

# Public Health Approach to Violence and Violent Crime

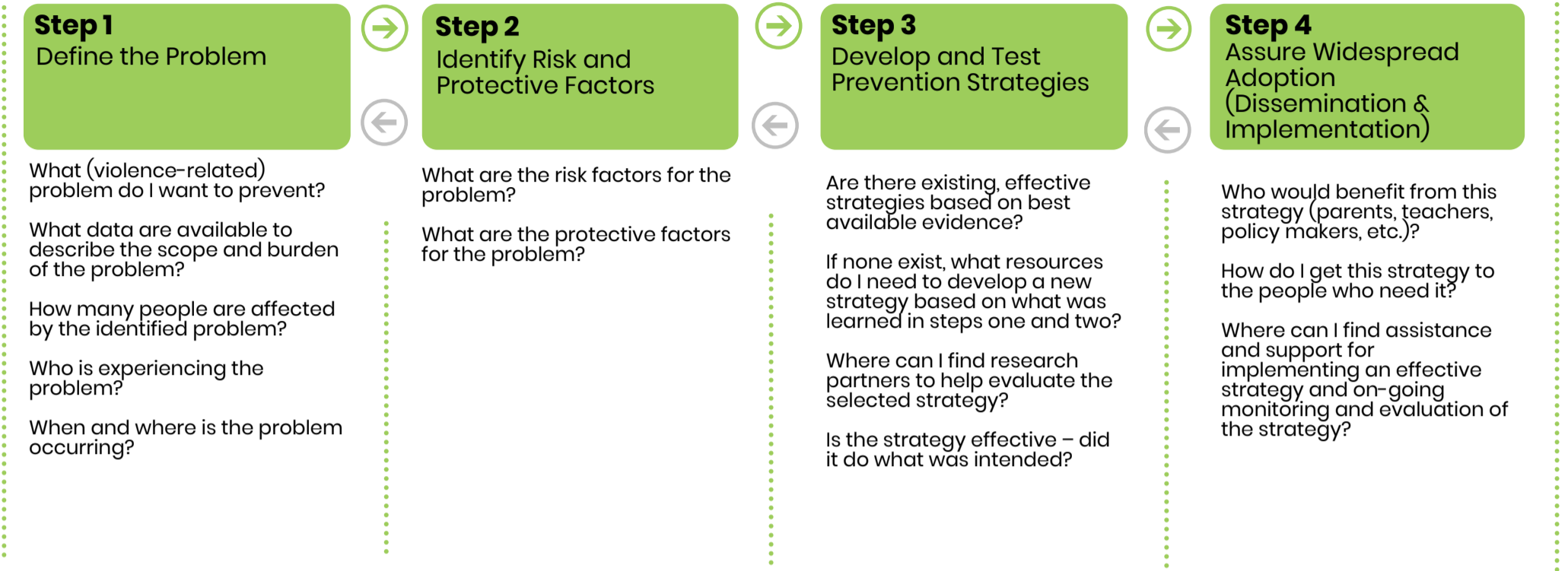
## Using the Public Health approach to biological disease to tackle violence

In tackling a disease, it is important to understand:

- the nature of disease, how it presents and how it is transmitted
- what factors act to increase the risk of contracting the disease
- what factors act to protect
- how to identify outbreaks

And then what treatment is effective in dealing with the disease and how interventions/strategies can be implemented....

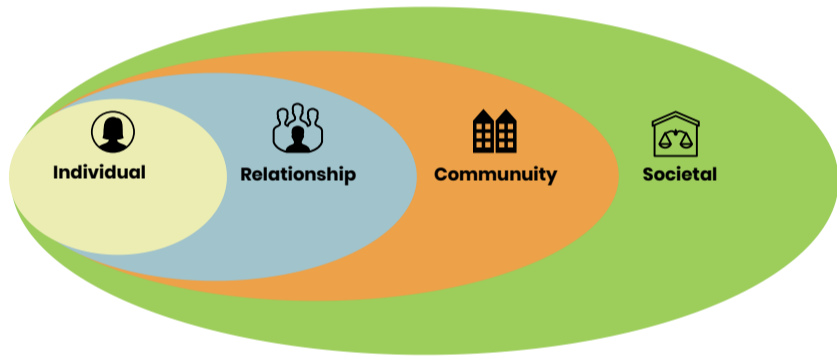
**Followed by on-going disease surveillance, and review of the effectiveness of actions to prevent, reduce and/or mitigate.**



Source: Summarised from the United States Centre for Communicable Disease (CDC)

## Risk Factors and Protective Factors

Factors which increase the risk of committing or being a victim of violence can be defined at different levels.



## Levels of violence prevention

- **Primary** – stop violence before it starts, reduce the number of new cases (**incidence**) in the population.
- **Secondary** – respond quickly to incidents, reduce the **prevalence** of violence in the population.
- **Tertiary** – to intervene once violence has started to reduce /mitigate harm

## Risk Factors

- Access to weapons
- Substance misuse
- Mental health problems and/or disability
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Family history of criminality, depression, etc.
- Exposure to violence in the home, family
- Homelessness
- Lack of job opportunities
- Lack of after-school activities
- Poor community integration or cohesion
- Local illicit drug trade
- Social norms making violence acceptable
- Social injustice, discrimination and social division
- Poverty

## Protective Factors

- Having good physical and mental health
- Problem-solving and conflict resolution skills
- Stable family relationships
- Reliable housing
- Social and community connectedness
- Access to effective clinical care for mental, physical, and substance abuse disorders
- Policy and strategies to address health disparities,
- Investment in deprived areas
- Social norms making violence unacceptable

Source: Safe States Alliance (2011) Preventing Violence: Roles for Public Health Agencies.

## Typology of Violence

Source: World Health Organisation (WHO)

The World Health Organisation (WHO) define violence as:

*"the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation."*

WHO then group violence according to who is committing the violence (from violence committed against oneself, violence inflicted by individuals, or small groups on others and violence inflicted by larger groups such as states, militia groups and terrorists organisations) and the nature of the violence committed.

