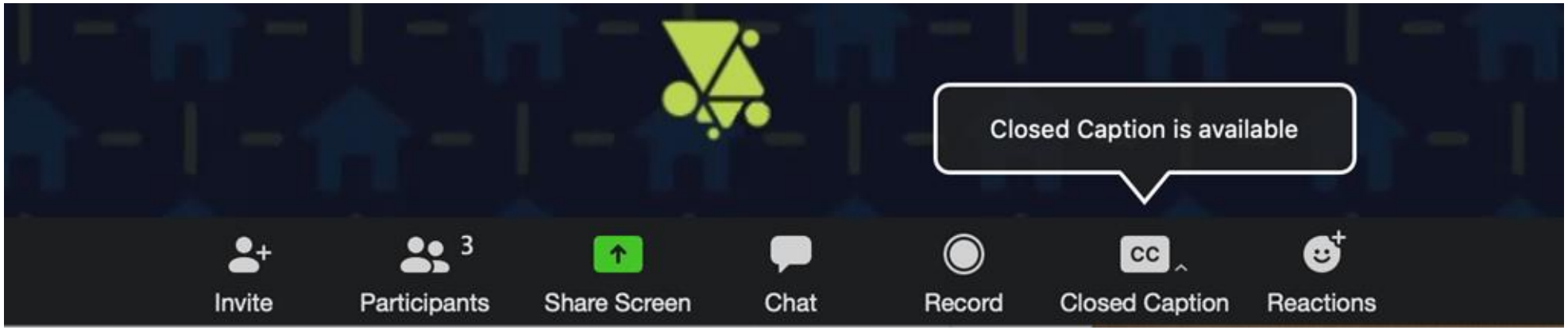
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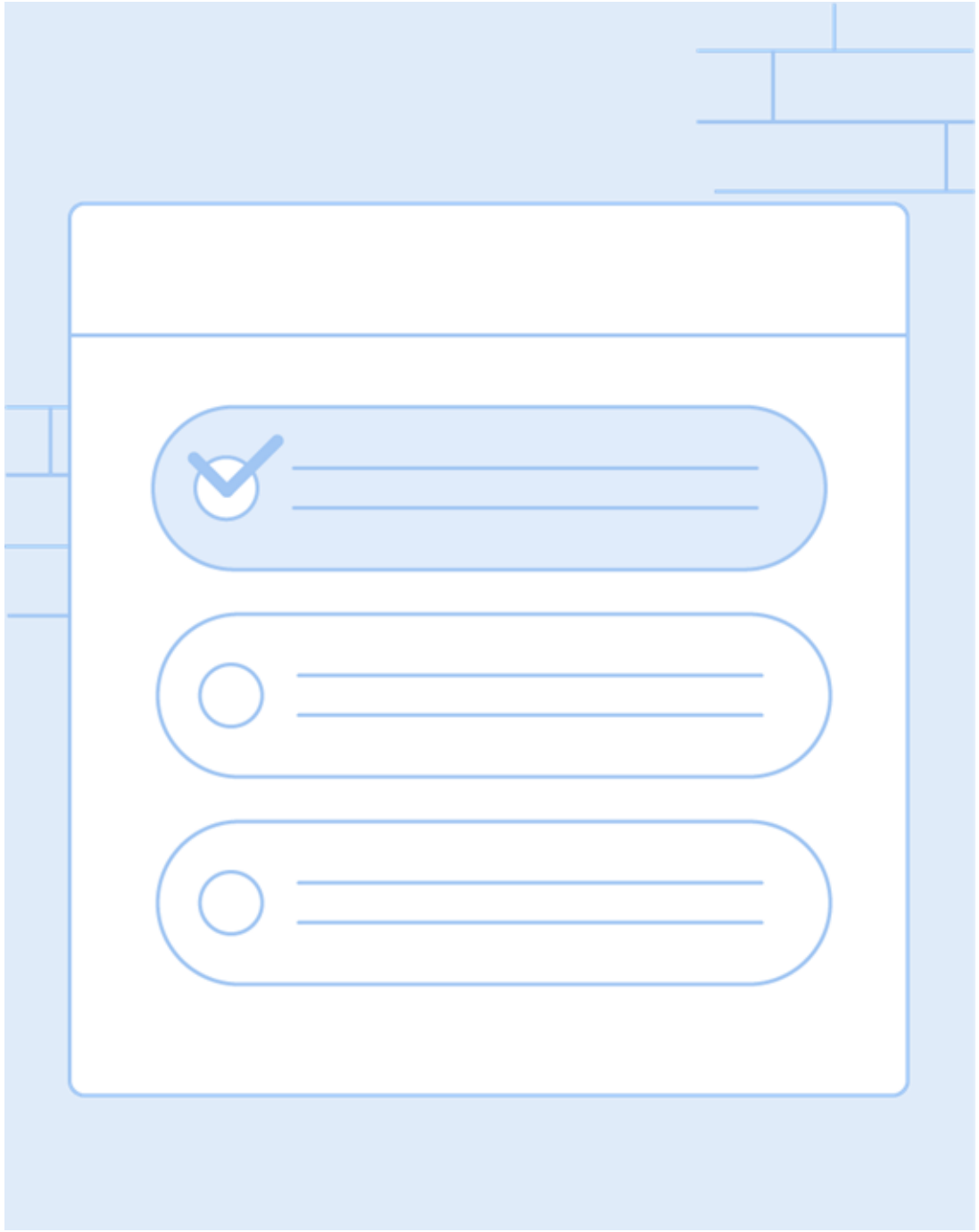
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How to use Zoom

- Text chat
- PowerPoint Slides
- Polling Questions
- Phone
- Closed Captioning
- Web Conference Guidelines



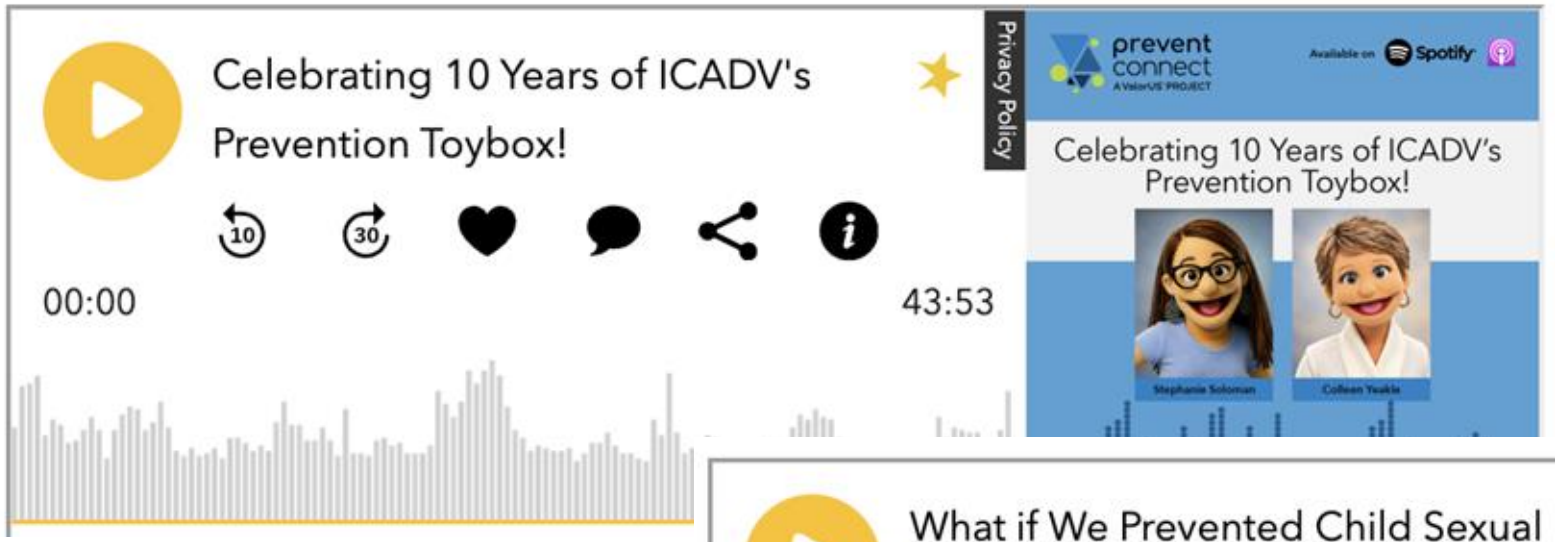
Polling Questions



PreventConnect

- Domestic violence/intimate partner violence
- Sexual violence
- Violence across the lifespan, including child sexual abuse
- Prevent before violence starts
- Connect to other forms of violence and oppression
- Connect to other prevention practitioners

Listen to our podcast!





National Sexual Assault Conference 2027



Register for our next web conference series!

Prevention Foundations: A New 2-Part Series

prevent connect



Tuesday, December 1st & Thursday, December 3rd
11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET



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Objectives

- Describe key strengths and assets of rural communities that can support effective prevention efforts
- Identify innovative, community-driven strategies to address public health and prevention challenges in rural settings
- Explore messaging approaches and communication strategies that connect with rural audiences and help build support for prevention

What is your relationship to rural communities?

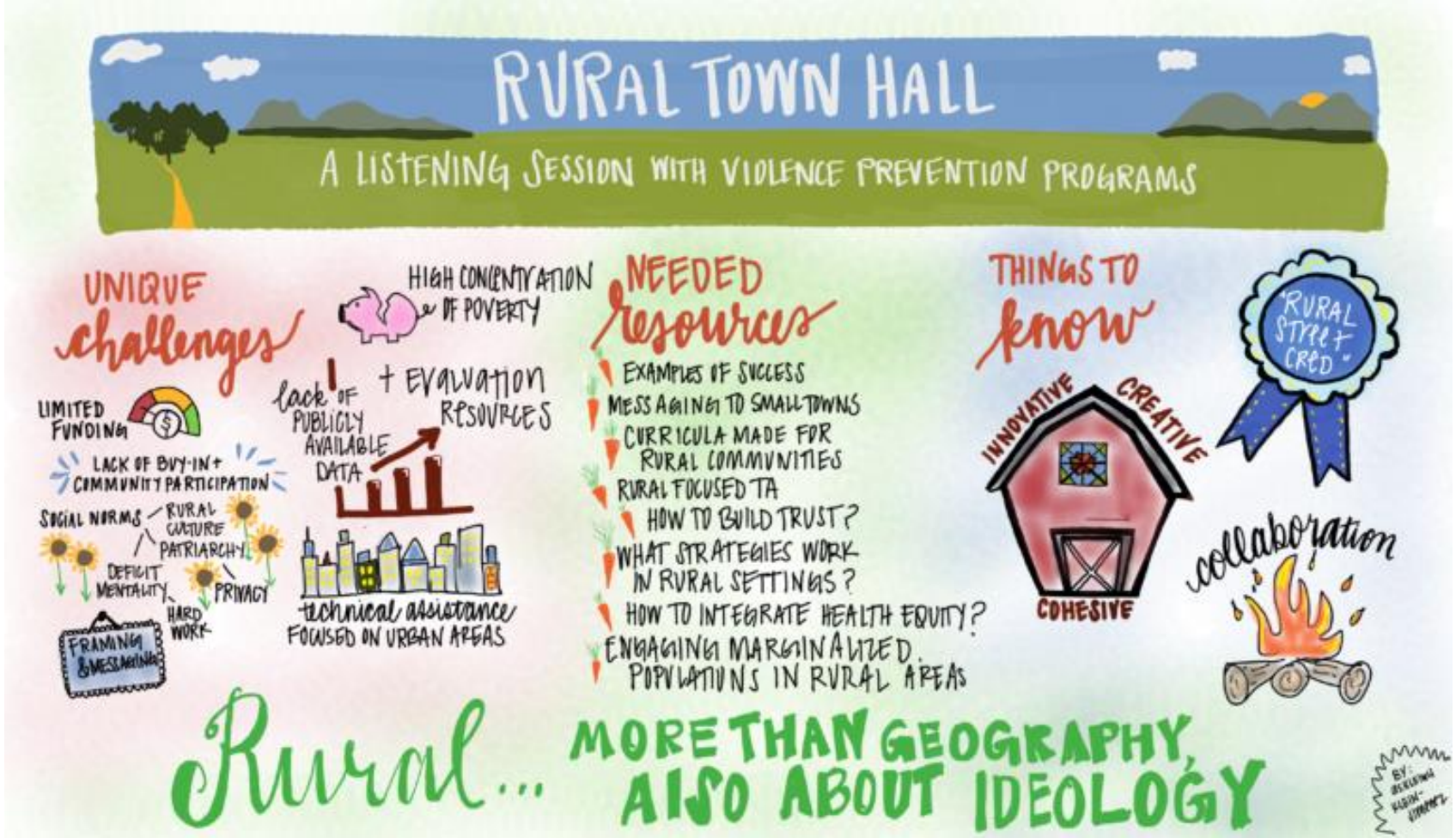
Chat Question



My Community



2024 RPE Rural Town Hall



Meet Our Guest



Diane Hall
Director
Office of Rural Health
CDC

Violence Prevention in Rural Communities: Moving Upstream and Connecting the Dots

November 17, 2026



Diane M. Hall, PhD, MSEd

Director, CDC Office of Rural Health

Rural Violence: Differences in Rates and Experience

Suicide: 20 per 1000 (compared to 14.2 urban) [1]

Child maltreatment: higher report rates in rural areas, similar substantiation rates [2]

Intimate partner violence: frequency and severity increase with rurality [3]

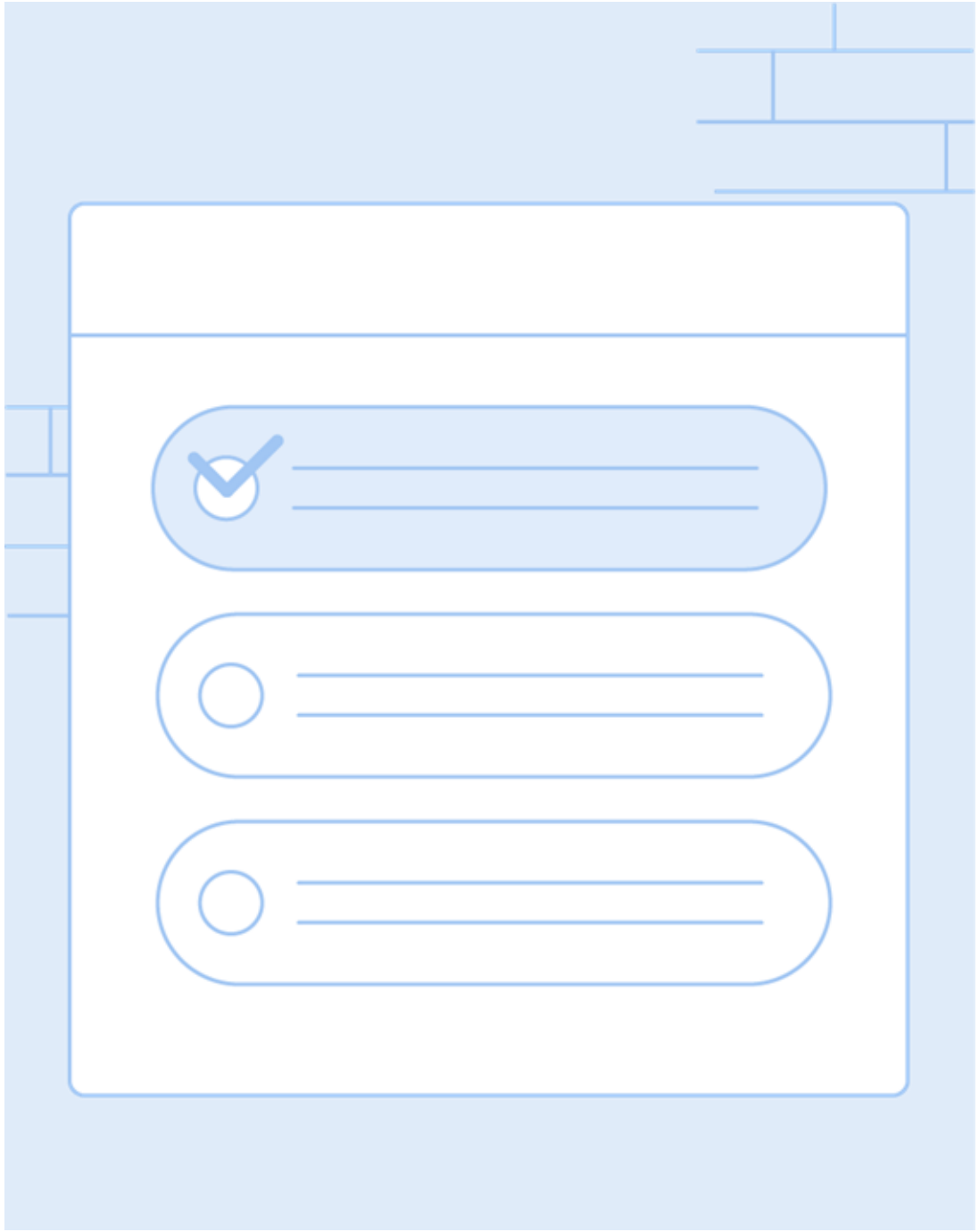
[1] Cammack AL, Stevens MR, Naumann RB, et al. *Vital Signs*: Suicide Rates and Selected County-Level Factors — United States, 2022. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2024;73:810–818. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7337e1

[2] Maguire-Jack, K., & Kim, H. (2021). Rural differences in child maltreatment reports, reporters, and service responses. *Children and Youth Services Review, 120,* Article 105792. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105792

[3] Peek-Asa, C., Wallis, A., Harland, K., Beyer, K., Dickey, P., & Saftlas, A. (2011). Rural disparity in domestic violence prevalence and access to resources. *Journal of women's health*, *20*(11), 1743-1749. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21919777/

What risk factors are your biggest concern for the rural areas in your state?

Polling Question

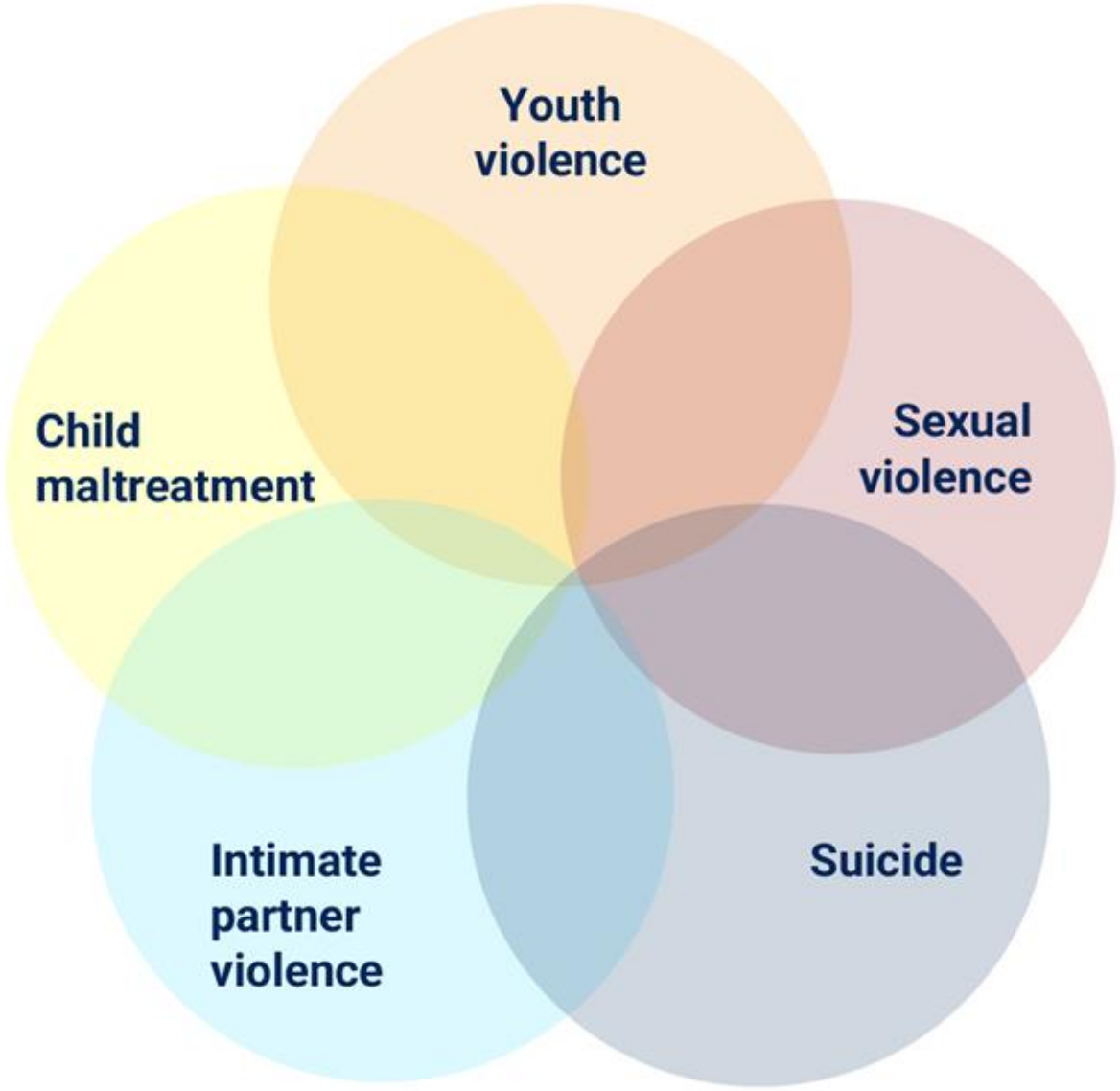


Rural communities can be more susceptible to risk factors for violence.

- Economic volatility
- Distance and transportation barriers
- Privacy concerns
- Workforce shortages
- Broadband gaps



Different forms of violence share common upstream risk factors.



Connecting the Dots

Risk Factors



- Economic stress
- Limited opportunities
- Social isolation
- Family conflict
- Norms supporting aggression

Protective Factors

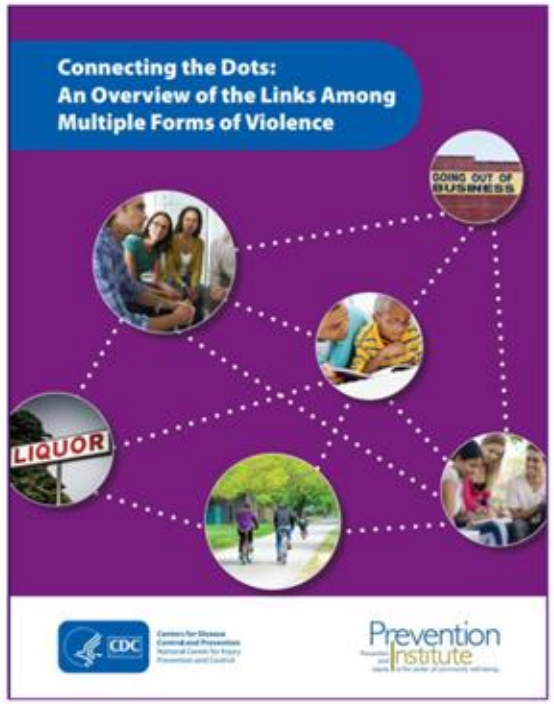


- Connectedness
- Caring adults
- Prosocial peers
- Access to services
- Coordinated resources and services

Outcomes

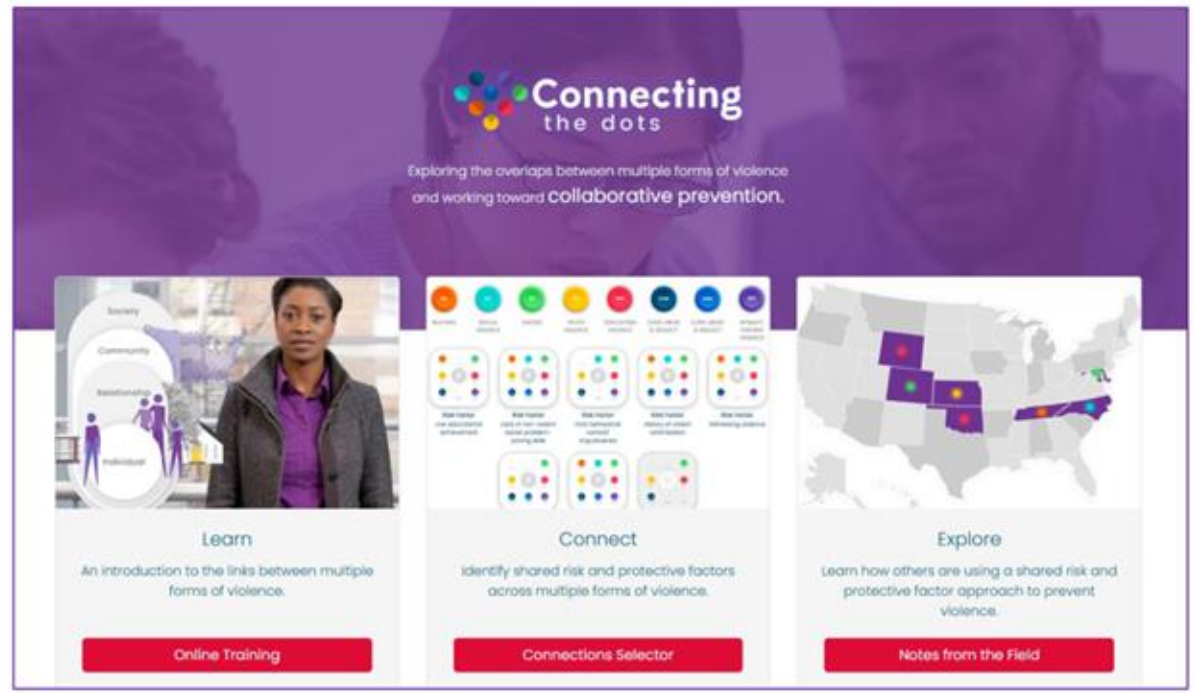
Wilkins et al., Connecting the Dots (CDC and Prevention Institute, 2014)
https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/183359

Connecting the Dots—Learn More



Report

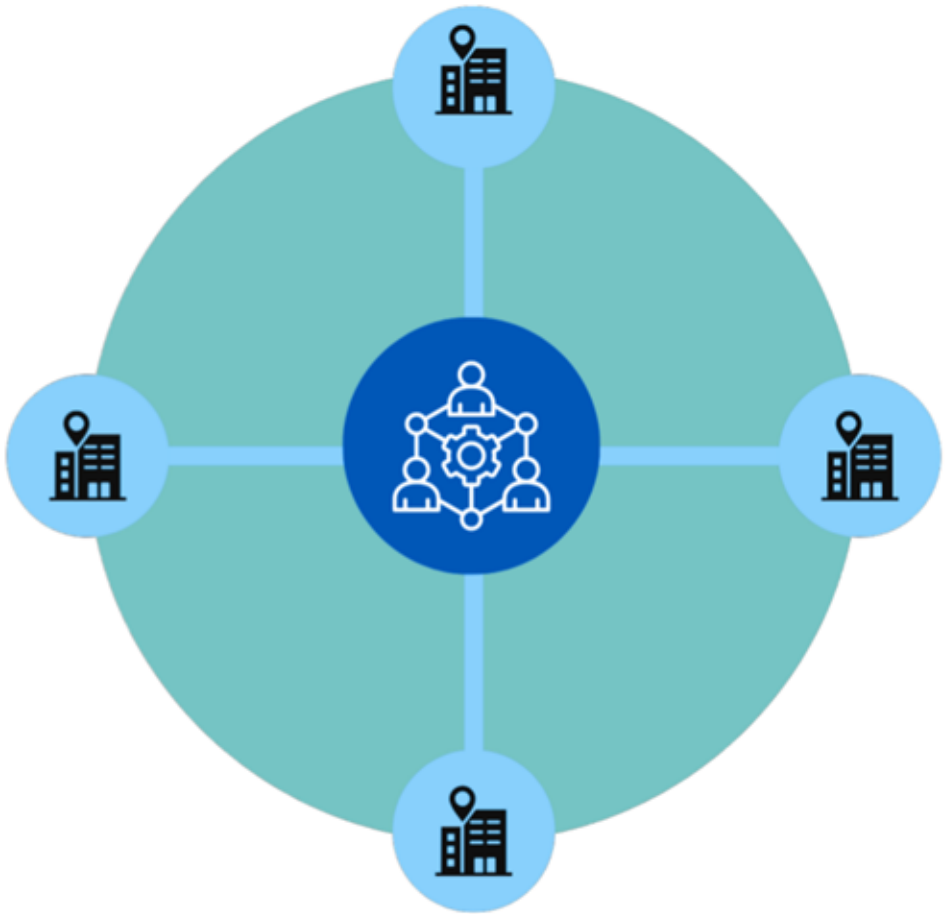
Wilkins et al., Connecting the Dots (CDC and Prevention Institute, 2014)
https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/183359



VetoViolence: Connecting the Dots

From Program Silos to Shared Upstream Action

- **Preserve** the distinct needs of violence survivors
- **Align** prevention efforts around shared conditions
- **Pool** relationships, infrastructure, data, and community trust
- **Use** one upstream investment to support multiple prevention goals

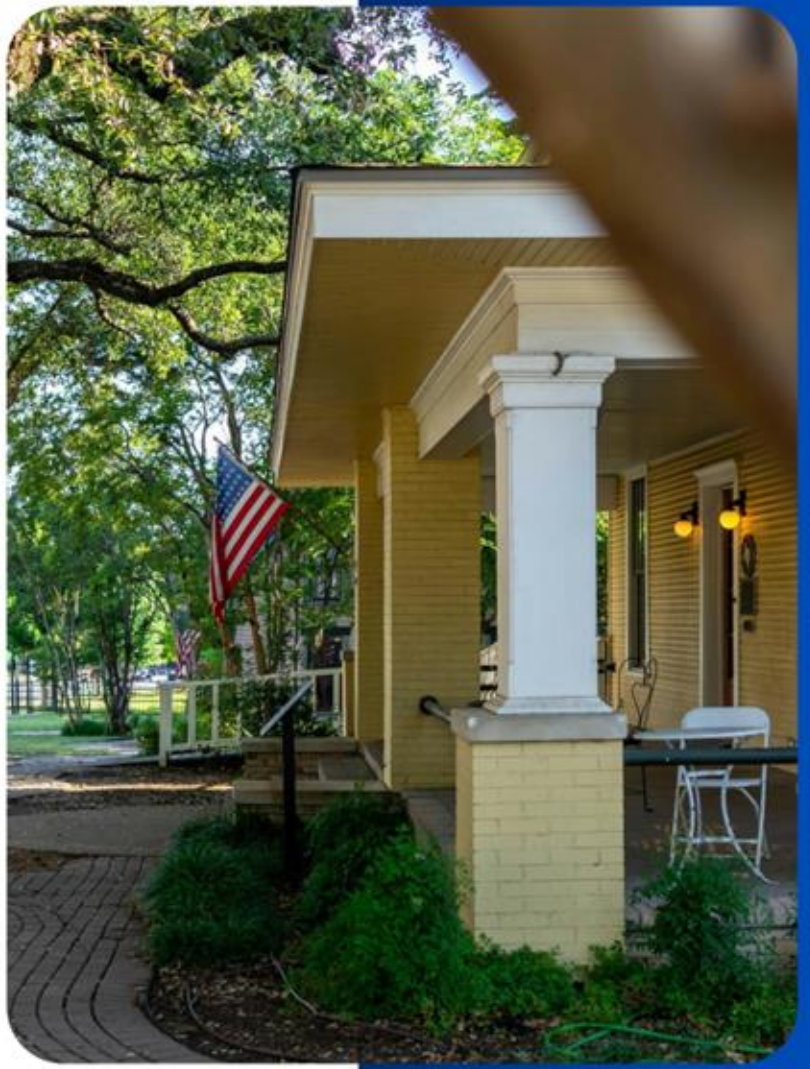


Rural Strengths Are Prevention Assets

Schools, clinics, libraries, Cooperative Extension, faith communities, and local businesses

Community identity

Local leaders



Starting in Communities



Muppet Wiki. *Bob.*
https://muppet.fandom.com/wiki/Bob.

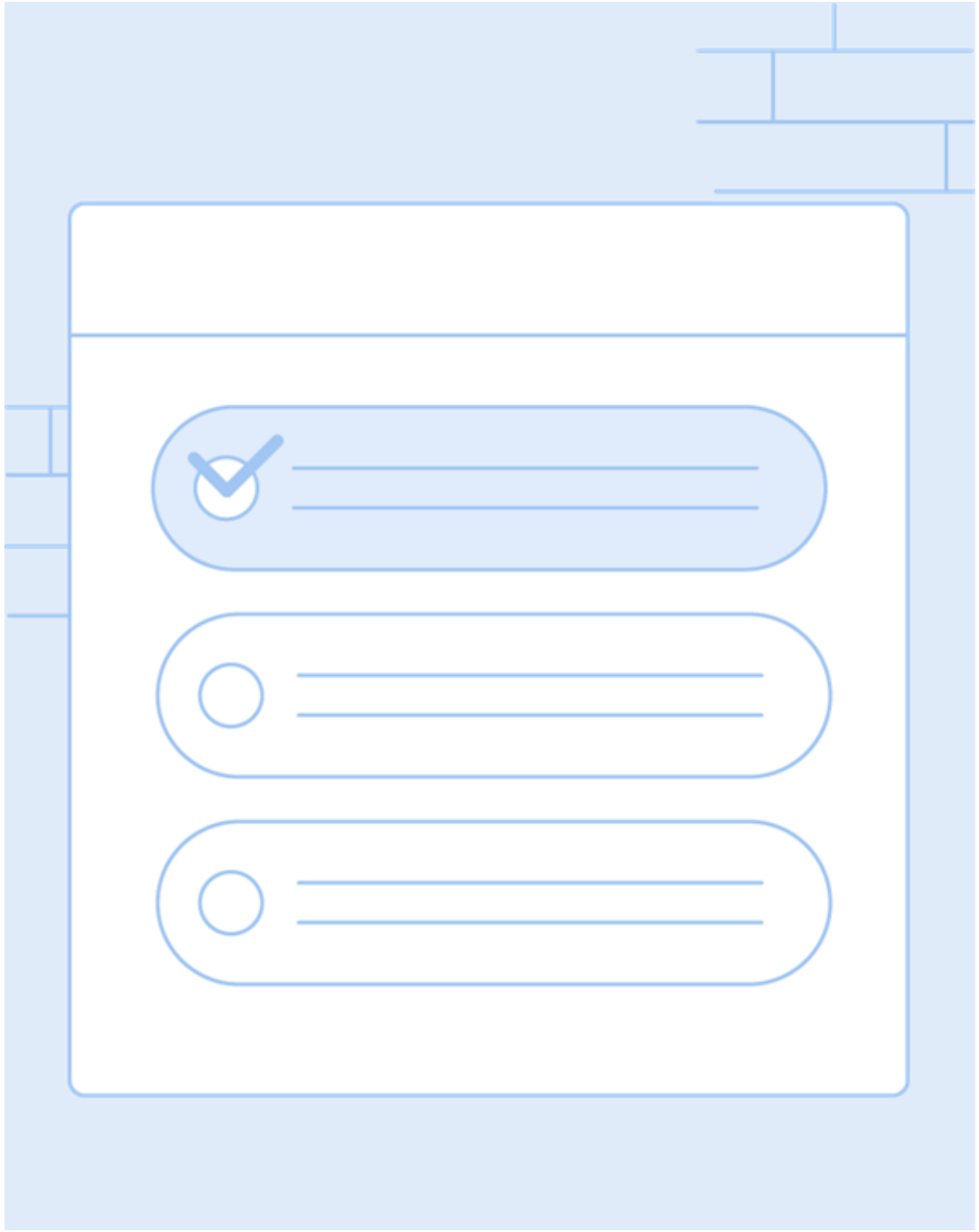
Vital Conditions for Health and Well-Being



Rippel Foundation. *The Vital Conditions for Health and Well-Being*. https://rippel.org/vital-conditions/.

Where would you like to start prevention efforts in your community?

Polling Question



Upstream Priority 1: Reduce Economic Stress

- Partner with employers, agricultural organizations, Cooperative Extension, and local service agencies
- Include economic stress in community assessments
- Share assistance through trusted local settings



Source: Wilkins et al., *Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence* (CDC and Prevention Institute, 2014)

Upstream Priority 1: Reduce Economic Stress

EXAMPLES

- Income Supports and Tax Credits
- Family-friendly Workplace Policies
- Job Training and Educational Pathway Programs



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). Community Violence Prevention: Resource for Action. https://www.cdc.gov/violence-prevention/media/pdf/resources-for-action/CV-Prevention-Resource-for-Action_508.pdf

Upstream Priority 2: Strengthen Families and Caregivers

- Expand parenting and relationship-skills education
- Offer services through schools, family resource centers, home visiting, primary care, and community organizations
- Design transportation, schedules, broadband access, and privacy concerns
- Promote safe, stable relationships



Source: Wilkins et al., *Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence* (CDC and Prevention Institute, 2014)

Upstream Priority 2: Strengthen Families and Caregivers

EXAMPLES

North Carolina Academic Center for Excellence (NC-ACE)

Parenting Wisely

Positive Action



https://nc-yvpc.org/?page_id=263

Upstream Priority 3: Build Connectedness and Community

- **Develop** cross-sector referral and follow-up pathways
- **Train** trusted community members to recognize distress and connect people to support
- **Pair** gatekeeper efforts with survivor-centered safety planning and confidentiality protections
- **Create** peer, mentoring, and community connection opportunities



Source: Wilkins et al., *Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence* (CDC and Prevention Institute, 2014)

Upstream Priority 3: Build Connectedness and Community

EXAMPLE

NEW YORK STATE | Office of Mental Health

ROOTS-NY (rural suicide prevention) links health care, schools, public health, and community organizations through trained community gatekeepers and follow-up pathways.



https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/NYOMH/bulletins/42e5c3c

Upstream Priority 4: Invest in Youth and Healthy Relationships

Embed social-emotional learning and healthy relationship skills in schools and youth programs

Use athletics, after-school programs, mentoring, and youth leadership opportunities

Engage young people in designing messages and prevention activities

Address dating violence, bullying, sexual violence, and suicide within a connected strategy



Source: Wilkins et al., *Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence* (CDC and Prevention Institute, 2014)

Upstream Priority 4: Invest in Youth and Healthy Relationships

EXAMPLES

Positive Action.

Coaching Boys INTO MEN

safe dates



https://www.positiveaction.net/youth-violence-prevention-programs

https://coachescorner.org/

https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/programs/44999999/safe-dates/print/

Communication That Connects with Rural Audiences



Lead With Shared Values

Safety, family well-being, responsibility, community strength



Framing

Frame help-seeking as practical support, community resilience



Trusted Messengers

Use trusted messengers with existing relationships



Practical Language

Use plain language and locally meaningful examples



AVOID:
Deficit-based descriptions of rural communities

Taking Action Across CDC Grant Programs



Identify shared risk and protective factors



Map overlapping partners, infrastructure, and outreach channels



Coordinate community participation and prevention messages



Share evaluation measures, successes, and lessons learned



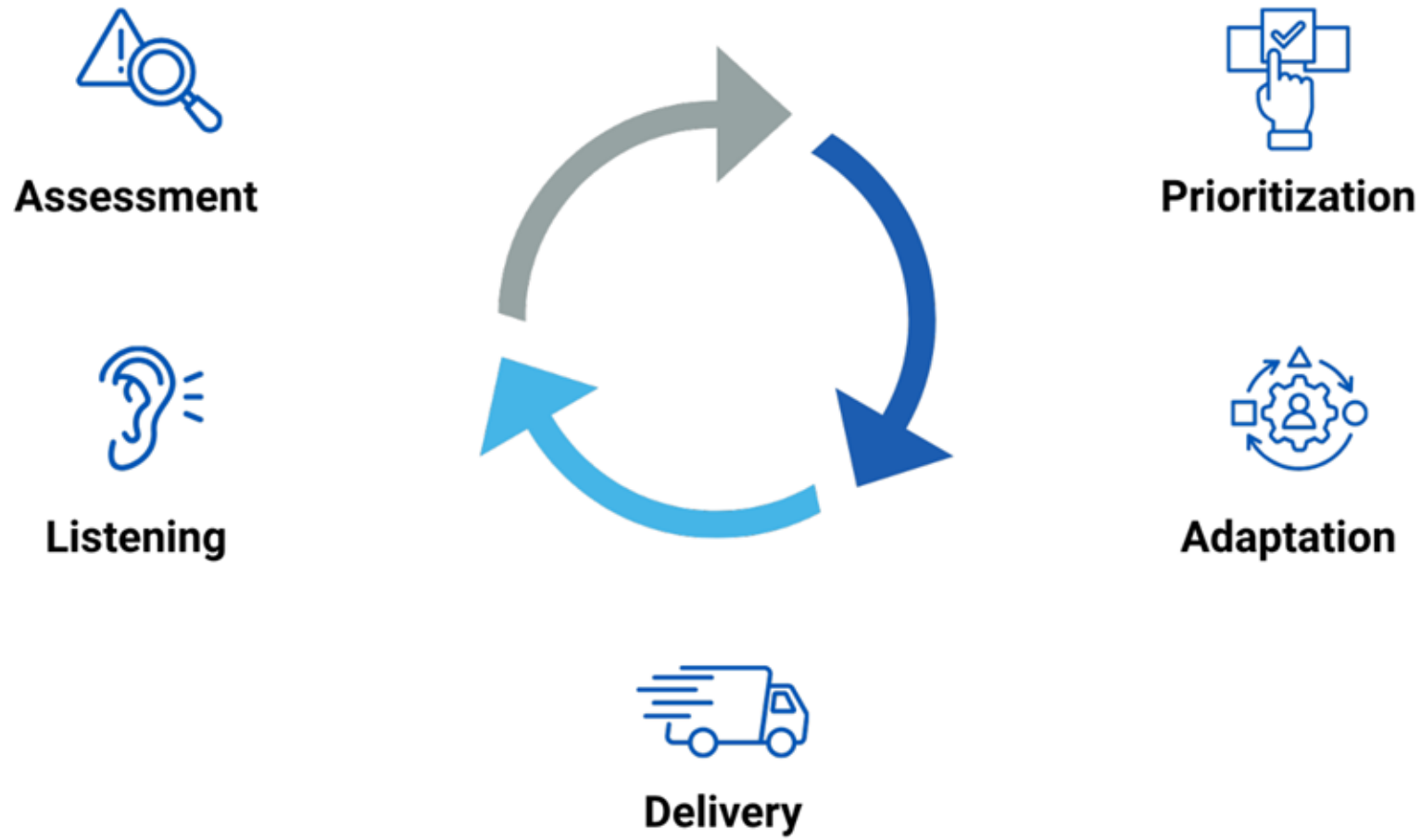
Preserve specialized expertise while creating common upstream goals

What existing partnership or service could you build on to connect prevention work across programs?

Chat Question



A Practical Rural Prevention Cycle



Closing Message

- Violence prevention is part of a broader **community-well-being strategy**
- Rural assets: **trust, relationships, local knowledge, and mutual aid**
- Durable progress comes from addressing **upstream conditions**
- Align around **shared protective factors** to extend grants' impact



Resources

RURAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING PLAN

- Rural Public Health 101
- Partnering with Rural Communities
- Risk Management
- Overview of Environmental Public Health
- Data Skills for Rural Public Health
- Local Public Health Policy In Rural Communities

VETOVIOLENCE

https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/

RHI HUB

https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/violence-and-abuse

Thank You

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www.cdc.gov/ruralhealth
ruralhealth@cdc.gov

For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 https://www.cdc.gov/
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The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

What is one strength in a rural community you live in or work with that you now see as an opportunity for prevention?

Chat Question



Join us on Thursday for Part 2!





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