

INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH PROMOTION



ANASTASIA SNELLING

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Introduction to Health Promotion

Anastasia Snelling, Editor

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Foreword

This introductory text will be a perfect fit for many of the rapidly emerging professional degree programs in health promotion and allied professions that regard health promotion as a core responsibility. The convergence of focus on health promotion in recent years has been spurred by the inescapable reality that behavior is the primary pathway through which society can have a positive influence on the prevailing health problems of today's world. Professor Snelling and her collaborating authors have represented that reality in the first part of the book with a chapter on each of the leading behavioral determinants of chronic health conditions. Then they have shown how state-of-the-art theories, models, and experience-based strategies for health promotion can be applied in systematic ways to address those problems.

One feature that makes this book stand out among many others is the selection of a balanced roster of authors from academia and practice. The role of practicing health professionals who lead important organizations and programs in health promotion should help bring the theories and research evidence of academics to life for students. Indeed, it has been my lament that too many evidence-based guidelines for practice in health promotion have been produced by academic research without sufficient attention to the context in which the evidence would be applied. My argument to those who sponsor health promotion research and those who fund health promotion programs is that if we want more evidence-based practice, we need more practice-based evidence. This book will help point the way and inspire some students to plan, implement, and evaluate theory-based and

evidence-based health promotion interventions and programs that will, in turn, produce the complementary practice-based evidence we desperately need in this field.

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Preface

The health promotion field emerged during the second half of the twentieth century as medicine and science became successful treating infectious diseases with antibiotics, advancing maternal and child health, and improving sanitation practices. These gains significantly improved the quality and quantity of life for all. Yet, now we face the next medical crisis: chronic disease. Medicine and science research have continued to manage disease conditions through a number of procedures, surgeries, and pharmaceuticals. All of these approaches come with a very high cost to the individual through reduced quality of life and economic cost to organizations and the federal government responsible for providing health insurance. At this time, health care costs account for 17.6% of the gross domestic product. This means that the United States spends almost seventeen cents of every dollar on providing health care to Americans. Controlling these health care costs is a continuing priority for the nation. Consider that over 70% of all health care costs are related to chronic disease and that many risk factors for chronic disease are considered modifiable, such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, food choices, and managing stress. These modifiable risk factors are the core behaviors that the field of health promotion focuses on to improve the quality of people's lives and to manage rising health care costs.

Changing individual and societal health behavior is a very complex process. Since the 1980s, more research has shown that for individuals to successfully adopt healthy behaviors, social, behavioral, and environmental factors also must be part of the process of change. The healthy choice must be the easy choice in our homes, schools, work

sites, and communities. The vision is to live in a country where a culture of health is seen, practiced, and supported throughout the life span.

The unique contribution of this book is to introduce students to the individual and societal forces that have transformed the factors that influence one's health, including social and physical environments, medical advances, personal lifestyle choices, and legislation. The book identifies and discusses the innovative health campaigns, strategies, and policies that are being implemented and enacted to improve health behaviors and practices that ultimately improve the quality of life.

It is my sincere desire that the writings in this book inspire you to either embark on a career in health promotion or, at the very least, provide you with an understanding of the ways in which many disciplines intersect with health promotion, so that whatever discipline you study, you will better understand how your work interacts with the promotion of health. Almost every discipline intersects with the field of health promotion. Further, health promotion professionals do not work in isolation. The nature of health promotion is to work across multiple disciplines to design and develop strategies that use the best knowledge we know and apply it to health behaviors. [Table P.1](#) lists diverse areas of study and identifies the related work of health promotion, whether you study exercise or nutrition science to understand how to advise consumers on health behaviors to improve their health status or if you study communication or marketing to design health campaigns that inform the general public about health risks associated with smoking or drinking and driving or public policy to understand or evaluate how public health policy decreases health disparities by providing consumers with healthful foods or access to affordable health care.

Table P.1 Disciplines and the Relationship with Health Fields

Discipline	Contribution	Example
Communication and marketing	Social marketing campaigns	Campaigns to reduce smoking or promote physical activity
Public policy	Local, state, and national policy promoting health	Affordable Care Act
Human resources	Health benefits offered through employers	Work site health
Biology	Understanding the changes in the body from food and exercise	Healthy behavior identification
Psychology	Understanding why people make the choices they do and how to facilitate behavior change	Health promotion models
Sociology	Understanding how human society functions and influences behavior	Health promotion models
Medicine and allied health	Monitoring health, identifying risk factors, and restoring health	Annual physicals; clinical preventive services
Economics	Behavioral economics	Encouraging healthy food choices

This introductory textbook for health promotion students is designed and written to be distinctly different from other

textbooks. It provides readers with an in-depth examination of the forces that have changed our lifestyles and environments over the past century, which in turn have resulted in changes in individual health behaviors that affect the onset of chronic conditions. During this same time frame, there were also considerable medical advances, improving early detection of disease and developing progressive treatments for chronic conditions. These changes are ones that health promoters must understand and address. Ultimately, the framework for the development of social and physical environments that support healthy lifestyle choices will guide the transformation of communities where people are empowered to make healthy choices, so they can live longer lives free of preventable disease, disability, and premature death.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1, “The Foundation of Health Promotion,” introduces the framework of health promotion and provides the student to a number of key terms, models, and trends related to the field. [Chapter 2](#) introduces health behavior change theories that offer constructs on how individuals approach personal behavior change, that is, the essence of health promotion—engaging individuals to actively promote their own health through daily actions such as being physically active or selecting healthy foods to eat. Program planning models ([chapter 3](#)) are essential tools to successfully reaching large groups of people through social marketing campaigns to interventions to enacting policies to create environments in which people can practice healthy behaviors.

Part 2, “Health Behaviors,” describes those actions that promote health and prevent disease. These chapters introduce the short history of how tobacco use, eating, physical activity, and emotional health have evolved as a result of the changes in our social and physical

environments. These chapters provide a comprehensive discussion of the health behaviors that influence the onset of chronic disease in our country and how and why these behaviors have changed over time. [Chapter 8](#) highlights the important role clinical preventive services also have on promoting health by monitoring chronic disease development and overall health status. Health promotion professionals are promoting healthful living, hence, the inclusion of preventive services (immunizations and age-appropriate screenings) available through the medical community need to be understood and promoted.

These health behavior chapters examine how changes in our environment and society over the past several decades have affected behaviors and how those changed behaviors affect health and disease. By understanding the historical perspective of each of these behaviors, health promotion professionals will possess a richer context for their work, understanding that multiple forces have shaped, and continue to affect, the health of individuals and our society. Health behavior change is complex; in order to advance innovative solutions, it is critical that health promoters fully understand the history of these behaviors. Within each chapter, examples of policies and programs that exemplify health promotion in action are provided.

Part 3, “Health Promotion in Action,” presents how state and federal governments engage in promoting healthful living for their consumers, what associations and certifications support the health promotion profession, where health promotion is taking place and the job opportunities available for this profession, and closing out with future trends in health promotion as we move through the twenty-first century. There are a plethora of national activities that promote health and prevent disease. The federal agencies monitor health status, provide broad guidelines, conduct research, and fund programs to

promote health. Collectively, there are thousands of federal employees who work across disciplines to study or implement new approaches to improve the health of our society.

[Chapter 10](#) discusses the setting where health promotion takes place, which further exemplifies that health promotion is beginning to be seen everywhere such as in day care centers, schools, colleges, work sites, food stores, retirement homes, and communities. Again, thousands of professionals believe in the vision of a country in which people are practicing healthy behaviors every day because the healthy choice is the easy choice. Staying current within the discipline will be important after you graduate.

[Chapter 11](#) discusses associations, journals, and certifications that provide important information for your life beyond the borders of an academic institution. In time, reading a textbook or listening to a professor's lecture will be in the past. But as a professional, you will need to stay current and this chapter is full of associations and journals that will facilitate your continued professional development. The final chapter is a look into the future predicting some trends that will help to create a culture of health to ensure that the Healthy People 2020 goals to “attain high-quality, longer lives free of preventable disease, to improve the health of all groups, to create social and physical environments that promote good health for all, and to promote healthy behaviors across all life stages” will be achieved.

At the end of each chapter, the student will find a brief summary and list of key terms of the information presented in the chapter. After the summary and key terms are a list of student questions and activities. Both the questions and activities are written to extend the learning and understanding of the material presented in the chapter. By completing the questions and activities, students will gain a

deeper understanding of the breadth and depth of the health promotion field. All references used in each chapter are at the end and students are encouraged to seek out these articles, book chapters, and books for additional information.

My goal for this textbook is to enhance the academic preparation of students who are pursuing degrees in health promotion, public health, health education, and other degrees that address or affect the health status of individuals, communities, and societies nationally as well as around the world. Although this textbook focuses on behaviors, trends, and resources in the United States to promote health, many of them are applicable to cultures and settings around the world. There is a universal desire to live a healthful life, and this desire can be found in people of every age, gender, race, and ethnicity.

The book provides a foundation of knowledge for the health promotion professional. Many students are excited to learn such a field exists and ask where they can begin. My response is always with themselves! Being a role model and learning to practice what health promotion professionals teach is a great starting point. I do not expect that you will set a perfect example of health every day, but by practicing health-promoting behaviors you will personally experience the process and the benefits and become healthy as a result.

An instructor's supplement is available at www.josseybass.com/go/snelling. Additional materials such as videos, podcasts, and readings can be found at www.josseybasspublichealth.com. Comments about this book are invited and can be sent to publichealth@wiley.com.

Acknowledgments

I would like to first thank all of the contributing authors of this book whose expertise in their respective areas has enhanced the content in this book. Many of the contributing authors have spent time at American University, and the health promotion programs have been enriched as a result of their work. Also, I would like to thank all the faculty, staff, and students in the School of Education, Teaching, and Health at American University for their encouragement and support along this journey. A special recognition to my team of graduate assistants, especially Michelle Kalicki and Stephanie Sunderlin, who are always willing to work with me on this and the many projects I accept. Last, I want to thank Laura Aden Caldwell, whose editorial and organizational work has enhanced this book.

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Reviewers Lori Francis, Christina R. Johnson, and Steve McClaran provided thoughtful and constructive comments on the complete draft manuscript.

Finally, this book is dedicated to my family who inspire me to make a difference in people's lives through my work. My husband, Roger; my children, Trevor, Anastasia, and Amelia; my parents, John and Amelia Mustone; my siblings, John, Lisa, Paul, Mary Ellen, and Jessica; and my extended Mustone and Snelling family members. May we all live a life full of love, happiness, and good health.

“To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Editor

Dr. Anastasia Snelling is a professor and the Associate Dean in the School of Education, Teaching, and Health at American University. She has been a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as a registered dietitian for over thirty years and a fellow in the American College of Nutrition. Dr. Snelling teaches courses including nutrition, health promotion, and health communication at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

Her research focuses on methods of behavior change in nutrition education to manage risk factors related to chronic disease. Specifically, her research focuses on using the school environment to improve the health status of children. Grounded in the Social Ecological Model, her work in school health examines different levels of influence that can improve the health and food environment, leading to improved health and weight status. By addressing the needs of the child within the social, economic, and cultural contexts where they live, the research aligns health *and* education to enable students to reach their full potential. Reliable evidence indicates that healthy students are better learners, and, consequently, good health is fundamental to ensuring an effective education.

Dr. Snelling regularly presents her research at national and international conferences. Her research is published in many highly-regarded journals focusing on nutrition, health promotion, and school health. She has appeared on *C-Span* to discuss food labeling regulation and her opinions and expertise have appeared in such media outlets as *Education Week*, the *Washington Post*, *US World and News Report*, and *Fox Business News*.