



PTTC HHS REGION 4
Southeast

Policy Webinar 1: Foundations of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

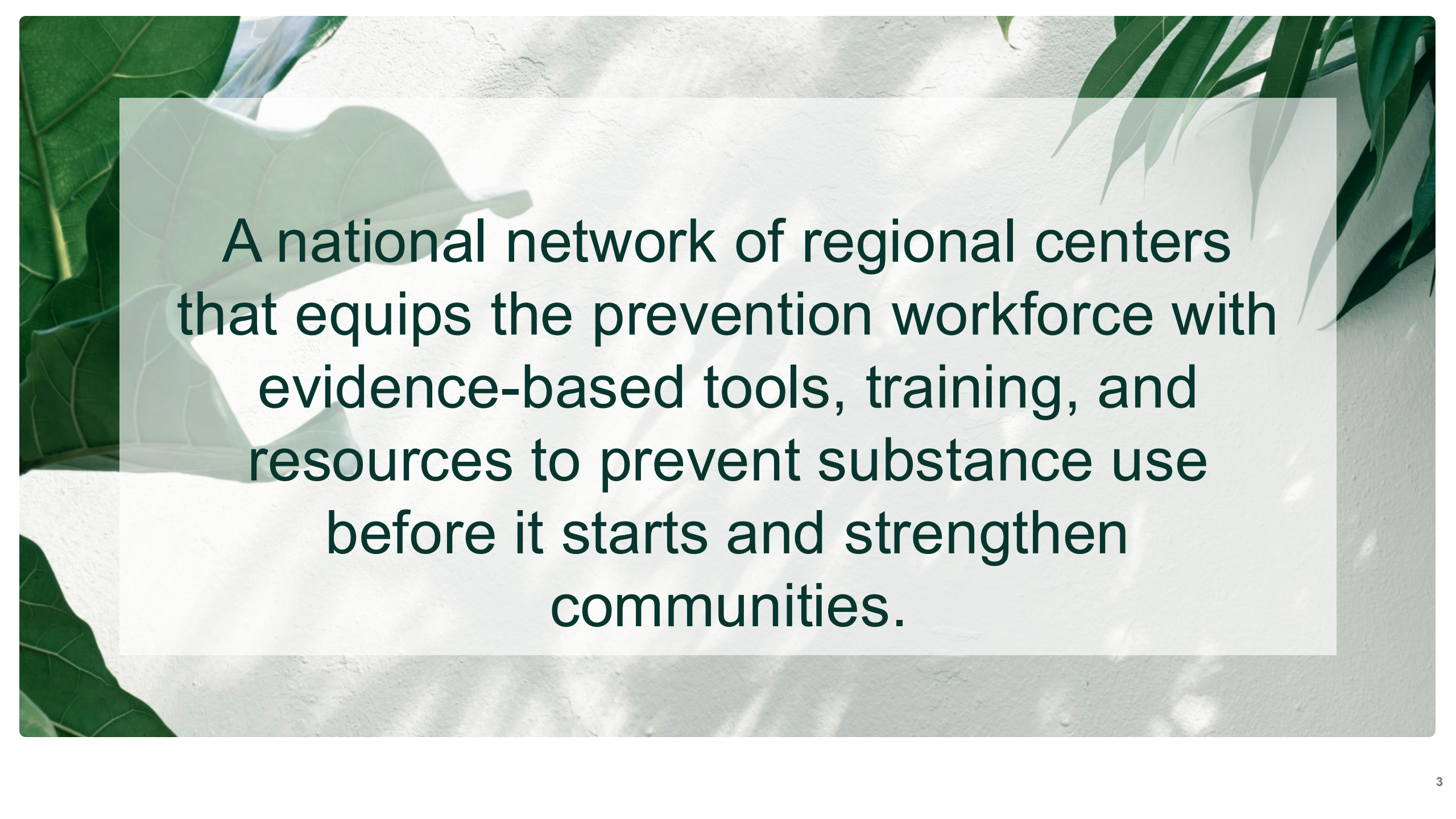
Mark Wolfson, Traci Toomey, Matthew Rossheim

April 29, 2026



Acknowledgement

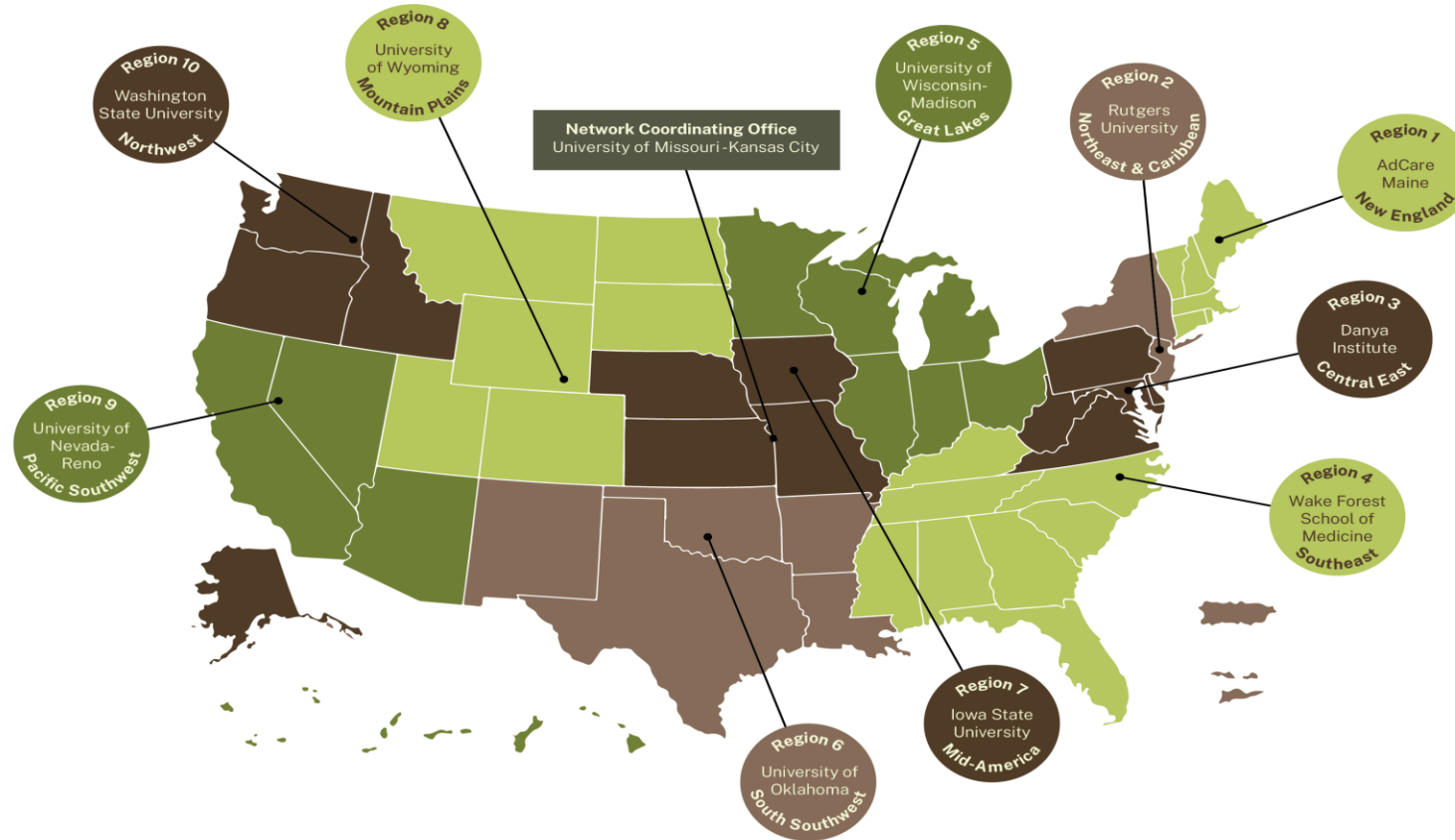
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- Published by the **Southeast PTTC**



A national network of regional centers that equips the prevention workforce with evidence-based tools, training, and resources to prevent substance use before it starts and strengthen communities.



PTTC HHS REGION 4 Southeast

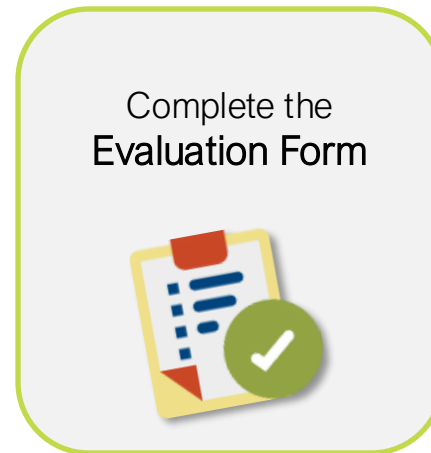


Wake Forest University
School of Medicine



Housekeeping

After the webinar:





Today's Presenters



Mark Wolfson,
PhD

*Professor and Chair
at the University of
California, Riverside*



Traci Toomey,
PhD, MPH

*Professor at
University of
Minnesota*



Matthew Rossheim,
*PhD, MPH, CPH,
FAAHB*

*Associate Professor
at University*



Learning Competency & Objectives

- Competency: Analyze the Role of Policy Interventions in ATOD Prevention
- Learning Objectives:
 - Discuss the benefits of policy interventions
 - Describe theory/evidence for policy interventions
 - Discuss prevention professionals' role in policy

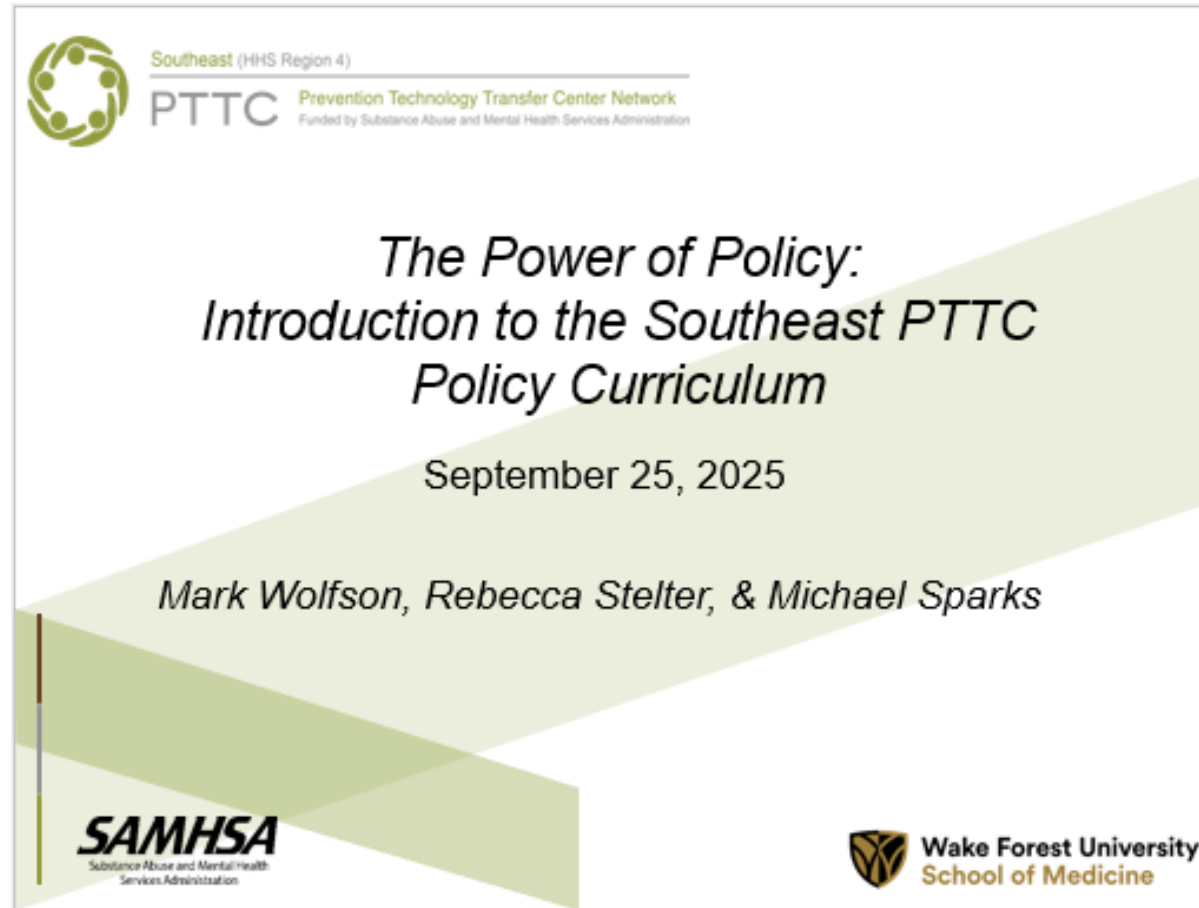


Agenda for Today's Webinar

- Southeast PTTC's New Policy Curriculum
- Why Policy?
 - Benefits (and Costs) of Policy Interventions
- Policy Theory and Frameworks
- Policy Evidence
- Policy Roles for People Working in Prevention
- Q & A



Southeast PTTC's New Policy Curriculum



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFSqpi613Js>

Motivation

Growth in Scientific
Support Demonstrating
Efficacy of Local ATOD
Policies

Limited (but Growing!)
Resources to Support
Effective ATOD Policy
Development

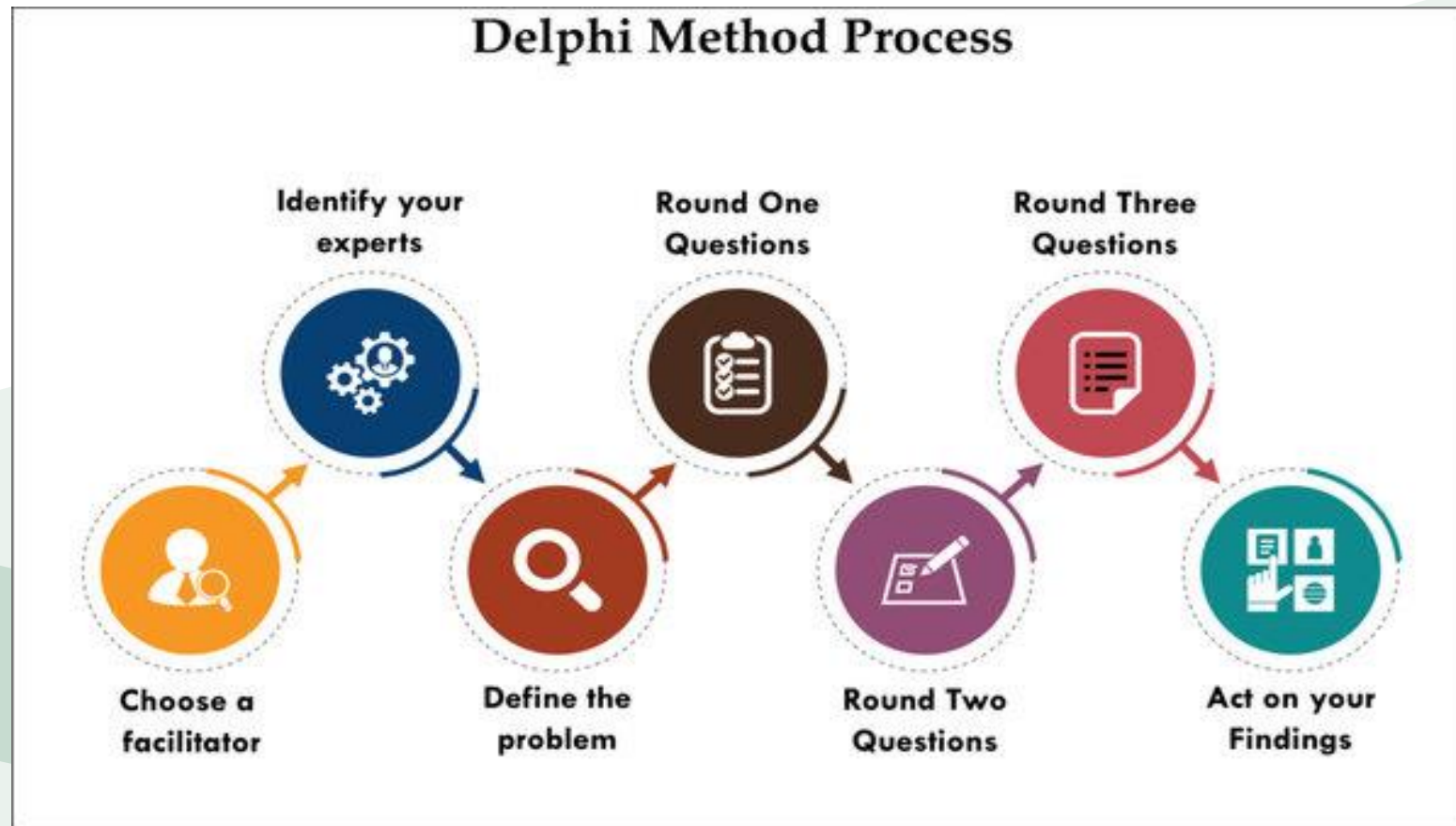
Southeast PTTC & Partner
Expertise in Supporting
Coalition Policy
Implementation &
Building Capacity of the
Prevention Workforce on
Policy

Southeast PTTC has
Developed a New Policy
Curriculum for People
Working in Prevention!

Our process to developing the policy advocacy curriculum: The Delphi Method



Rebecca Stelter, Ph.D.
Innovation Research &
Training





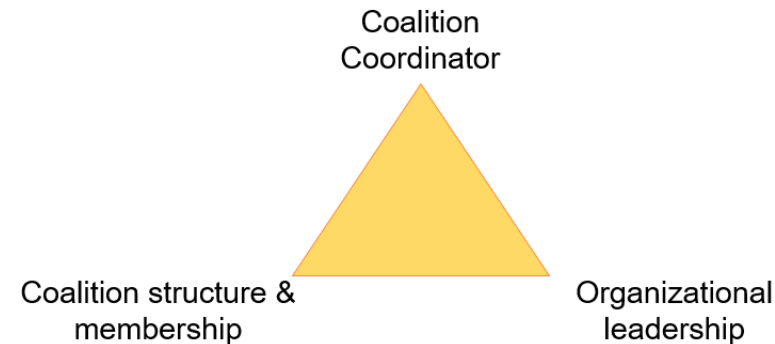
Key Areas Addressed in the Curriculum

Knowledge

Domain 1: Role of policy for prevention/reduction of ATOD problems
Domain 2: Knowledge of policy systems
Domain 3: Policy research & analysis skills
Domain 4: Policy development & adoption
Domain 5: Policy implementation
Domain 6: Evaluation of policy
Domains 7-11: Substance-specific

Readiness

Factors Affecting Successful Policy Work



Skills in Policy Implementation





Key Areas Addressed in the Curriculum

Knowledge

Domain 1: Role of policy for prevention/reduction of ATOD problems

Domain 2: Knowledge of policy systems

Domain 3: Policy research & analysis skills

Domain 4: Policy development & adoption

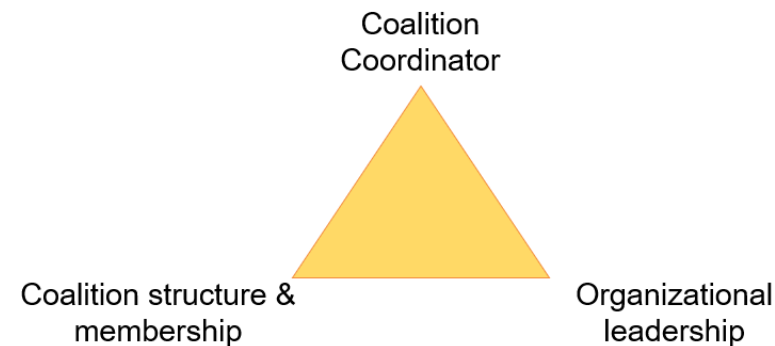
Domain 5: Policy implementation

Domain 6: Evaluation of policy

Domains 7-11: Substance-specific

Readiness

Factors Affecting Successful Policy Work



Skills



Phases of the Southeast PTTC Policy Curriculum

Phase 1: Policy Foundations (Webinars)

Building knowledge about substance use prevention policy advocacy

Requirements:

- Complete the 3-part webinars (certificate available after each webinar)
- Complete and pass knowledge test after each webinar

Phase 2 – Step 1: Assessing Coalition Coordinator Readiness (COP)

Assessing coordinator interest for substance use prevention policy implementation

Pre-Requisites:

- Phase 1's 3-part webinar series
- Attend readiness orientation web.
- Power of Policy asynchronous training

Course Requirements

- Complete coordinator readiness assessment activities
- Attend 4 COP sessions

Phase 2 – Step 2: Assessing Coalition/Organization Readiness (COP)

Assessing and building coalition/organization readiness for substance use prevention policy implementation

Pre-Requisites:

- Complete Phase 2-Step 1 coordinator readiness COP
- **Course Requirements:**
- Complete readiness activities
- Attend 4 COP sessions

Phase 3: 10 – Step 1 Implementing 10 – Step Policy Process (Training)

Building skills for substance use prevention policy advocacy

Pre-Requisites:

- Complete Phase 2 – Step 2 coalition/org readiness COP
- Complete Policy 10-Steps asynchronous training

Course Requirements:

- Attend 4 session training to prepare for policy implementation

Phase 3: Step 2 Policy Implementation Community of Practice (COP)

Building skills for substance use prevention policy advocacy

Pre-Requisites:

- Complete Phase 3 – 10 step Policy Training

Course Requirements:

- Attend 4 session COP to work on policy implementation



A Definition (CDC)

Policy is a law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive, or voluntary practice of governments and other institutions.

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Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: *Is there a need for a new
ATOD policy curriculum?*



Bringing in the audience...



Question: *Is there a need for a new ATOD policy curriculum?*

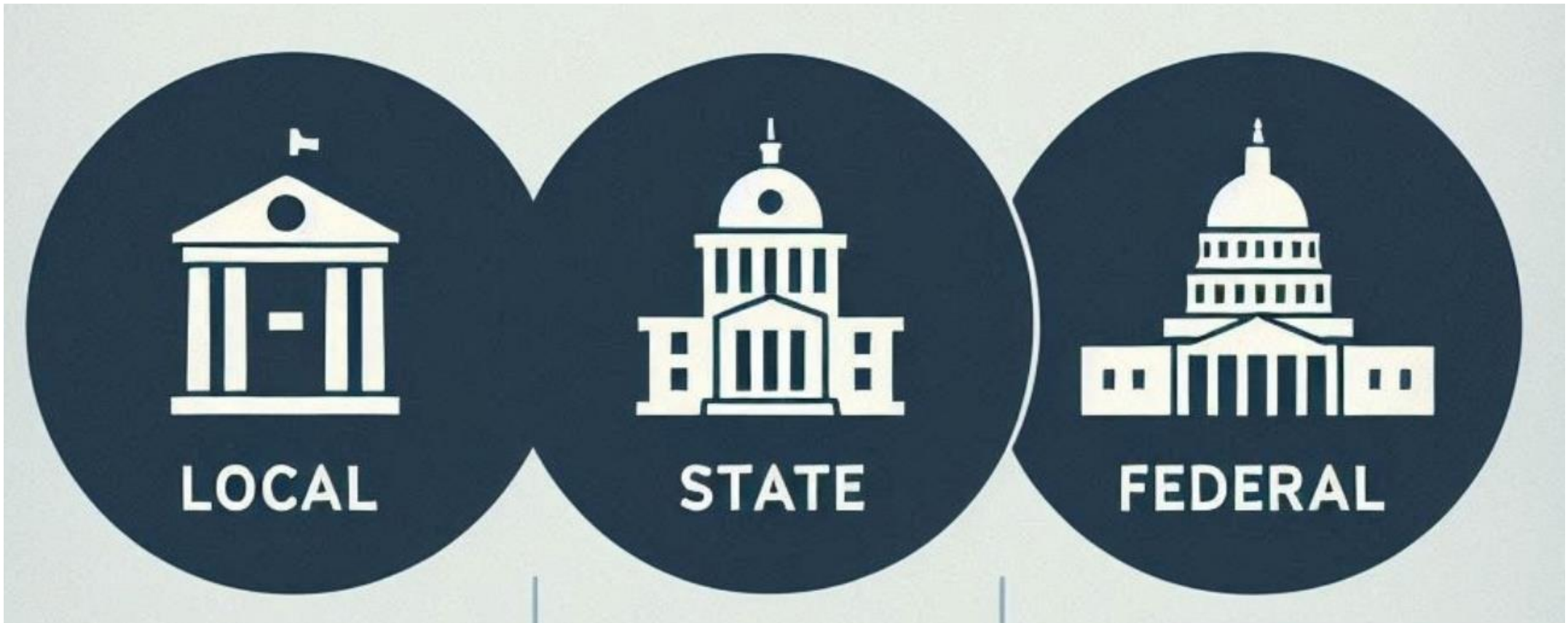
POLL QUESTION

I have:

- A. Led the implementation of a coalition-based policy campaign
- B. Been a part of a team working to implement a coalition-based policy campaign
- C. I have not been part of any coalition-based policy work

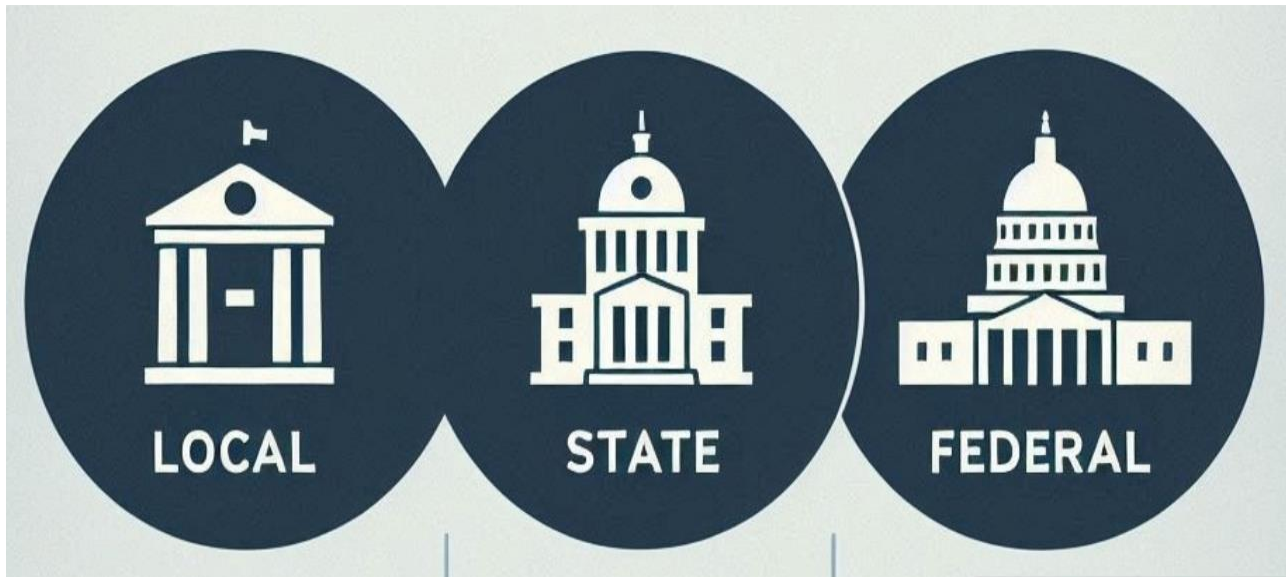


Levels of Policy





Levels of Policy



International



ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY

ALCOHOL EXAMPLE

The local service club adopts a policy requiring alcohol at club events be served by people who have received responsible beverage service (RBS) training, in order to reduce the potential for DWIs.

OPIOID EXAMPLE

The ABCD Pharmacy chain adopts a corporate policy to install and maintain a prescription drug drop box at each of its stores to reduce the availability and diversion of opioids and other prescription drugs with abuse potential.

TOBACCO EXAMPLE

Bob's local convenience store will no longer sell tobacco products to reduce rates of tobacco use and improve community health.

PUBLIC POLICY

ALCOHOL EXAMPLE

The Anytown City Council passes a local ordinance holding social hosts accountable for loud and unruly parties on their property. Thus, reducing the negative consequences of these parties involving partygoers and neighborhood nuisances. (Sometimes called Social Host Ordinances.

OPIOID EXAMPLE

City council will require that all pharmacies in the city limits must provide a permanent prescription drug drop box at their location to reduce the availability and diversion of opioids and other prescription drugs with abuse potential.

TOBACCO EXAMPLE

The City Council passes a local ordinance prohibiting the use of tobacco products in all City- owned and managed parks to reduce youth and adult exposure to second-hand smoke and environmental concerns associated with tobacco litter.



Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: Where do you think the “action is” in policy in the current period – public versus institutional? International, federal, state, local?



Bringing in the audience...



Question: *Where do you think the “action is” in policy in the current period – public versus institutional? International, federal, state, local?*



Why is it important to learn about policy?





Why Policy?



It Can Be a Highly Effective Strategy for Behavior Change & Population Health



It is a Central Element of Public Health and Prevention Practice



There Are Critical Legal, Ethical, and Philosophical Issues associated with Public Health Policy



It Can Be a Highly Effective Strategy for Behavior Change & Population Health



Why A Minimum Legal Drinking Age of 21 Works



For Everyone
MAY 15, 2024

- Setting the legal age to 21 for buying alcohol has helped protect health by:
 - Fewer motor vehicle crashes
 - Before the national law was in place, states that raised their MLDA to 21 years had a 16% drop in motor vehicle crashes²
 - Less underage drinking
 - After states raised their MLDA to 21 years in 1984, the percentage of people who drank before turning 21 went down.
 - From 1985 to 1991, the percentage of young people (aged 18 to 20) who reported drinking alcohol during the past month dropped almost 20%—from 59% to 40%.^{A3}
 - Young adults also drank less alcohol when states raised their MLDA.
 - From 1985 to 1991, the percentage of young people (aged 21 to 25) who reported drinking during the past month dropped almost 15%— from 70% to 56%.^{A3}
 - Safer, healthier people and communities
 - The MLDA of 21 years helps lower the risk of developing alcohol and other substance use disorders, for those who drink alcohol. It also supports families and communities by leading to fewer harmful births, lower rates of suicide and homicide, and fewer deaths from alcohol poisoning.



It Can Be a Highly Effective Strategy for Behavior Change & Population Health

- However, it can also:
 - Be Ineffective (no effects)
 - Have unintended consequences
 - Contribute to maintaining or increasing health disparities



Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: *What is your favorite example of an ATOD policy that works?*



Bringing in the audience...

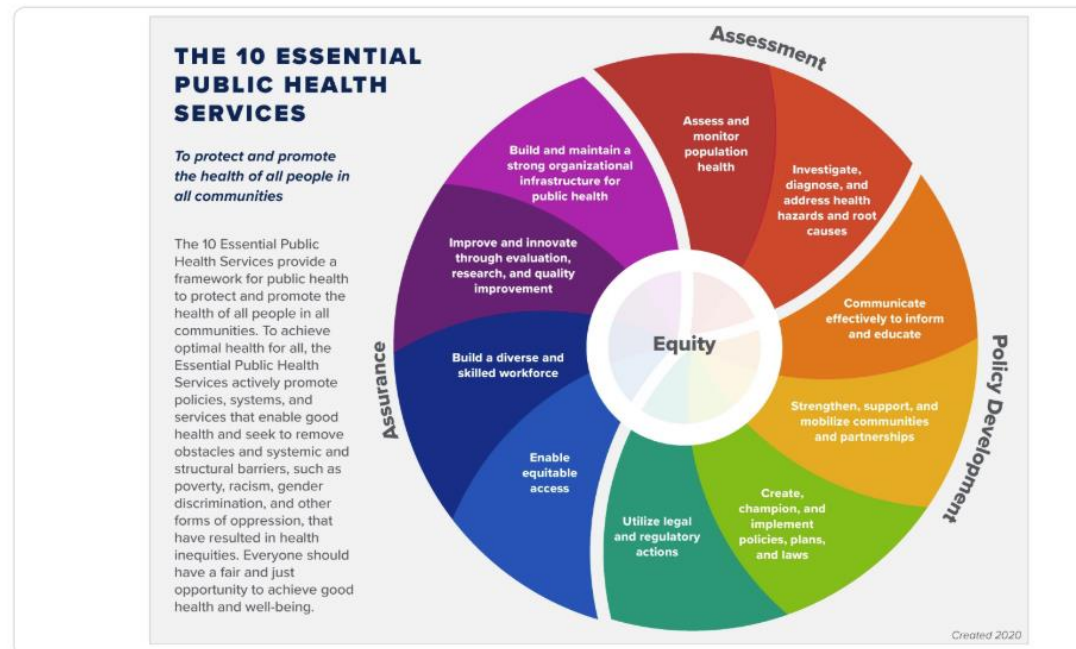


Question: *What is your favorite example of an ATOD policy that works?*



It is a Central Element of Public Health and Prevention Practice

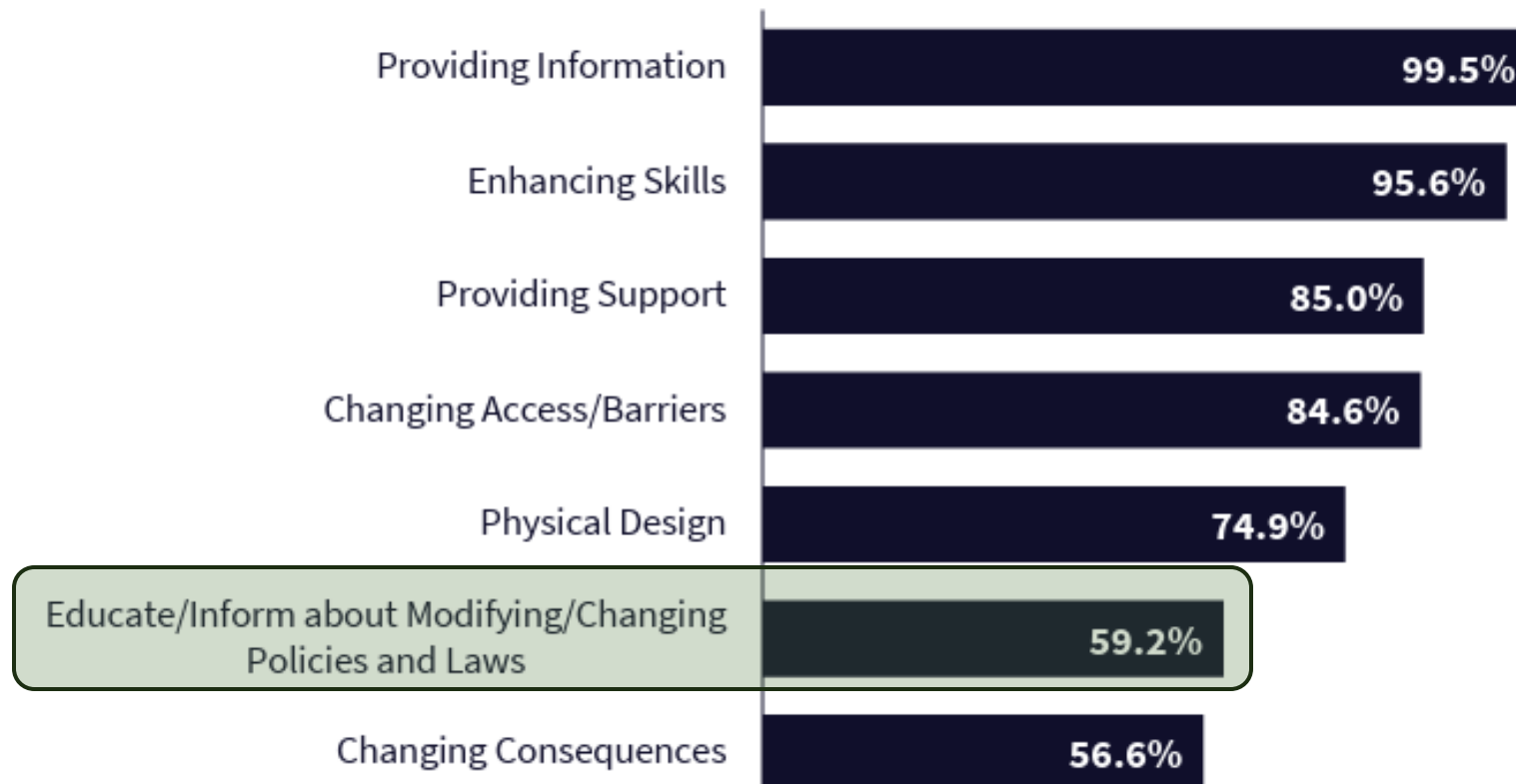
10 Essential Public Health Services (Revised, 2020)





It is a Central Element of Public Health and Prevention Practice

Figure 6. Percentage of DFC Coalitions Implementing the Seven Strategies for Community Change by Number of Strategies Engaged





It is a Central Element of Public Health and Prevention Practice

Table C.6: Educating/Informing about Modifying/Changing Policies or Laws Activities

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF COALITIONS ENGAGED	PERCENTAGE OF COALITIONS ENGAGED
School: Policies promoting drug-free schools	168	22.5%
Citizen enabling/Liability: Laws/public policies concerning adult (including parent) social enabling or liability such as social host ordinances; policies regarding Narcan/naloxone administration; Good Samaritan Laws)	122	16.38%
Underage Use: Laws/public policies focusing on use, possession, or behavior under the influence for minors	119	16.0%
Supplier Promotion/Liability: Laws/public policies concerning supplier advertising, promotion, liability, (e.g., server liability, product placement, happy hours, drink specials, mandatory compliance checks, responsible beverage service; Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs)	81	10.9%
Outlet Location/Density: Laws/public policies concerning limitation and restrictions of location and density of alcohol or marijuana outlets	78	10.5%
Treatment/Prevention: Laws/public policies promoting treatment or prevention alternatives (e.g., diversion treatment programs for underage substance use)	81	10.9%
Sales Restrictions: Laws/public policies concerning restrictions on product sales (e.g., alcohol at gas stations)	75	10.1%
Cost: Laws/public policies concerning cost (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana tax, fees)	50	6.7%
Workplace: Policies promoting drug-free workplaces	40	5.4%
Other Educating and Informing about Modifying/Changing Policies Activities	67	9.0%
<i>Summary: Educating and Informing about Modifying/Changing Policies or Laws</i>	441	59.2%

Source: DFC 2024 Progress Report



There Are Critical Legal, Ethical, and Philosophical Issues associated with Public Health Policy

- Police Powers/Public Health Authority of the State
 - → Authority of Government to Establish and Enforce Public Health Measures
 - Examples:
 - Isolation
 - Quarantine
 - Inspection



Government Has Authority to Act to Promote Public Health

- States have an inherent authority to protect, preserve, and promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the people, termed police powers.
- Police powers enable states to preserve the public health in areas ranging from injury and disease prevention to sanitation, waste disposal, and environmental protection.



But that authority is not unlimited!

- The Constitution safeguards individual interests in autonomy, privacy, liberty, and property.
- The Supreme Court often defers to public health authorities in matters of public health, but engages in strict scrutiny if government interferes with fundamental freedoms or discriminates against a suspect class.

And there has been a historical trend—
reinforced by reactions to measures to control
COVID-19—to challenge public health



AJPH RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

Judicial Review of Public Health Powers Since the Start of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Trends and Implications

Wendy E. Parmet, JD, and Faith Khalik, JD

 See also Parmet and Erwin, p. 267, Wiley, p. 269, Gostin, p. 272, Hodge et al., p. 275, and Platt et al., p. 288.



Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: Have you observed greater pushback against ATOD policy in recent years based on arguments of individual liberties and government overreach?



Bringing in the audience...

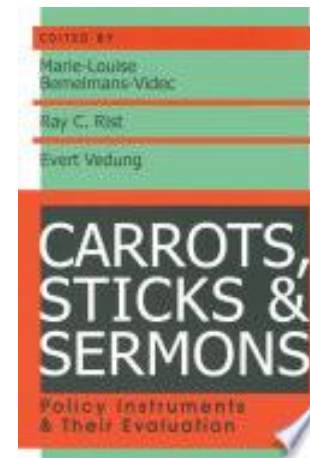


Question: *Have you observed greater pushback against ATOD policy in recent years based on arguments of individual liberties and government overreach?*



Policy Theory and Frameworks

- Policy Instruments



- The 4 Ps (Place, Price, Product, Promotion)

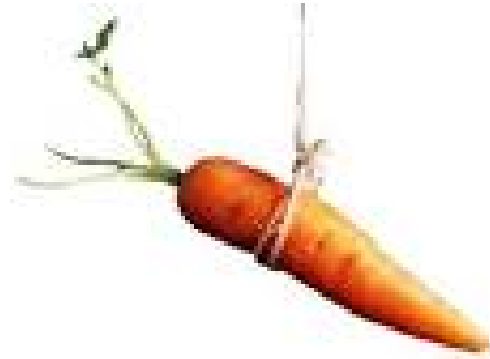




Policy Instruments



Regulation
(Sticks)

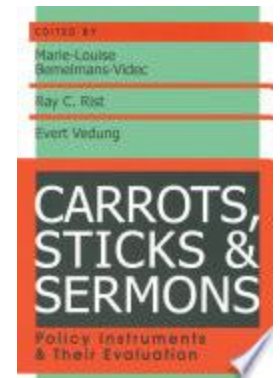


Economic Means
(Carrots)



Information
(Sermons)

Adapted from E. Vedung. 2010. Policy Instruments: Typologies and Theories.





Policies sometimes involve a combination of carrots, sticks, and sermons





Policy Instruments used in Alcohol Control



Regulation
(Sticks)



Economic Measures
(Carrots)



Information
(Sermons)



Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: Have you found it useful in your work to consider the advantages and disadvantages of using sticks, carrots, and sermons?



Addressing The Four P's: Place, Price, Product, & Promotion

PLACE



PRICE



PRODUCT



PROMOTION





A recent example of application of the 4 Ps model

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Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs

est. 1940
CENTER OF ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE USE STUDIES

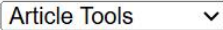
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The Evolving Alcohol Landscape: Implications for Public Health and Policy

Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, 86(3), 323–329 (2025). 

Matthew E. Rossheim,^{a,*} Ryan D. Treffers,^b Alicia C. Sparks,^c Michael Sparks,^d Kayla K. Tillett,^a [Show All...](#)
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Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey

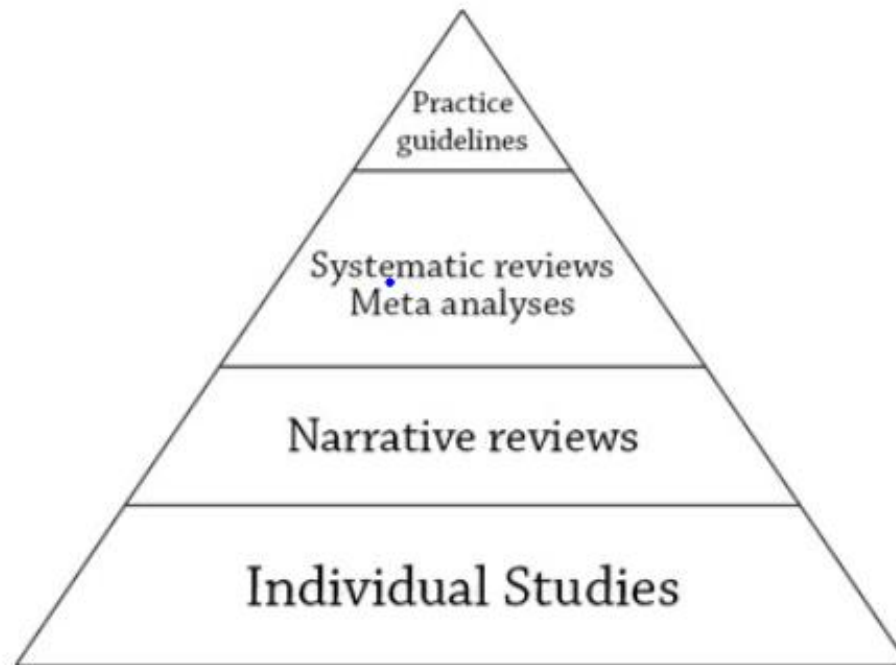


Matthew Rossheim

Question: *What theories or frameworks for understanding policy have you found useful in your work?*



How can I know whether a policy will be effective?



Source: Brownson RC, Baker EA, Deshpande ADD, Gillespie KN. Evidence-Based Public Health. 3rd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press; 2018.

Figure 8.1: Hierarchy of scientific evidence for evidence-based decision making.



The Community Guide

What works to
promote healthy
communities.

www.thecommunityguide.org



Some Additional Resources on Policy Effectiveness

- Blueprints for Health Youth Development - <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/>
- SAMHSA Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center - <https://www.samhsa.gov/libraries/evidence-based-practices-resource-center>
- CDC ENGAGE - <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/php/interventions/youth-substance-use-prevention.html>
- Preventive Services Task Force - <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/>



Updated April 15, 2026



CPSTF Recommends Community Interventions Involving Coalitions or Partnerships to Prevent Substance Use Among Youth

Systematic review evidence shows interventions reduce initiation and use of cannabis, tobacco, alcohol, illegal substances.



Reducing Alcohol-Impaired Driving

Intervention	CPSTF Finding
0.08% Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Laws	 Recommended (strong evidence) August 2000
Ignition Interlocks	 Recommended (strong evidence) April 2006
Lower BAC Laws for Young or Inexperienced Drivers	 Recommended (sufficient evidence) June 2000
Maintaining Current Minimum Legal Drinking Age (MLDA) Laws	 Recommended (strong evidence) August 2000
Mass Media Campaigns	 Recommended (strong evidence) June 2002
Multicomponent Interventions with Community Mobilization	 Recommended (strong evidence) June 2005
Publicized Sobriety Checkpoint Programs	 Recommended (strong evidence) August 2012

<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/pages/task-force-findings-motor-vehicle-injury.html#alcohol-impaired-driving>



Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: What advice do you have on policy effectiveness for people working in communities?



Policy Roles for People Working in Prevention



Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities. (2019). *Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities through policy and advocacy: A toolkit for trauma-informed, cross-sector networks*. Philadelphia, PA: Health Federation of Philadelphia.

<https://marc.healthfederation.org/tools/infographic/network-roles-policy-and-advocacy>



Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: What are some of the ways you've seen people engage in policy efforts?



Bringing in the audience...



Question: *What are some ways you've seen people engage in policy efforts?*



Review

- Southeast PTTC's New Policy Curriculum
- Why Policy?
 - Benefits (and Costs) of Policy Interventions
- Policy Theory and Frameworks
- Policy Evidence
- Policy Roles for People Working in Prevention



Resources!

Please check our website in the next 2-3 weeks for resources related to this webinar

<https://pttcnetwork.org/center/southeast-pttc/>



Bringing in Our Expert Panel...



Traci Toomey



Matthew Rossheim

Question: *What else is important for people to know?*



Bringing in the audience...



Question: *What else would you like to know?*



PTTC HHS REGION 4

Southeast

Q&A



<https://ttc-gpra.org/P?s=966644>



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Thank you!