



Strategic Planning



How to Decide What to Do

Suicide prevention efforts are most effective when they are guided by a strategic planning process. Strategic planning can help you determine specific problems and populations on which to focus, identify activities that will be effective in preventing suicide, and prioritize your efforts to achieve maximum impact.

The Strategic Planning Approach

SPRC's Strategic Planning Approach to Suicide Prevention includes the following six steps:

- [Step 1. Describe the Problem and Its Context](#) [1]

Use data and other sources to understand how suicide affects your community and to describe the problem and its context.

- [Step 2. Choose Long-Term Goals](#) [2]

Identify a small set of realistic and achievable long-term goals (e.g., reduce the suicide rate among a particular group).

- [Step 3. Identify Key Risk and Protective Factors](#) [3]

Prioritize the key risk and protective factors on which to focus your prevention efforts.

- [Step 4. Select or Develop Interventions](#) [4]



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Begin planning your approach by deciding which activity or combination of activities best address your key risk and protective factors.

- [Step 5. Plan the Evaluation](#) [5]

Develop an evaluation plan to track progress toward your long-term goals, show the value of your prevention efforts, and give you the information you need to refine, expand, or determine other next steps for your programming.

- [Step 6. Implement, Evaluate, and Improve](#) [6]

Implement and evaluate your activities, and use your evaluation data to monitor implementation, solve problems, and enhance your prevention efforts.

Whether you are starting a new program or assessing your progress midway through a project, you can use this approach to fit your needs.

Although these steps are listed in the order in which they would generally be carried out, you can also move back and forth between the steps as needed. For example, you may want to revise your long-term goals after identifying the key risk and protective factors. Or, if you are in the middle of a suicide prevention project, you may want to focus on the later steps in the strategic planning approach.

Links within this resource

[1] <http://www.sprc.org/strategic-planning/problem-context>

[2] <http://www.sprc.org/strategic-planning/goals>

[3] <http://www.sprc.org/strategic-planning/key-risk-protective-factors>

[4] <http://www.sprc.org/strategic-planning/interventions>

[5] <http://www.sprc.org/strategic-planning/plan-evaluation>

[6] <http://www.sprc.org/strategic-planning/implement-evaluate-improve>

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