



Reimagining Prevention: **What Actually Works for Youth and Families Today?**

Evidence Lens – What research and international standards tell us about what works in prevention

José Luis Benítez

CIJ | ISSUP Mexico

jose.benitez@cij.gob.mx



We don't lack evidence...

- We struggle to use it effectively -

- **Prevention works.**
- **But not all prevention works.**



Are we using evidence to build systems or just isolated programmes?

Prevention is not only about avoiding risk.

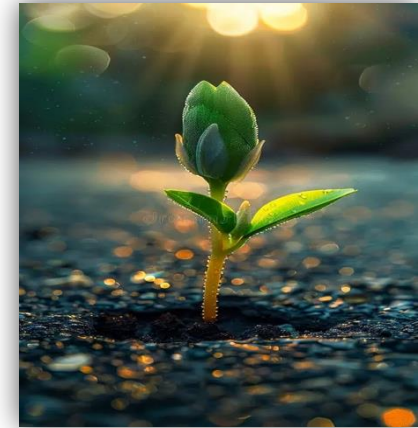
It is about creating conditions for health development.



Relationships



Environments



Opportunities

Prevention has evolved



Before

- Substances
- Individual responsibility
- Control

Now

- People and their contexts
- Development
- Health and systems

From preventing behaviours to shaping conditions

The challenge

The problem is not just what we do, but how fragmented our efforts are.

- Isolated programmes
- Limited reach and impact
- Weak long-term sustainability

Without systems, evidence has limited impact.



What does evidence tell us?

1. Prevention works

- It should be evidence-based.

2. Protection matters

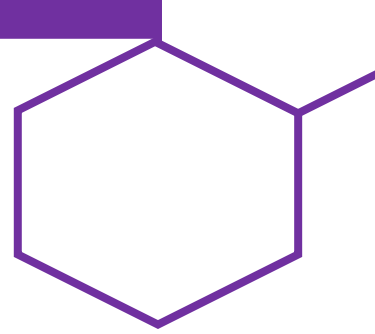
- Family, skills, and environments.
- In different settings.

3. Timing is critical

- Across the life course.



Effective prevention is intentional, structured, and driven by evidence.



Evidence is not enough – standards guide action

- Research tells us what works.
- Standards show how to do it well.
- They enable scaling, adaptation, and sustainability.

Standards make evidence actionable.

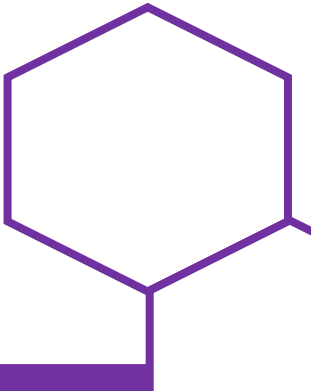


What do standards consistently prioritize?



- Early prevention (childhood and adolescence).
- Family-based interventions.
- School-based social and emotional learning.
- Community and environmental strategies.
- Life-course approach.

Evidence must be applied – not only known



What effective prevention requires



Early and sustained

- Childhood and adolescence.
- Life-course approach.

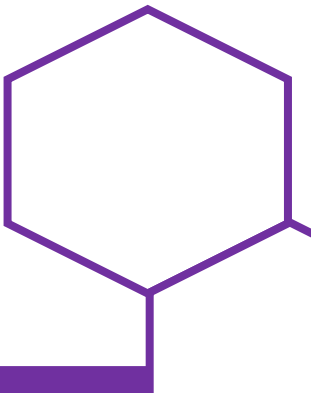
Where it happens

- Family (relationships, parenting, emotional support).
- School (social and emotional learning).

Beyond individual

- Community and environmental.

Early. Sustained. Multi-level.

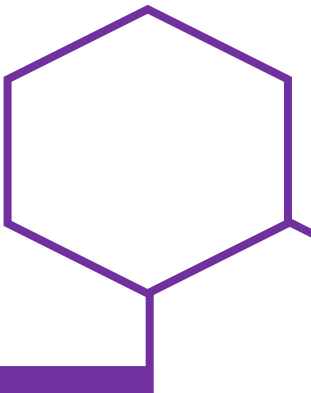


What evidence tells us to avoid



- One-off or short-term interventions.
- Information-only campaigns.
- Fear-based approaches.
- Isolated programmes.

Not everything called “prevention” is effective.



Translating evidence into practice

- Different cultural contexts.
- Systems capacity varies.
- Need for adaptation without losing effectiveness.

➤ **Evidence \neq implementation \neq sustainability**

The question is not if it works – but how to make it work here.



If prevention is to be effective...

- Move **beyond individual programmes.**
- Build **integrated systems.**

Prevention works when we **focus on people, relationships, and their contexts.**

Evidence is the starting point...not the end point.

Thank you

What works is known. Let's make it work.

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