

Typology for Classifying Interventions / Strategies by Level of Scientific Evidence Category

CDPHE, Prevention Services Division, Epidemiology, Planning, and Evaluation Branch

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	How Established	Considerations for Level of Scientific Evidence	Data Source Examples
Proven	Peer review via systematic or narrative review	Based on study design and execution External validity Potential side benefits or harms Costs and cost-effectiveness	Community Guide Cochrane reviews Narrative reviews based on published literature
Likely Effective	Peer Review	Based on study design and execution External validity Potential side benefits or harms Costs and cost-effectiveness	Articles in the scientific literature Research-tested intervention programs Technical reports with peer review
Promising	Written program evaluation without formal peer review	Summative evidence of effectiveness Formative evaluation data Theory-consistent, plausible, potentially high-reach, low-cost, replicable	State or federal government reports (without peer review) Conference presentations
Emerging	Ongoing work, practice-based summaries, or evaluation works in progress	Formative evaluation data Theory-consistent, plausible, potentially high-reaching, low-cost, replicable Face validity	Evaluability assessments* Pilot studies National Institute of Health (NIH) research (RePORT database) Projects funded by health foundations
Not Recommended	Varies.	Evidence of effectiveness is conflicting and/or of poor quality. Weak theoretical foundation Balance of benefit and harm cannot be established or evidence demonstrates that harm outweighs the benefits.	Varies.

* A pre-evaluation activity that involves an assessment to establish whether a program or policy can be evaluated, what the barriers to its evaluation might be.

Source: Adapted from Healthy People 2020 and Brownson RC, Fielding JE, Maylahn CM. Evidence-based Public Health: A Fundamental Concept for Public Health Practices . *Annual Review of Public Health*. Vol. 30: 175-201