

The Social Ecological Model of Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention use a four-level, social ecological model to identify potential areas for prevention activities:



Individual level influences are personal factors that increase the likelihood of becoming an IPV victim or perpetrator. Examples include attitudes and beliefs that support IPV, isolation, and a family history of violence. Prevention strategies at this level are often designed to promote attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that support intimate partnerships based on mutual respect, equality, and trust. Specific approaches may include mentoring and education.

Interpersonal relationship level influences are factors that increase risk due to relationships with peers, intimate partners, and family members. A person's closest social circle—peers, partners and family members—can shape an individual's behavior and range of experience. Prevention strategies at this level may include education and peer programs designed to promote intimate partnerships based on mutual respect, equality, and trust.

Community level influences are factors that increase risk based on individual experiences and relationships with community and social environments such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods. Prevention strategies at this level are typically designed to impact the climate, processes and policies in a given system. Social norm and social marketing campaigns are often used to foster community climates that promote intimate partnerships based on mutual respect, equality, and trust.

Societal level influences are larger, macro-level factors that influence IPV, such as gender inequality, religious or cultural belief systems, societal norms, and economic or social policies. Prevention strategies at this level typically involve collaborations by multiple partners to promote social norms, policies, and laws that support gender equity and foster intimate partnerships based on mutual respect, equality, and trust.