

Think Piece

The Public Health Approach: Building Safe and Inclusive Communities

A public health approach to safe and inclusive communities recognizes that the quality of both the social and physical environments influence individual and community health and well-being. This is because health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love. Health is created by caring for oneself and others, by being able to take decisions and have control over one's life circumstances, and by ensuring that the society one lives in creates conditions that allow the attainment of health by all its members.

Violence Prevention

Violence takes many more forms than physical blows or wounds. It includes sexual assault, neglect, verbal attacks, insults, threats, harassment and other psychological abuses. Violence occurs in homes, workplaces, public institutions, schools, health care facilities and the street.

A public health approach considers that violence, rather than being the result of any single factor, is the outcome of multiple risk factors and causes. Strategies that prevent one type of violence and that address shared underlying factors have the potential to prevent a number of different types of violence.

Prevention strategies at the individual level promote attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that prevent violence. Prevention strategies at the relationship level may include parenting or family-focused prevention programs, and mentoring and peer programs designed to reduce conflict, foster problem-solving skills, and promote healthy relationships.

Prevention strategies at the community level impact the social and physical environment – for example, by reducing social isolation, improving economic and housing opportunities in neighborhoods, as well as the climate, processes, and policies within school and workplace settings.

Societal factors include social and cultural norms that support violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflicts. Other societal factors include the health, economic, educational and social policies that help to maintain economic or social inequalities between groups in society.

OBJECTIVES of PHABC's SUMMER SCHOOL

By the end of the summer school, attendees will be able to:

- Understand how physical and social environments influence community safety, inclusion and health.
- Identify public health approaches to building safe and inclusive communities.
- Examine innovative and collaborative methods of promoting community safety and inclusion.

SUMMER SCHOOL TOPICS

- Health equity in practice
- Building healthy/safe/inclusive environments
- Healthy relationships and emergency responses
- Community inclusion and literacy



How Inclusive is Your Community?

Recognition of Diversity How well do community services respond to diverse groups in the population including such considerations as physical access, language and culture, safety, income, etc.

Human Development What opportunities exist for individual development of talents, skills and capacities through full participation in community life?

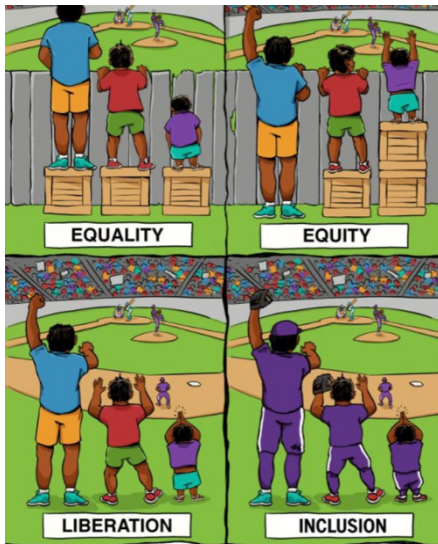
Involvement and Engagement How does decision-making ensure that decisions are made “by” not “for” community members?

Living Conditions How do community facilities, programs and services respond to circumstances in the surrounding community such as housing, safety, transportation, etc.?

Connection to Community Services How well do community organizations work together through partnership and collaboration to support all community members?

Summer School 2018

Think Piece



Interaction Institute for Social Change
Artist: Angus Maguire

An inclusive society identifies the historical and material bases of various forms of exclusion and works actively to overcome them. Public health can address some of the roots of exclusion by acting on the social determinants of health and promoting health equity.

Key areas for public health action are:

- Creating partnerships with different sectors and the public
- Reporting on inequities in health and effective ways to decrease inequities
- Participating in policy development and advocacy on health determinants
- Modifying and orienting interventions and services to reduce inequities

This familiar graphic has been updated. Originally envisioned as a way to illustrate the difference between equality (equal access) and equity (fair opportunity), the cartoon has been extended to express liberation—no fence—and now, inclusion—becoming part of the game. This is a powerful approach to expressing the journey to social justice.

Health Equity in Practice

The Equity Lens in Public Health (ELPH) project documents and describes how public health has been thinking about and working on health equity in recent years. Putting an equity lens into practice is illustrated by SWITCH, a student-led clinic in a low-income neighbourhood in Saskatoon.

Building Healthy/Safe/Inclusive Environments

Community planning decisions can influence public transit, affordable housing, neighbourhood walkability, social activities and access to amenities and services. These elements shape patterns of daily community activity and connection and can significantly influence health and health inequities. Initiatives highlighted at the summer school include the Healthy Built Environment Toolkit, healthy play environments for children, and crime prevention through environmental design.

Healthy Relationships & Emergency Response

A comprehensive public health approach to violence prevention not only addresses an individual's risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence, but also the norms, beliefs and social and economic systems that create the conditions for violence to occur. Violence prevention strategies highlighted at the summer school include policies that promote gender equality, and programs designed to promote healthy relationships free of bullying, harassment and abuse. Emergency responses include responding to social emergencies, and incorporating violence prevention and psychosocial programs into disaster response and recovery.

Community Inclusion & Literacy

Literacy is more than just the ability to read and write. Literacy is the ability to engage fully in activities and opportunities at home, at work, and in the community. People who are more likely to experience poverty and low literacy include recent immigrants, Indigenous people, women, people with disabilities, single parents, seniors and people in prison. Low levels of literacy can be an invisible barrier to social inclusion.

The [PHABC Summer School](#) is a unique and valuable opportunity for people interested in public issues from a range of disciplines to come together to learn from and with each other, with the support of leading thinkers and innovators.

For more information about registration for Summer School contact: staff@phabc.org

For other information about Summer School, please contact: coordinator@phabc.org

Key Sources:

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/youth/youth_violence/en/

<http://www.sparc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/project-diversity-facilitators-handbook.pdf>

http://nccdh.ca/images/uploads/PHR_EN_Final.pdf

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DHm9HPCV0AAKXJu.jpg>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/ottawa-charter-health-promotion-international-conference-on-health-promotion.html>