

The Cambridge Handbook of International Prevention Science

The Cambridge Handbook of International Prevention Science offers a comprehensive global overview on prevention science with the most up-to-date research from around the world. Over 100 scholars from 27 different countries (including Australia, Bhutan, Botswana, India, Israel, Mexico, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, and Thailand) contributed to this volume, which covers a wide range of topics important to prevention science. It includes major sections on the foundations of prevention, as well as examples of new initiatives in the field, detailing current prevention efforts across the five continents. A unique and innovative volume, *The Cambridge Handbook of International Prevention Science* is a valuable resource for established scholars, early professionals, students, practitioners, and policy-makers.

MOSHE ISRAELASHVILI is Associate Professor at the Tel Aviv University (Israel) School of Education. He has extensive experience in prevention programs' development, implementation and evaluation, especially in the context of children and youth resilience promotion and substance abuse prevention. He is a consultant to major institutions in Israel, such as the Israel Ministry of Education/Psych-Counseling Services, Israel Anti-Drug Authority, Israel Internet Association, and Israel Defence Forces and is a member of the Society for Prevention Research (SPR), American Psychological Association (APA), and the Society for Stress and Anxiety Research (STAR). A visiting professor in Canada and the United States, he also serves on the editorial boards of international journals.

JOHN L. ROMANO is Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota, United States. His scholarship emphasizes prevention science and international psychology. The author of *Prevention Psychology: Enhancing Personal and Social Well-Being* (APA, 2015), he is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA). The awards he has received include Prevention Section (APA's Society of Counseling Psychology) Inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award, Distinguished Contributions to Counseling Psychology (Society of Counseling

Psychology), APA’s International Psychology Division International Mentoring Award, and the American Counseling Association Research Award. He has been a visiting professor, consultant, and external evaluator/assessor at universities in several countries. He has disseminated research/scholarship through international journals and conferences and serves on the editorial boards of international journals. He is a former U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer (Nigeria) and has been a Visiting Professor in Malaysia and Thailand.

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Moshe Israelashvili

Tel Aviv University

John L. Romano

University of Minnesota



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To our families, that directly and indirectly supported our global journey to promote prevention science, and to scholars, practitioners, and policy makers who are bringing the science of prevention to their countries, cultural groups, and disciplines to improve the health and well-being of children, youth, and adults across the globe

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Contributors

- BOLANLE E. ADETOUN, ECOWAS, Nigeria.
- MODUPE ADEWUYI, Lenoir-Rhyne University, United States.
- ADEBOWALE (DEBO) AKANDE, IRC, South Africa.
- TITILOLA AKANDE, Dublin University, Ireland, and Malmö University, Sweden.
- PAULA ALLEN-MEARES, University of Michigan, United States.
- MIRIAM ÁLVAREZ, University of La Laguna, Spain.
- JOAN AMER, University of the Balearic Islands, Spain.
- DELIL ATHIÉ, Instituto Mexicano de Investigación de Familia y Población, A.C. (Yo quiero Yo puedo-IMIFAP), Mexico.
- LLUÍS BALLESTER, University of the Balearic Islands, Spain.
- JOSIPA BAŠIĆ, University of Zagreb, Croatia.
- K. A. BATES, Yale University, United States.
- CADY BERKEL, Arizona State University, United States.
- MARTINA BRAASCH, University of Wuppertal, Germany.
- PETRA BUCHWALD, University of Wuppertal, Germany.
- SONIA BYRNE, University of La Laguna, Spain.
- AMADOR CALAFAT, European Institute of Studies on Prevention (IREFREA), Spain.
- GIOVANNA CAMPELLO, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Austria.
- CHEUNG-MOON CHO, National Information Society Agency, Korea.
- WAN HAR CHONG, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.
- MILENA CLAUDIUS, Boston College, United States.

- MADELINE A. COHEN, Columbia University, United States.
- ROBERT CONYNE, University of Cincinnati, United States.
- BARBARA DE LARM, Indiana University, United States.
- SEAN C. DEMARTINO, Springfield College, United States.
- ANNAMARIA DI FABIO, University of Florence, Italy.
- TSHERING DOLKAR, Counseling Services, RENEW, Bhutan.
- GRANT ELLISON, Eastern Michigan University, United States.
- KARIN ENGSTRÖM, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden.
- DOROTHY L. ESPELAGE, University of Florida, United States.
- ZELDE ESPINEL, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and Jackson Memorial Hospital, United States.
- MARIA ESPINOLA, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, United States
- BARRY EYE, Eastern Michigan University, United States.
- LEA FERRARI, University of Padova, Italy.
- PERRY FIRTH, Seattle University, United States.
- YVONNE FORSELL, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden.
- ERICA FRYDENBERG, University of Melbourne, Australia.
- MARIA ROSARIA GALANTI, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden.
- ABIGAIL H. GEWIRTZ, University of Minnesota, United States.
- DANIEL GOLDBERG, Indiana University, United States.
- BETHANY GOURLEY, Eastern Michigan University, United States.
- BRANDON J. GRIFFIN, Virginia Commonwealth University, United States.
- SALLY M. HAGE, Springfield College, United States.
- NADIA HASAN, Texas A&M University at Kingsville, United States.
- HANNA HEIKKILA, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Austria.
- ANNA-EMILIA HIETANEN, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Mexico.
- JUN SUNG HONG, Wayne State University, United States, and Sungkyunkwan University, Korea.

- JI SU HONG, Affinia Healthcare, St. Louis, Missouri, United States.
- SAJID HUMAYUN, University of Greenwich, United Kingdom.
- MOSHE ISRAELASHVILI, Tel Aviv University, Israel.
- SARAH JONES, Arizona State University, United States.
- MONTSE JUAN, European Institute of Studies on Prevention (IREFREA), Spain.
- MAUREEN E. KENNY, Boston College, United States.
- ELYSSA KLANN, Indiana University, United States.
- DOUGLAS KNUTSON, Oklahoma State University, United States.
- ELLEN KOCH, Eastern Michigan University, United States.
- JULIE M. KOCH, Oklahoma State University and Grand Canyon University-College of Doctoral Studies, United States.
- AI LENG PATRICIA KOH, KK Women’s & Children’s Hospital, Singapore.
- GENOMARY KRIGBAUM, Marian University–College of Osteopathic Medicine, United States.
- KATHERINE KULICK, Virginia Commonwealth University, United States.
- CAROLINE R. LAVELOCK, Virginia Commonwealth University, United States.
- ELIZABETH LETOURNEAU, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. and Moore Center for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse, Johns Hopkins University, United States.
- WADIH MAALOUF, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Austria.
- ANNA MÅNSDOTTER, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden.
- MARTÍ MARCH, University of the Balearic Islands, Spain.
- ANNE MAURICIO, Arizona State University, United States.
- DAVID V. MCQUEEN, Global Consultant in Health Promotion, United States.
- JULIANA MEJÍA-TRUJILLO, Nuevos Rumbos Corporation, Colombia.
- JETTE MÖLLER, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden.
- STEFANIE MORGENROTH, University of Wuppertal, Germany.
- NEHA NAVSARIA, Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, United States.
- LAURA NOTA, University of Padova, Italy.

- K. M. NYAMA, UW University, South Africa.
- CARMEN ORTE, University of the Balearic Islands, Spain.
- KRZYSZTOF OSTASZEWSKI, Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology in Warsaw, Poland.
- TEBATSO PAUL, Institute of Development Management, Botswana.
- ANTHONY A. PEGUERO, Virginia Tech University, United States.
- AUGUSTO PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, Nuevos Rumbos Corporation, Colombia.
- SUSAN PICK, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Yo quiero Yo puedo-IMIFAP, Mexico.
- AGNIESZKA PISARSKA, Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology in Warsaw, Poland.
- ANDREAS RECHKEMMER, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver, United States.
- SOLOMON RENATI, K B P College, Vashi, Navi Mumbai, India.
- ARTHUR REYNOLDS, University of Minnesota, United States.
- MARÍA JOSÉ RODRIGO, University of La Laguna, Spain.
- JOHN L. ROMANO, University of Minnesota, United States.
- DARKO ROVIŠ, University of Rijeka, Croatia.
- KYLE RUNDLES, Emerson College, United States.
- IRWIN N. SANDLER, Arizona State University, United States.
- JONATHAN SCHWARTZ, University of Houston, United States.
- STEPHEN SCOTT, King’s College, London, United Kingdom.
- TERESA MARIA SGARAMELLA, University of Padova, Italy.
- DANIEL T. L. SHEK, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong.
- RYAN T. SHIELDS, Johns Hopkins University, United States.
- JAMES M. SHULTZ, Center for Disaster and Extreme Event Preparedness, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, United States.
- SKULTIP SIRIKANTRAPORN, Alliant International University, United States.
- SHREELETHA SOLOMON, Institute for Child and Adolescent Health Research, Mumbai, India.
- SALVATORE SORESI, University of Padova, Italy.
- REX STOCKTON, Indiana University, United States.

- HANAKO SUZUKI, University of Tsukuba, Japan.
- CHOO SYLVIA HENN TEAN, KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital, Singapore.
- HUI NEE TANG, KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital, Singapore.
- JENN-YUN TEIN, Arizona State University, United States.
- JUDITH A. TEMPLE, University of Minnesota, United States.
- JOHN W. TOUMBOUROU, Deakin University, Australia.
- M. M. TSERERE, King of Kings Globe, South Africa.
- ARUNYA TUICOMEPEE, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.
- ELLEN L. VAUGHAN, Indiana University, United States.
- MARGA VIVES, University of the Balearic Islands, Spain.
- NATHANIEL G. WADE, Iowa State University, United States.
- NANCY WIGTON, Applied Neurotherapy Center, Scottsdale, Arizona, United States.
- EMILY WINSLOW, Arizona State University, United States.
- SHARLENE WOLCHIK, Arizona State University, United States.
- Y. JOEL WONG, Indiana University, United States.
- EVERETT L. WORTHINGTON, Jr., Virginia Commonwealth University, United States.
- ADRIANA M. YOUSSEF, University of Minnesota, United States.

Foreword

Historically, the prevention of problem behaviors and the promotion of positive behaviors have received extensive commentary and scientific study. However, in more recent years, newer theoretical approaches, rigorous research methodologies, intensive explorations of efficacy and effectiveness models, and careful implementations of prevention/promotion programs served as accumulating components for the establishment of knowledge on prevention into the relatively new interdisciplinary professional domain of prevention science.

Currently, the domain of prevention science is characterized by increasing groups of scientists and practitioners who focus on prevention as their main field of expertise. The establishment of such groups was the natural result of the enlarging and crystalizing body of knowledge on the science of prevention. This knowledge is presented and exchanged in various vivid professional forums, both oral (e.g., conferences, workshops) and written (e.g., journals, books). Moreover, an increasing number of stakeholders and decision makers are gradually getting to know the power of early interventions as an essential component in the prevention of behavioral disorders and diseases as well as in the promotion of health and well-being. Yet, one of the major limitations of existing knowledge of prevention science is its concentration in a relatively narrow spectrum of countries, as the more developed prevention interventions are often designed and implemented in higher-income countries. This does not suggest that prevention interventions are not developed in other parts of the world (as demonstrated in this *Handbook*), nor that prevention programs that have been developed and implemented in some countries are not applicable for implementation in other countries. Rather, the *Handbook* emphasizes the need for a more global perspective of prevention science as an important step in widening the scope of knowledge and relevance of this academic and professional domain. This broader perspective may include how problems and understandings of prevention are conceptualized globally and how best to use theoretical and applied knowledge from prevention science across different countries and cultural contexts.

Therefore, the major purposes of this *Handbook* are to strengthen communication among prevention scholars from across the globe and to provide updated knowledge about prevention science to researchers and practitioners in different parts of the world. It is believed that this global exposure will lead not only to

more intensive international exchanges of ideas and collaborations but also to assist in the crystallization of already existing knowledge in prevention science.

Accordingly, the *Handbook* includes two main parts. The first part contains chapters that represent the current state of knowledge on important topics and paradigms of prevention science. The second part includes chapters that were written by prevention scholars from various parts of the world. Each scholar, or group of scholars, wrote about his or her nation and how prevention has been applied in their given country or region.

The call for chapter proposals for this *Handbook*, the first of its kind, attracted many authors from across the globe from various disciplines. As a final publication, the *Handbook* includes descriptions, commentaries, and lessons learned by more than one hundred scholars from twenty-seven different countries. While the scope of the countries is not balanced across all parts of the world, the rich and varied group of authors presents a wide range of prevention topics and methodologies. The authors describe not only behaviors to be prevented (e.g., drug and alcohol abuse) but also behaviors to be enhanced and strengthened (e.g., promoting health and well-being). In addition, challenges associated with prevention work in various countries, most notably the lack of funding for prevention activities, limited training opportunities, and the need to empirically validate implemented prevention interventions, are especially highlighted.

Naturally, it was impossible to cover all the prevention efforts conducted in each and every nation of the world. Nevertheless, we trust the *Handbook* will be a valuable resource for both experienced and novice prevention scholars, practitioners, and policy makers. Finally, in pursuit of the promotion of prevention science, we hope that the *Handbook* offers inspiration and future increased collaboration among scholars throughout the world.

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