



Federal Advocacy Commitments

Prevention Institute (PI) partners with health equity, civil rights, social and racial justice, and public health advocates to champion and support an evolving [portfolio](#) of federal policies, practices, and investments. We believe that *how* we show up as advocates and partners matters as much as the policy actions we take. Our advocacy approach is grounded in the following core commitments:



Amplifying community-centered solutions and leadership. PI's inclusive vision of the [public health ecosystem](#)¹ embraces community-centered solutions and leadership as essential to public health's effectiveness and workforce. We are committed to policy actions rooted in health equity and racial justice that advance community-driven priorities for health, safety, and wellbeing. This includes pursuing efforts to increase the flow and accessibility of federal resources and funding directly to community-based organizations, young changemakers, and other entities working on behalf of the public's health.



Championing health equity and racial justice. PI understands that achieving optimal health, safety, and wellbeing means that [societal systems and structures have to be reimaged and redesigned for health equity and racial justice](#).² We emphasize proactive policy actions that advance the drivers of equity and justice; create enabling environments to build community power; and dismantle and replace oppressive systems. This means pursuing policies that will have measurable and sustainable benefits on the health, safety, and wellbeing of people and communities of color and communities of low wealth who experience the pervasive harms of structural racism and systemic violence.



Upholding the values of connection, dignity, and interdependence. In PI's work with the [Making Connections initiative](#),³ participating community organizations and coalitions identified a set of core stabilizing elements through their local community planning processes. We call these the [Pillars of Wellbeing](#).⁴ And because the *Pillars* are essential for people and for communities to flourish, our policy priorities are informed by, and emphasize them:

- *Belonging and connectedness*: being accepted, having a place, feeling part of something
- *Safety*: the experience of security and stability at the interpersonal, emotional, and community level
- *Dignity*: the experience of having worth/value; living in a climate of mutual respect and regard

- *Trust*: the ability to rely on the wider community, government, and public institutions
- *Hope and aspiration*: the belief that progress is possible
- *Control of destiny and self-determination*: the ability to take action and lead change



Weaving multiple forms of evidence. PI embraces a comprehensive view of evidence-based decision-making that [uplifts contextual and experiential evidence](#)⁵ to complement the current reliance on best available research evidence. Contextual evidence includes measurable factors in a community that may impact the success of a policy strategy. Experiential evidence includes the collective experience and expertise of those who have practiced or lived in a particular setting (i.e. lived experience). PI is committed to embedding contextual and experiential evidence throughout the policy analysis, development, implementation, and evaluation process to elevate community lived experience; shift power, action, and ownership to communities; and enhance policy sustainability and impact.



Elevating community-centered narratives. PI recognizes the importance of connecting policy advocacy to community narrative power.⁶ We are committed to [embedding community-centered narratives](#)⁷ across our policy efforts. This includes an emphasis on narratives that reinforce abundance over scarcity; collectivism and interdependence over individualism and self-reliance; and liberation and freedom over oppression and control. By grounding efforts in an affirmative long-term vision of the world we want to inhabit—which includes supporting the demands of young changemakers—we are better able to develop policy strategies that ask for everything that communities want and deserve.



Expanding and redefining our role in policy partnerships. PI understands that the public health sector plays an important role in the broader social movement to advance equitable health, safety, and wellbeing outcomes. We are committed to seeking opportunities to learn from, amplify, and contribute a public health voice on a range of policy coalitions that are championed by health equity, racial justice, social justice, and civil rights advocacy organizations. We believe that we can add value to policy partnerships without overly centering ourselves and our perspectives. A core component of our advocacy work emphasizes strengthening, expanding, and nurturing our policy partnerships to highlight the interconnected priorities across public health, health equity, and racial justice.



“Showing our work” for greater accountability & transparency. PI’s [Policy Portal](#) is designed to publicly share specific advocacy actions across our intersecting policy priorities. The portal reflects our ongoing commitment to “show our work” toward greater accountability and transparency as we learn from our partners and strengthen our own advocacy practices.

RESOURCES

1. [Centering Racial Justice to Strengthen the Public Health Ecosystem: Lessons from COVID-19](#). Prevention Institute and Big Cities Health Coalition, November 2022.
2. [Building Bridges: The Strategic Imperative for Advancing Health Equity and Racial Justice](#). Prevention Institute, July 2020.
3. [Making Connections for Mental Health and Wellbeing Among Men and Boys](#) was a 5-year national initiative to transform community conditions that influence mental wellbeing for veterans, young men, and boys of color. Together with the Movember Foundation, Prevention Institute worked with 13 communities across the U.S. to shift policies, practices, and norms to create greater opportunities for health and resilience.
4. [Pillars of Wellbeing](#) are the core stabilizing elements needed for people and for communities to flourish emotionally. They were developed through conversations with participants in the Making Connections initiative.
5. [Uplifting Contextual and Experiential Evidence](#) was a Center for Disease Control and Prevention funded project to identify best practices for integrating contextual and experiential evidence into an accepted and institutionalized science base.
6. Community narrative power is defined as “growing narrative power in the hands of local communities that experience the outcomes of harmful and helpful narratives.” Sen R, Moore M. [Funding Narrative Change: An Assessment and Framework by the Convergence Partnership](#). Convergence Partnership.
7. PI’s [Health Equity in Practice](#) learning module includes a section on [narrative change](#) and the connections between [narrative change and policy advocacy](#).