Normalization of Prevention Principles and Practices

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Knowledge Amassed after 40 Years of Research

Problems underlying high risk behaviors <u>all</u> involve poor self-regulation and are preventable if appropriately addressed.

Adversity, inequities, stress, and trauma are often root causes.

Both the risk factors themselves (e.g., adversity, structural factors) and their negative impacts (e.g., dysregulation) are preventable if appropriately addressed.

Evidence-based programs have been developed for the prenatal period through adolescence and emerging adulthood

Programs work best when mapped to underlying mechanisms of the phenomena we wish to prevent

Particularly impactful for disadvantaged children and adolescents.
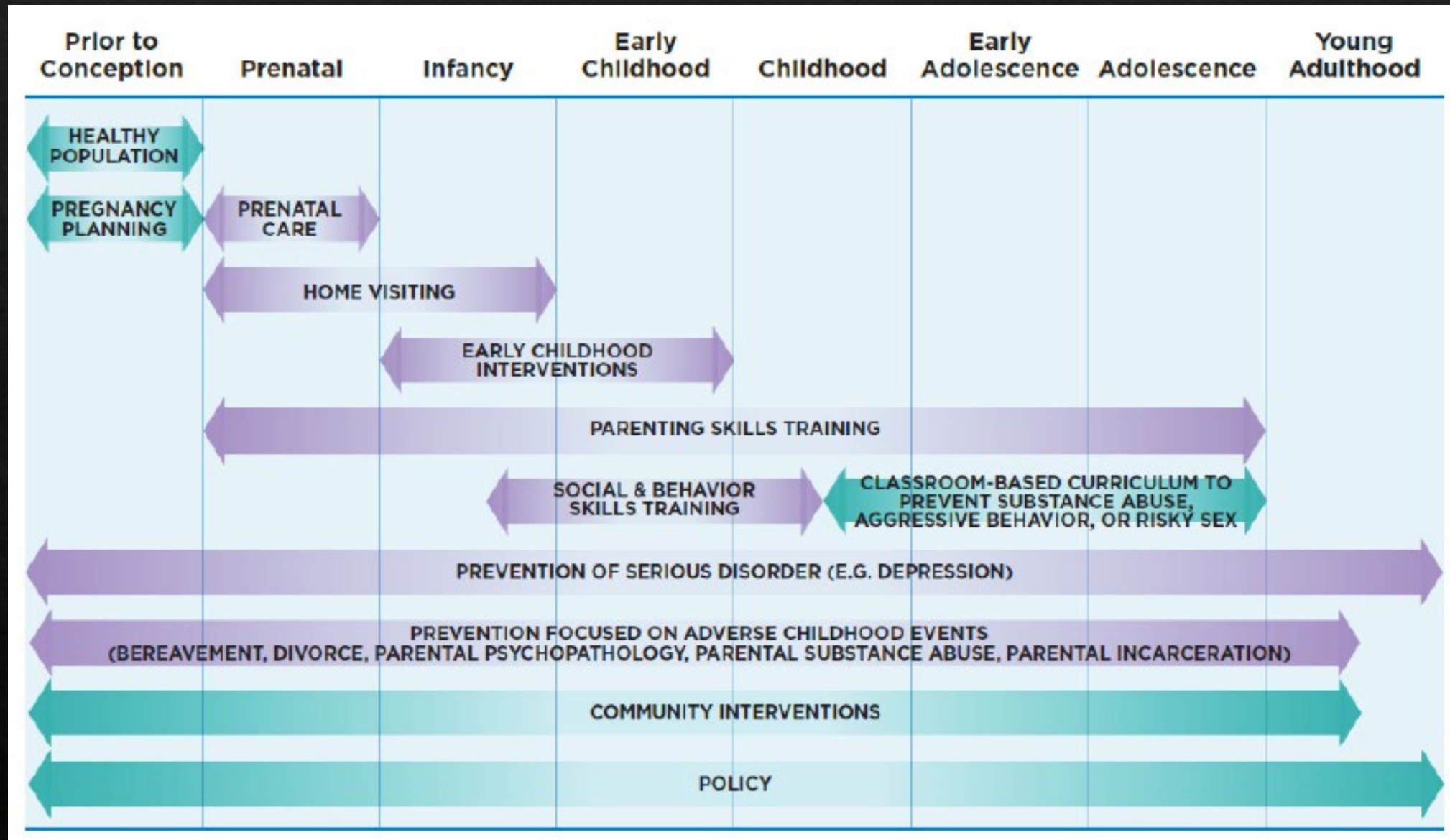
Bread and Butter of Prevention

◈ Prevention research has historically been focused on the development, implementation and scaling of interventions.

◈ The success of this agenda is remarkable.

◈ Increasing and sustaining those impacts can be achieved by:

1. broadening the scope and scale of evidence-based interventions

2. identifying or developing effective methods that advance the institutionalization of those that are most efficacious and generalizable.

◈ Constraint is a function of the reality that the research process is largely dictated by time-limited grants.

"Culture of Prevention"

Public Health Parable

NORMALIZE PREVENTION
Population Level

PROMOTE RESILIENCE
Deliver Proven Practices

INOCULATE
At-Risk Populations

TRIAGE
Reactive Strategies

Creating a healthy society through evidence-based, people-centered ideas.
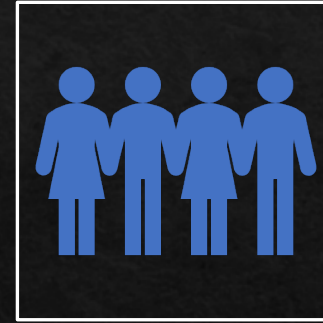
Two Approaches to Normalizing Prevention

Target Entire Communities

- Strengthening and scaling intervention implementation processes and active ingredients

Reform Universal Social Systems

- Changing Minds
- Changing Interactions
- Changing Systems
- Changing Policies

Drivers of Normalization

1. **Increasing knowledge**

   a) Changing attitudes and mindsets extends from understanding of human development and importance of how adults interact with each other and their children.

   b) Making scientific knowledge widely accessible catalyzes change in attitudes and behaviors.

   c) End goal—to spur shift in cultures, priorities & practices that, in turn, influence policies, distribution of resources and system level relationships.

Drivers of Normalization

2. **Incorporating practices/ principles that explain intervention effects into daily lives**

   a) Can transform the way adults interact with each other and their children

   b) These fundamental units of interventions have been shown experimentally to influence specific behaviors.

   c) Integrating a wide range of practices and principles into daily interactions has potential to broadly and sustainably promote health and well-being, independent of any single intervention or grant.

   d) Ultimate effects are a more equitable playing field.

Benefits of Embedding Active Ingredients

◈ Ingredients, kernels, practices and other program components can be incorporated into mindsets, daily interactions and system-level practices.

◈ To extent we have identified them and their ability to impact child development, family functioning, and community health.

◈ Adaptable to multiple settings.

◈ Accommodating of cultural and community characteristics, preferences and needs.

◈ Infinitely adoptable on an individual or systems level.

◈ Have greater potential to exert population level effects than single interventions.

What we've learned about caregiver practices to promote self-regulation

Interacting in warm, responsive ways

Recognizing and responding to child cues

Providing physical and emotional comfort when child is distressed

Modifying the child's environment to decrease demands and stress

Providing consistent routines and structure

Modeling self-calming strategies

Teaching rules, redirecting, and using effective, positive behavior management strategies that are age-appropriate

For preschool children: intentional modeling, monitoring, and coaching of specific, targeted self-regulation skills such as identifying and expressing emotion, calming down, waiting, and solving problems

From home…
to school…
to community…

The Abecedarian Approach

Quality adult-child interactions—serve and return– as frequent and intentional occurrences in 4 contexts.

<u>Language Priority:</u> During spontaneous, unplanned events, practices (Notice, Nudge, Narrate) for picking up on the child's actions or words and prompting new words or actions.

<u>Enriched Caregiving:</u> In the repeated routines of caregiving, the adult create multiple opportunities (Care, Connection, Content) to make it a fruitful learning experience

<u>Conversational Reading</u>: While reading books, the adult uses hierarchical prompts (See, Show, Say) to elicit progressively more sophisticated responses and engagement from the child.

<u>LearningGames®:</u> In purposeful games, the adult sustains interactive play so that the child gradually learns to think ahead, pursue a goal, and solve problems.

What is the evidence?

SCHOOL
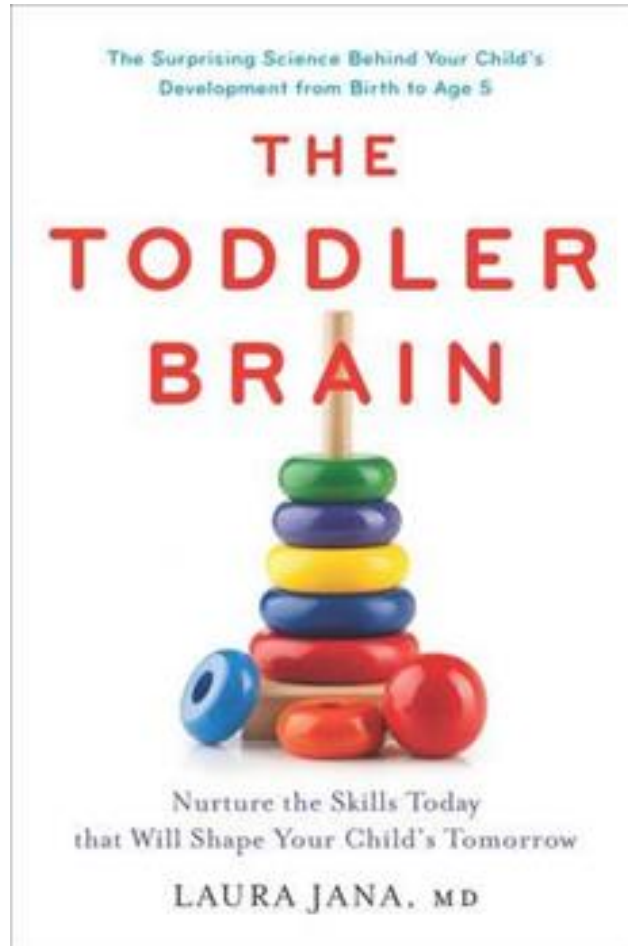
Social Emotional Learning

Each dollar invested in social emotional skill-building programs can return over $11 in benefits, largely by preparing children to become successful adults.

Social emotional skills help children navigate the learning environment, making it more likely they will graduate from both high school and college, opening up a world of opportunity.

Well-developed social emotional skills not only reduce the school readiness gap, they also bolster physical, mental, and behavioral health, helping them to avoid risky behaviors, substance abuse, delinquency, and crime.

Future Proofing

Brain-cognitive functions underlying skill development	Skills specifically needed to succeed in our society	Practices that nurture these skills	Implications for their future
- Executive decision making - Emotional self-regulation - Language - Impulse control - Working memory - Executive attention - Sociability - Time perspective	- Deliberation - Conflict resolution - Persistence - Problem solving and planning - Imagination - Empathy - Curiosity - Organizational skill - Situational awareness	- Play - Communication - Goal setting - Stress reduction and management - Perspective taking - Cooperation - Conflict management - Emotional understanding	- Greater effectiveness - Creativity and innovation - Economic stability - Increased productivity - Healthy relationships - Healthy parenting - Avoidance of disadvantageous choices

Community-Wide Normalizing Strategies

◈ Reducing Stigma

◈ Media coverage

   ◇ News stories re traumatic experiences

   ◇ Commercials

   ◇ Social media

◈ Education

   ◇ Instilling EF building blocks

   ◇ Parenting in middle school

   ◇ Addiction

◈ Training

   ◇ Teachers

   ◇ Mental health providers
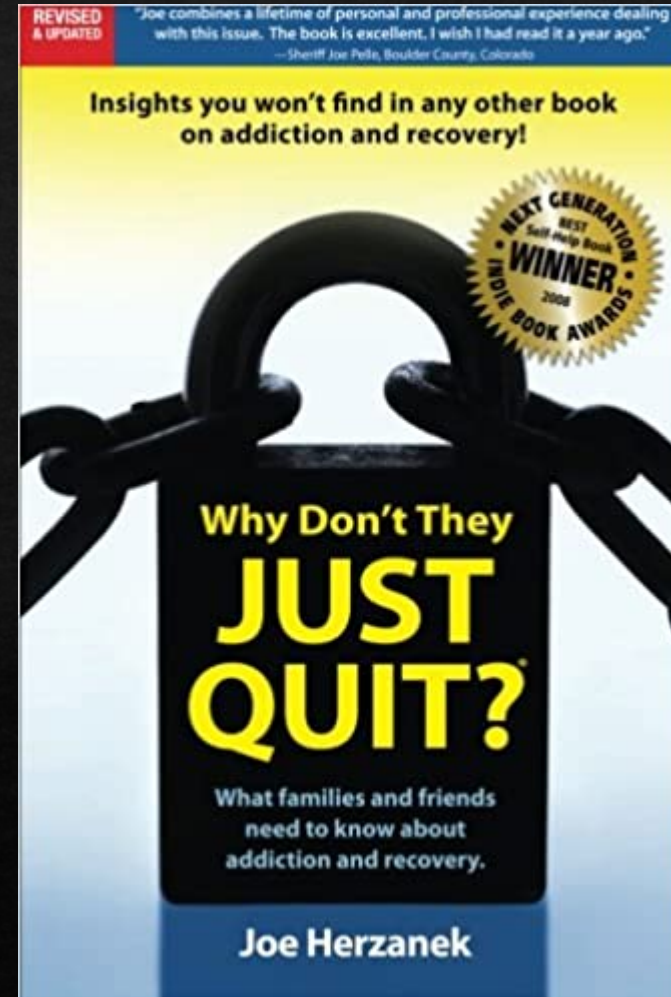
   ◇ Primary care providers

   ◇ First responders

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  - First responders

REVISED & UPDATED

"Joe combines a lifetime of personal and professional experience dealing with this issue. The book is excellent. I wish I had read it a year ago."
—Sheriff Joe Pelle, Boulder County, Colorado

Insights you won't find in any other book on addiction and recovery!

NEXT GENERATION
BEST Self Help Book
WINNER
2008
INDIE BOOK AWARDS

Why Don't They
JUST QUIT?

What families and friends need to know about addiction and recovery.

Joe Herzanek

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   ◇ Judges and DAs

Healthy Brain Development In a Prevention Framework

A forthcoming book (April 2022) by Dr. Dana Suskind will help society recognize the power & necessity of preventing early cognitive disparities that often give rise to behavioral and mental health problems.

The key to doing so is supporting parents.

An Alarming Disconnect

◈ Whereas young children require caregivers' responsive input and time, our economy demands many parents instead spend increasingly more time at work, whether in multiple jobs or in positions that require constant connectedness.

◈ Whereas children of all ages require ongoing guidance, support and nurturing, too many parents lack the time, access, or resources to provide their children what they need to succeed.

◈ Whereas young children require safe, nurturing, and calm environments to develop socioemotional skills and executive functioning, far too many are robbed of that critical foundation by poverty, homelessness, violence, and the impacts of racism.

Neuroscience as a Roadmap

◈ Learning begins not on the first day of school but the first day of life.

◈ Children's earliest and most impactful brain architects are their parents and caregivers.

◈ Environment matters. Stable, calm environments foster socioemotional skills and executive function; disruptive environments impede their development.
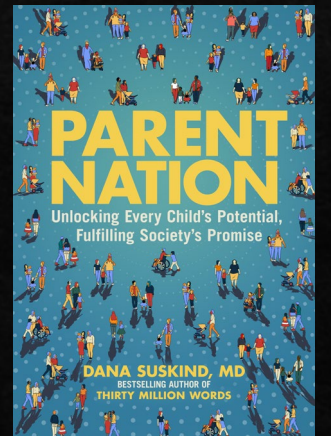
A "Parent Nation" as the Destination

- ◈ Paid family leave that allows parents critical time with their children.

- ◈ A comprehensive and high-quality early childcare system.

- ◈ A child allowance and other measures to address child poverty.

- ◈ A holistic approach to prenatal and pediatric care that includes information about brain development.

- ◈ A re-imagining of public education to include age-appropriate approaches to learning in the first five years of life.

- ◈ A private sector that institutes family-friendly policies that are also good for the bottom line.

- ◈ A criminal justice system that does not interfere with children's development

- ◈ A widespread belief that we all have a role to play in ensuring the healthy development of children; that "going it alone" is neither necessary or ideal

Population Level Education

The key objective is to create positive change in outcomes for children and families by mobilizing knowledge about the intergenerational impact of addiction and toxic stress on the developing brain.

1. Mobilizing and linking the science of brain development with mental health and addiction.

2. Developing a shared understanding of the intergenerational effects of stress and addiction at different ages and stages of development and the implications related to policy, practice, and research.

3. Fostering "communities of purpose" able to apply and communicate this knowledge to develop innovative and integrated approaches for prevention, intervention, and treatment for mental health and addiction issues across the lifespan.

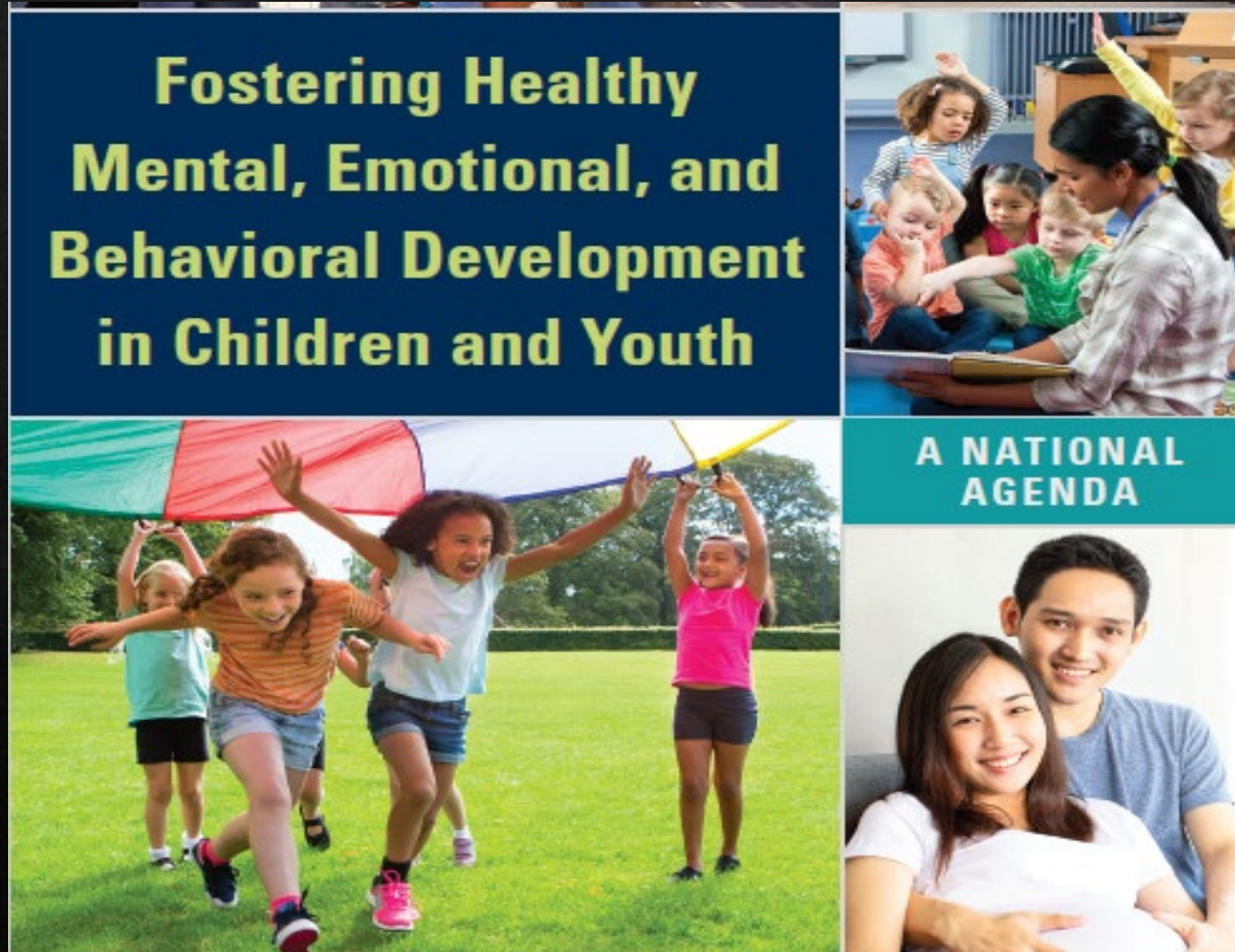Alberta family wellness initiative
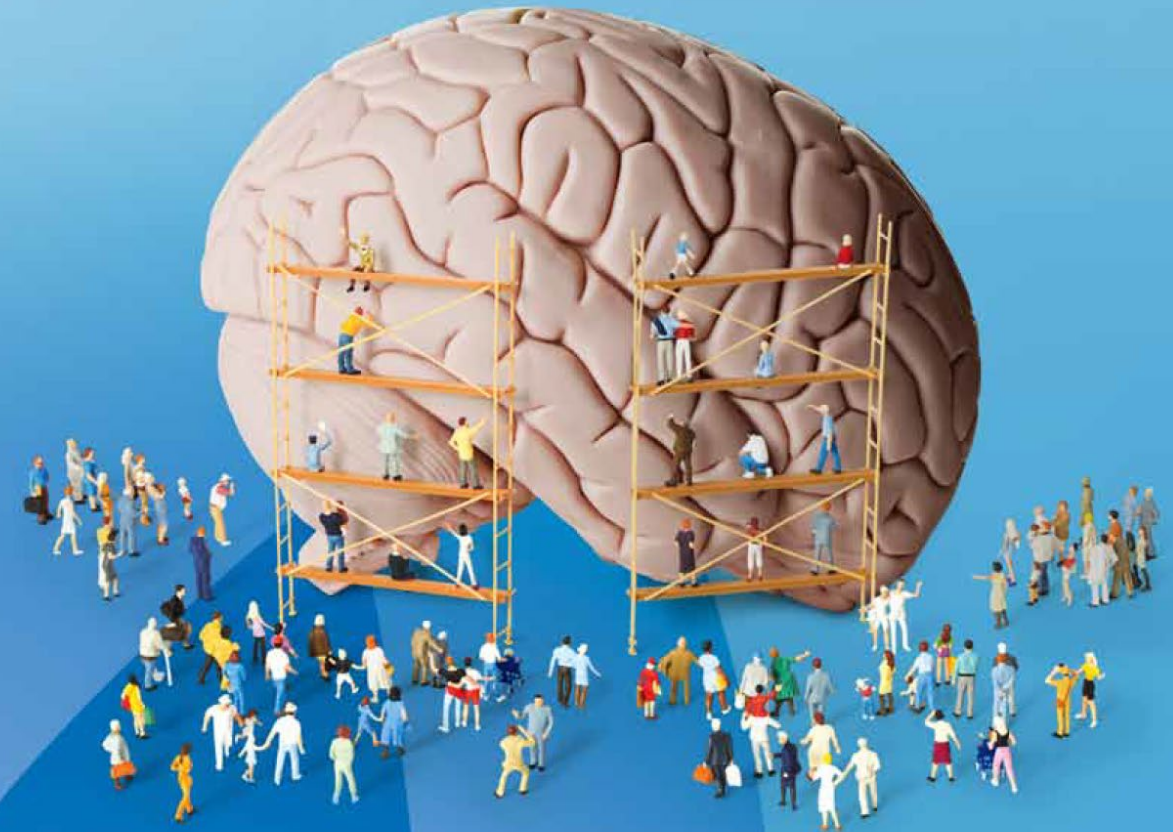
SHARING THE BRAIN STORY

AFWI's Knowledge-Mobilization Strategy:
Transforming research, policy, and practice in Alberta

Community- and System-Wide Education: Alberta Family Wellness (Palix)
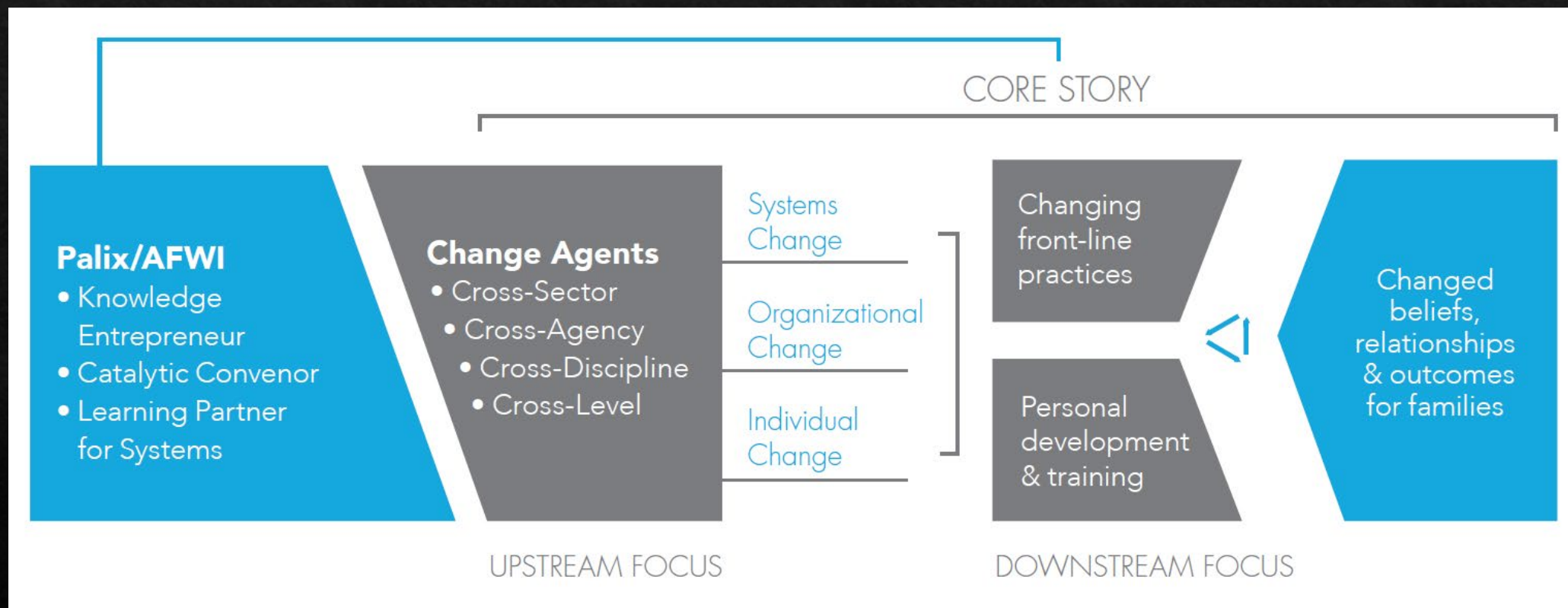
National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine
Board on Children, Youth, and Families

What's Needed

Research to identify active ingredients and mechanisms of effects

Applying the science of implementation to determine best practices

Effective communication strategies that target multiple audiences

How to build political will to

How to build community coalitions to increase political influence

How to build educational curricula that embody these principles

How to build practices into systems

How to engage scientists in the advocacy process