

The Intersection of Public Policy and Health Behavior Theory in the Physical Activity Arena

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Benefits of Policy-level Approaches

- Impact a large number of people.
- Can better influence people who are difficult to reach.
- Require less time and effort from individuals.
- More cost-effective.

(Swinburn et al., 1999; Yen & Syme, 1999).



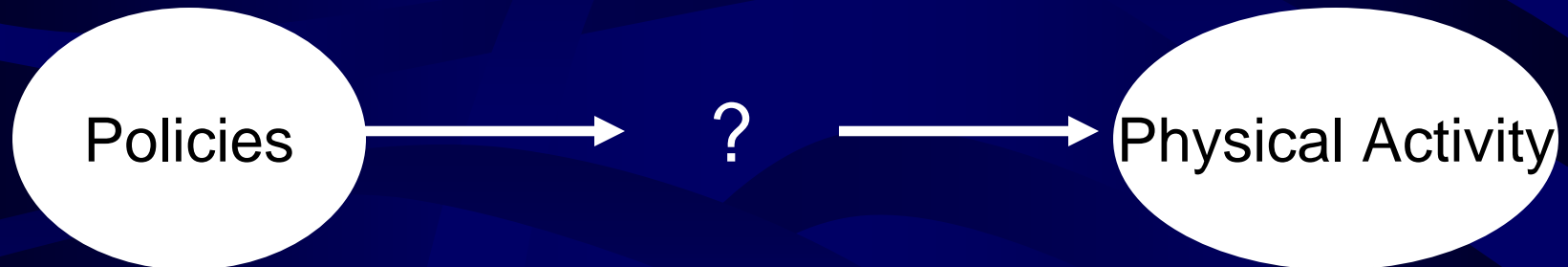
Types of Physical Activity Policy Strategies

Policy Strategy	Examples
1. <i>Provide information about the behavior.</i>	Point-of-decision stairway prompts, Mass media campaigns, Classroom-based curriculum.
2. <i>Increase/decrease opportunities for behavior.</i>	Improved access, availability, and proximity to facilities, resources, services, and programs; Enhanced aesthetics; Improved safety.
3. <i>Offer incentives/disincentives for behavior.</i>	Public transportation vouchers, Lottery incentives, Tax deductions, Reduced health insurance premiums.
4. <i>Require/prohibit behavior.</i>	Pedestrian-only streets, Driving restrictions, Parking regulations.



Which approach should
policy-makers take?

How do policies influence physical activity behavior?

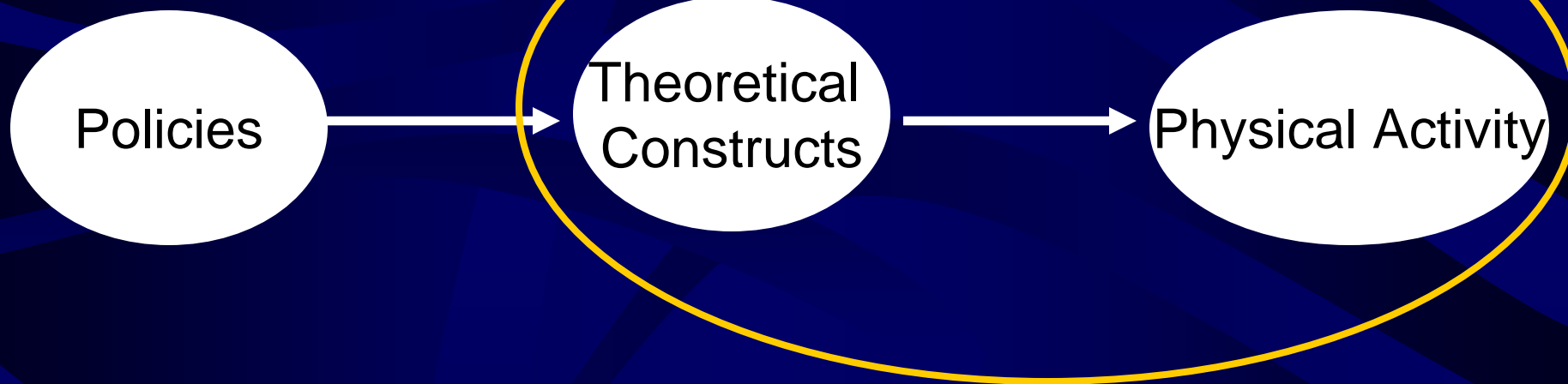


Theories of Health Behavior Change

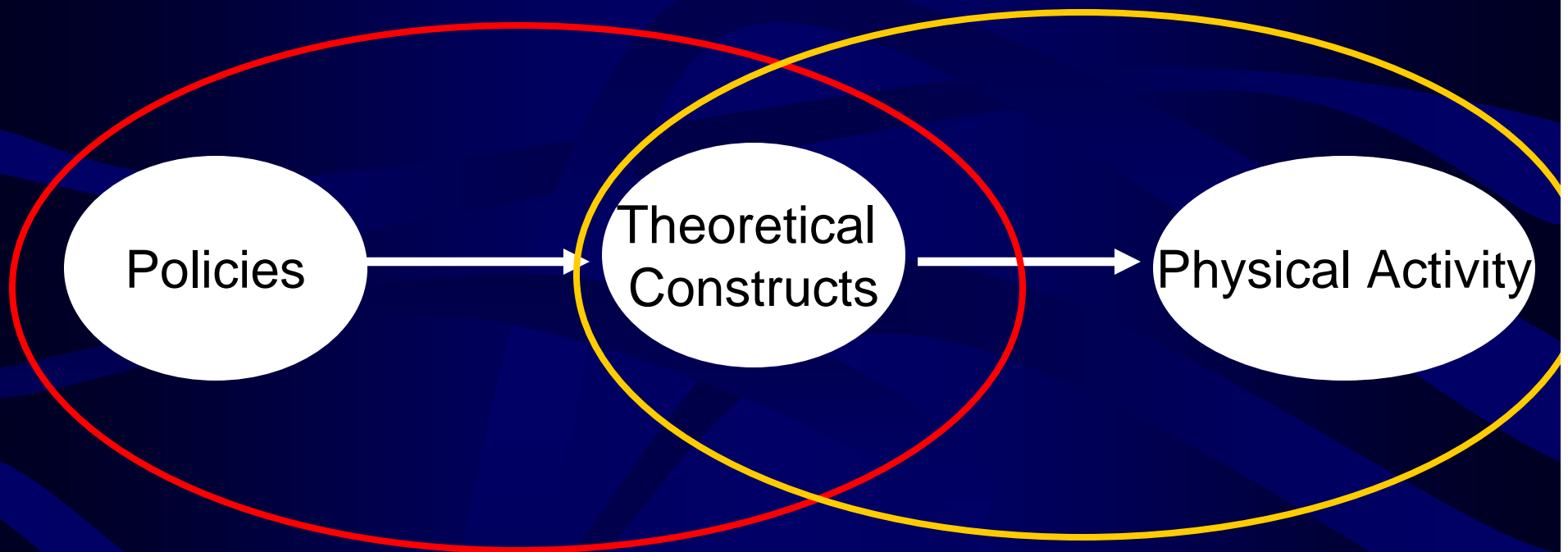


- Offer a variety of psychosocial factors that are thought to predict health behavior change.
- Few past attempts to describe the influence of physical activity policies on mediating mechanisms.

Theoretical Intervening Variables



Theoretical Intervening Variables



Intersection Between Policy Strategies and Theoretical Variables

	Policy Strategy			
Health Behavior Theory	Provide information about the behavior	Increase/decrease opportunities for the behavior	Offer incentives or disincentives for the behavior	Require/prohibit the behavior
Health Belief Model (HBM)				
Self-Determination Theory (SDT)				
Transtheoretical Model (TTM)				

Intersection Between Policy Strategies and Theoretical Variables

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Health Belief Model (HBM)	<i>Perceived susceptibility,</i> <i>Perceived severity,</i>			
Self-Determination Theory (SDT)	<i>Integrated regulation (i.e., self-worth and growth)</i>			
Transtheoretical Model (TTM)	<i>“Consciousness raising”—</i> <i>Precontemplation to Contemplation</i>			

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Health Belief Model (HBM)	<i>Perceived susceptibility,</i> <i>Perceived severity,</i>	<i>Perceived barriers,</i> <i>Cues to action</i>		
Self-Determination Theory (SDT)	<i>Integrated regulation (i.e., self-worth and growth)</i>	<i>Intrinsic regulation (i.e., enjoyment)</i>		
Transtheoretical Model (TTM)	<i>“Consciousness raising”—</i> <i>Precontemplation to Contemplation</i>	<i>“Stimulus control”—</i> <i>Preparation to Action and Maintenance</i>		

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Health Belief Model (HBM)	<i>Perceived susceptibility,</i> <i>Perceived severity,</i>	<i>Perceived barriers,</i> <i>Cues to action</i>	<i>Perceived benefits</i>	
Self-Determination Theory (SDT)	<i>Integrated regulation (i.e., self-worth and growth)</i>	<i>Intrinsic regulation (i.e., enjoyment)</i>	<i>Identified regulation (i.e., rewards)</i>	
Transtheoretical Model (TTM)	<i>“Consciousness raising”—</i> <i>Precontemplation to Contemplation</i>	<i>“Stimulus control”—</i> <i>Preparation to Action and Maintenance</i>	<i>“Reinforcement management”—</i> <i>Action to Maintenance</i>	

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Self-Determination Theory (SDT)	<i>Integrated regulation (i.e., self-worth and growth)</i>	<i>Intrinsic regulation (i.e., enjoyment)</i>	<i>Identified regulation (i.e., rewards)</i>	External/Introjected regulation (i.e., rules, laws)
Transtheoretical Model (TTM)	<i>“Consciousness raising”—</i> <i>Precontemplation to Contemplation</i>	<i>“Stimulus control”—</i> <i>Preparation to Action and Maintenance</i>	<i>“Reinforcement management”—</i> <i>Action to Maintenance</i>	“Social liberation”— Maintenance

Policies that Require or Prohibit Behaviors Could have Negative Consequences

- Unplanned activity could cause injuries (e.g., improper footwear or carrying heavy loads).
- Individuals may be less compelled to be active in other settings due to fatigue or negative attitudes.



Summary

- Policies that provide information map onto a number of psychosocial constructs and may be useful for individuals early in the change process.
- Policies that provide opportunities rely heavily upon or may trigger intrinsic motivation and may be useful for individuals who are preparing to change behavior.
- Policies that offer incentives or require the behavior do not involve many psychosocial processes and may be more useful for reinforcing behavior maintenance versus adoption.

Future Recommendations

- Need more policy evaluation research.
- Examine the impact of policies on psychosocial and behavioral outcomes.
- Use longitudinal and quasi-experimental research designs.
- Conduct subgroup analyses.





Thank You

