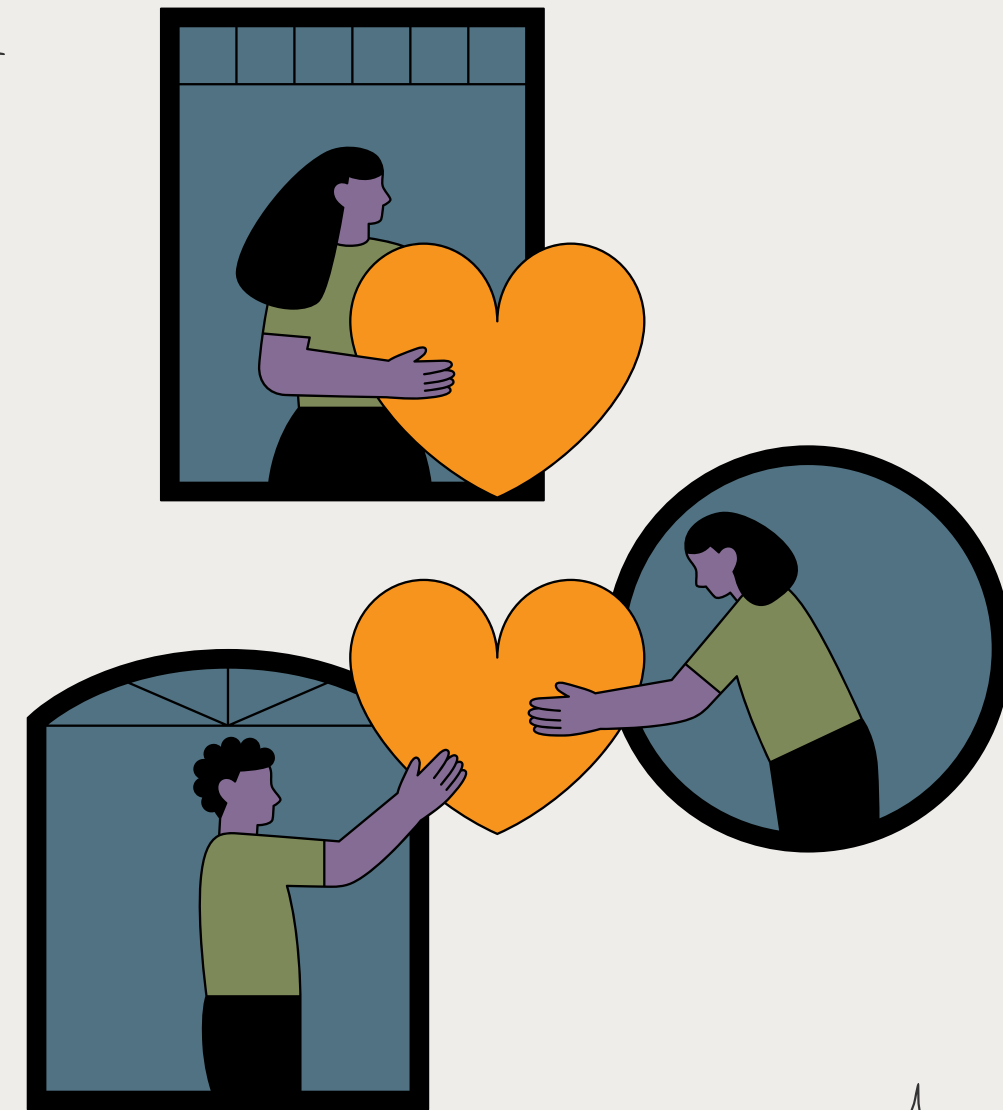


# PREVENTING CRISIS

PRACTICAL UPSTREAM STRATEGIES FOR  
MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE  
PREVENTION



ARIEL COHN, PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
LYDIA FUQUA, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES  
DCCCA

---



---

# WHO WE ARE

This training was developed by  
DCCCA Community Based  
Services in partnership with  
Sources of Strength.



---

# THE STORY OF UPSTREAM PREVENTION



---

# THE STORY OF UPSTREAM PREVENTION



In our work of suicide and substance use prevention...

**What's happening downstream?**

**What does going upstream look like?**





# WHAT IS UPSTREAM PREVENTION?

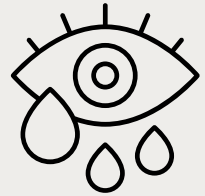


# ACES

Adverse Childhood Experiences



**ABUSE**



**NEGLECT**



**FAMILY INSTABILITY**



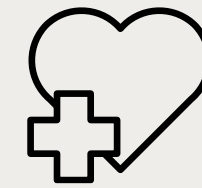
**MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES**



**SUBSTANCE USE**

# PCES

Positive Childhood Experiences



**FEELING SAFE**



**SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS**



**SENSE OF BELONGING**



**TRUSTED ADULT**



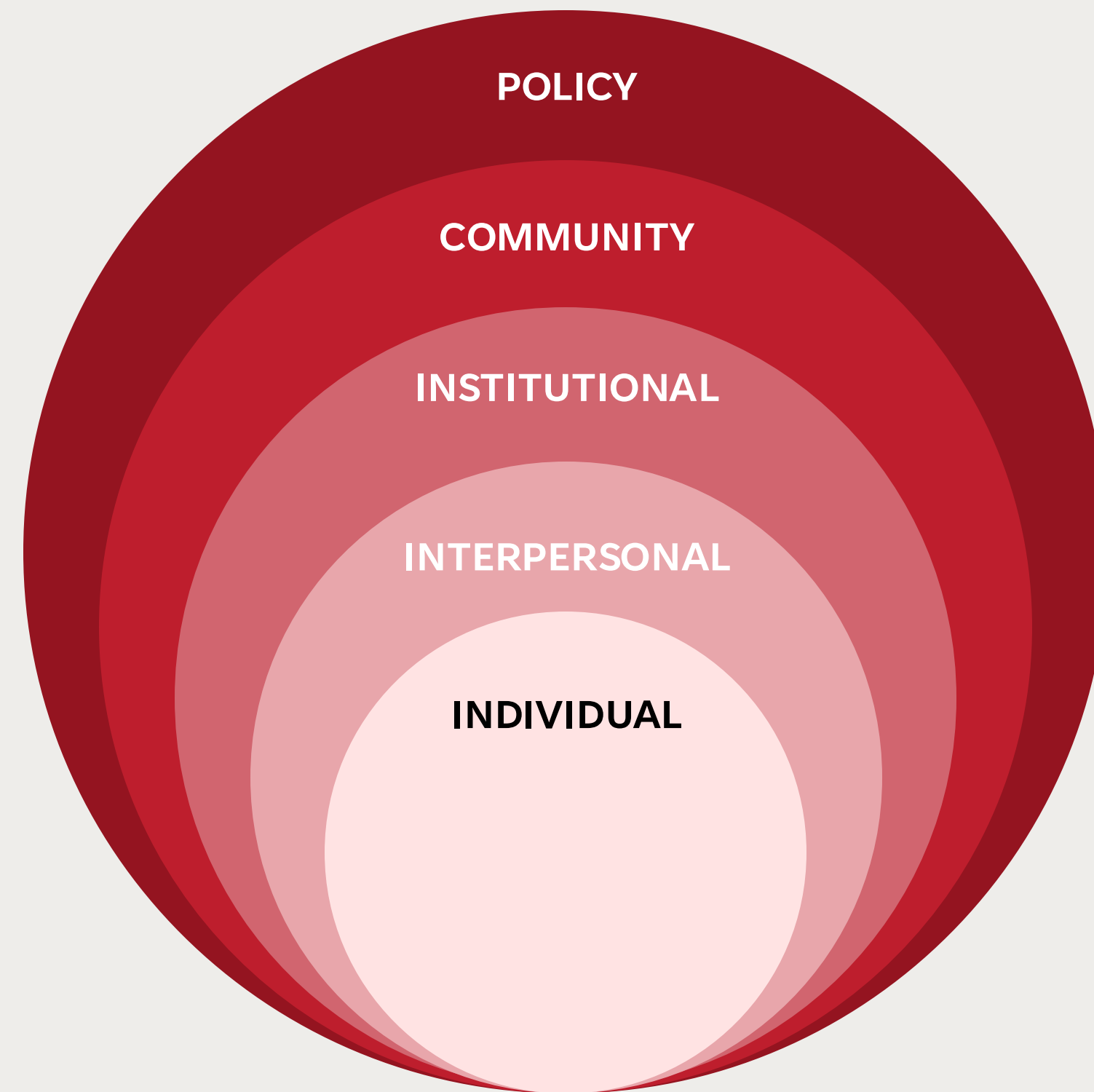
**HEALTHY ACTIVITIES**



# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



# SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL



# SHARED RISK FACTORS

FOR SUICIDE & SUBSTANCE USE

- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Family Conflict
- Household Access to Substances or Firearms
- Bullying
- Transitions and Mobility
- Family History of Substance Use Disorder or Suicide
- Easy Access to Substances
- History of Mental Health Conditions
- Community Violence

# SHARED PROTECTIVE FACTORS

FOR SUICIDE & SUBSTANCE USE

- Engagement in Positive, Meaningful Activities
- Positive Self-Concept
- Cultural Identity and Connection
- Religious or Spiritual Beliefs
- Developed Coping Skills
- Connection to Family
- Connection to Positive Adults Outside the Home
- Strong Community Infrastructure







When we tend the soil early and often,  
the whole garden grows healthier.



---

# UPSTREAM IN ACTION: YOUR COMMUNITY



Think of a time in your community when healthy conditions like connection, safety, or access to resources helped people thrive.



What about when a lack of those conditions made things harder?



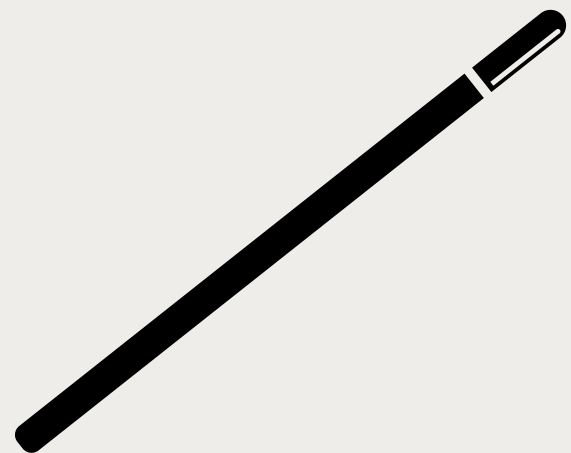
How can we “tend the soil” where we live and work?





# IF YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND...

What is one thing you would change to  
meaningfully reduce suicides and/or substance  
use disorder in our world?





---

# OUR TOOLBOX

## **SOCIAL CONNECTIONS**

Communities with stronger social connections and access to mental health resources see lower rates of suicide and depression.

## **FUNDING**

Every dollar invested in evidence-based prevention can save multiple dollars in future crisis response and treatment.

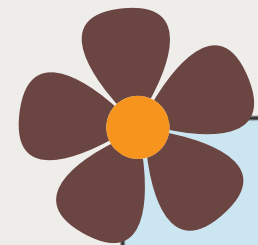


## **PROGRAMMING**

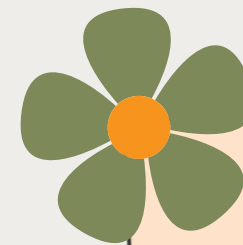
Programs that build resilience and protective factors help children, families, and communities thrive long-term.



# THE POWER OF ONE



One protective factor I  
can strengthen in my  
community is...



One positive ripple  
effect of  
strengthening that  
protective factor is...





# WHAT IS MY ROLE?



Upstream prevention means influencing the roles, policies, and resources that shape mental health and suicide prevention.



---

# WHAT IS MY ROLE?



## SYSTEMS LEVEL

Influencing rules,  
policies, and  
resources that shape  
mental health and  
suicide prevention.



## COMMUNITY LEVEL

Connecting people,  
reducing isolation,  
promoting protective  
factors, and spreading  
awareness.



## INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Engaging in health  
coping strategies can  
help reduce risk and  
strengthen resilience.



---

# WHAT IS MY ROLE?

A decorative graphic of a stylized flower with five light blue petals and a central orange circle, positioned behind the text.

## SYSTEMS LEVEL

Influencing rules,  
policies, and  
resources that shape  
mental health and  
suicide prevention.





---

# WHAT IS MY ROLE?



## COMMUNITY LEVEL

Connecting people,  
reducing isolation,  
promoting protective  
factors, and spreading  
awareness.



# WHAT IS MY ROLE?



## INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Engaging in health coping strategies can help reduce risk and strengthen resilience.





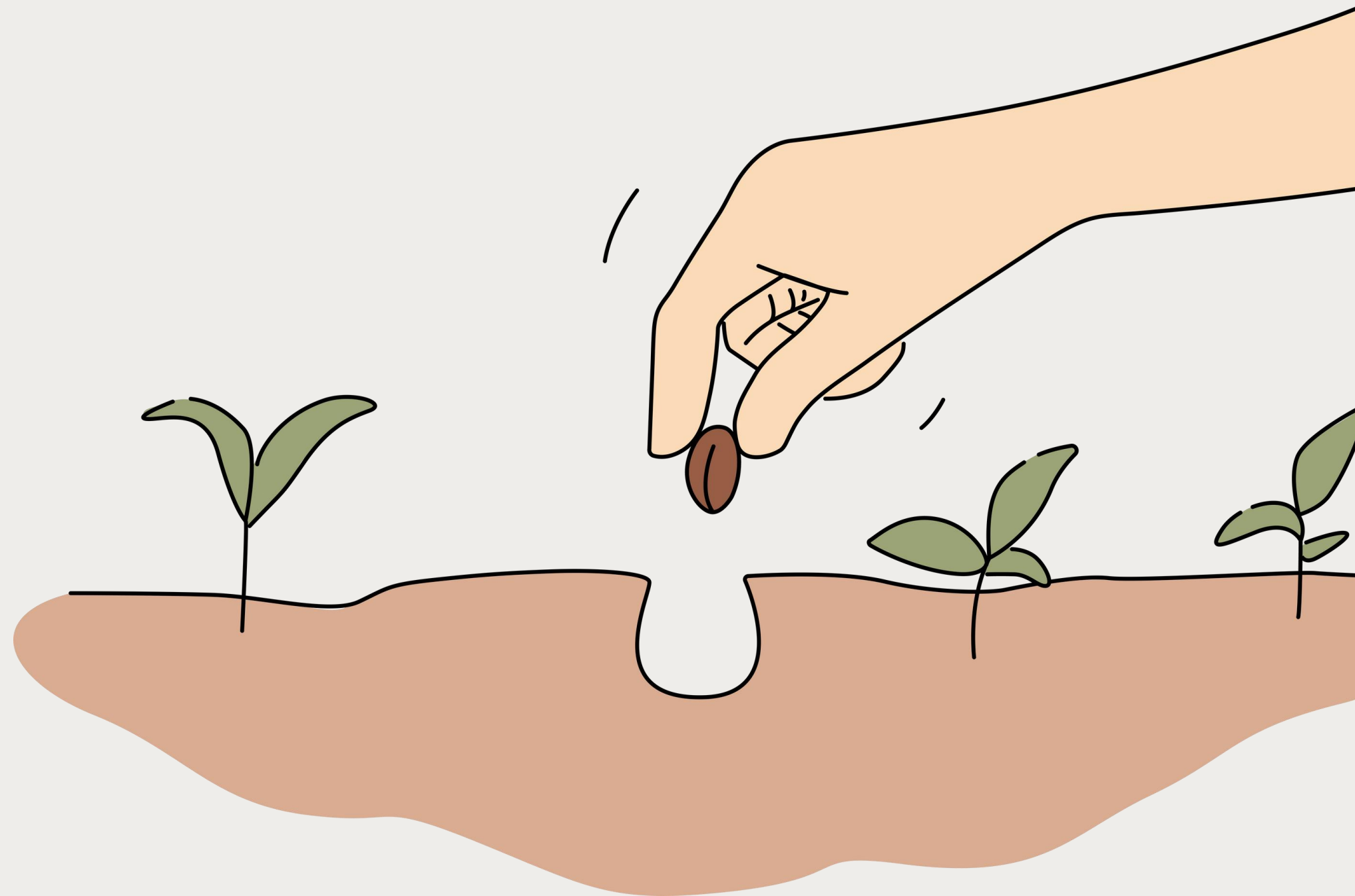
What is one shift you can make toward upstream thinking in your work or community?





# TAKING ACTION

Write down one concrete next step you will take in the next month to implement an upstream approach.





# REFERENCES

About the CDC-Kaiser ACE Study | Violence Prevention | Injury Center | CDC. (2024, June 3). Cdc.gov. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html?>

ACE Study | Adverse Childhood Experiences | Positive Childhood Alliance NC. (2024, August 16). Positive Childhood Alliance North Carolina. <https://www.preventchildabusenc.org/resource-hub/aces-study/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, May 15). Social Determinants of Health. Public Health Professionals Gateway; CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/public-health-gateway/php/about/social-determinants-of-health.html>

Home. (n.d.). Sources of Strength. <https://www.sourcesofstrength.org>

Policy Basics: The Child Tax Credit | Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2009, November 11). Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/policy-basics-the-child-tax-credit>

SAMHSA. (2019a). A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework. <https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/strategic-prevention-framework-pep19-01.pdf>

SAMHSA. (2019b). Risk and Protective Factors. In Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/20190718-samhsa-risk-protective-factors.pdf>

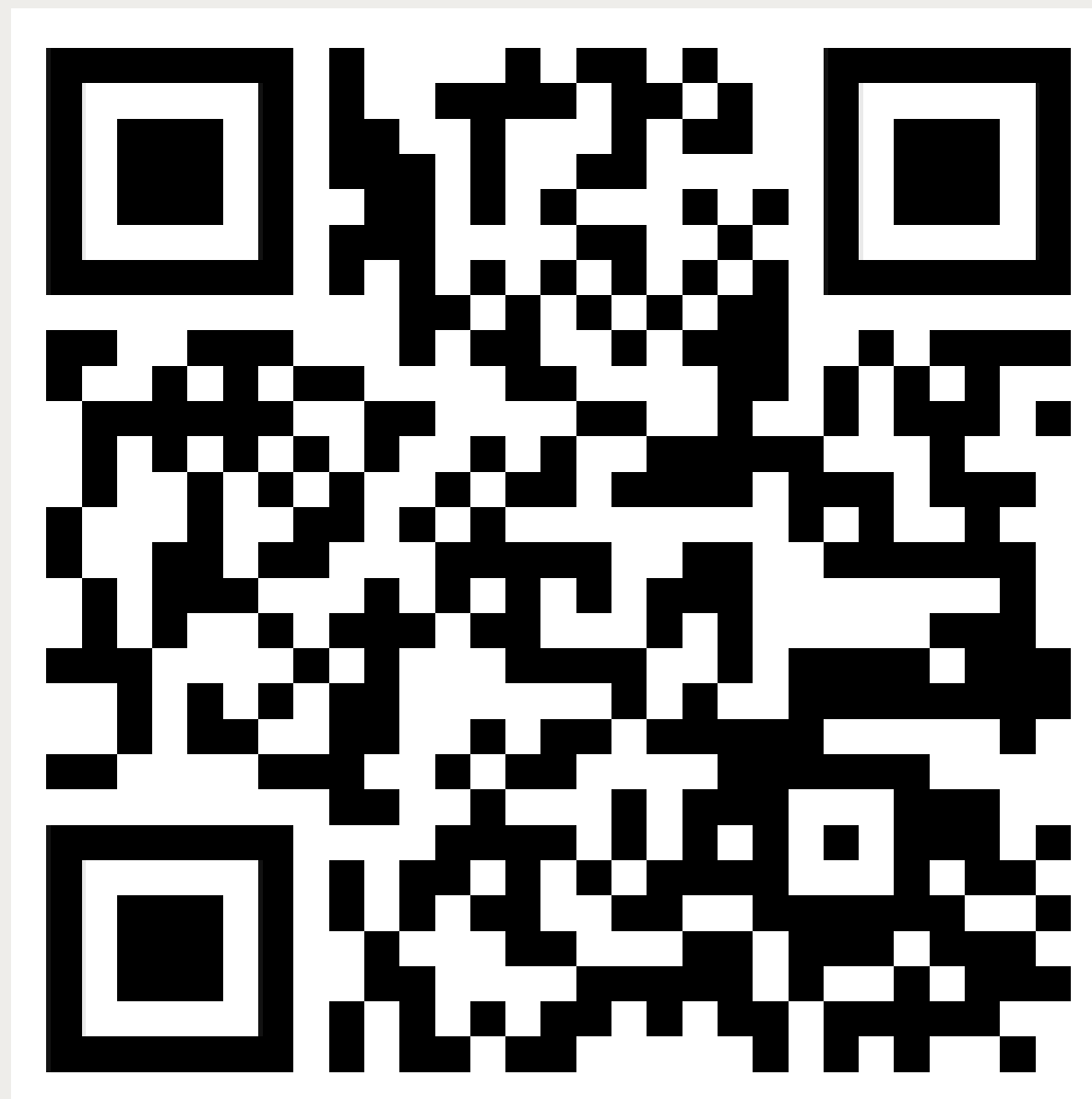
Schmitz, N., Doorn, K. A., & Békés, V. (2024). Current Uses and Contributions of the Protective and Compensatory Experiences (PACEs) Measure: A Scoping Review. *Trauma Care*, 4(3), 229–248. <https://doi.org/10.3390/traumacare4030021>

Volkow, N. (2022, April 28). Investing in Prevention Makes Good Financial Sense. National Institute on Drug Abuse. <https://nida.nih.gov/about-nida/noras-blog/2022/04/investing-in-prevention-makes-good-financial-sense>





# FEEDBACK





# THANK YOU



WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?

ARIEL COHN - [ACOHN@DCCCA.ORG](mailto:ACOHN@DCCCA.ORG)  
LYDIA FUQUA - [LFUQUA@DCCCA.ORG](mailto:LFUQUA@DCCCA.ORG)

