



# How to Integrate Wellness into Substance Use Prevention eBook

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# Purpose

To gain an understanding of wellness and its essential role in substance use prevention practice for enhancing the mental and physical wellbeing, performance and happiness of youth and young adults.



# Wellness Definitions & Models

# Health as Wellness

A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1948).

Wellness is a multi-faceted & interconnected construct.

No consensus on the definition or dimensions of wellness.

# Health-Related Quality of Life & Well-Being


1. New topic area for *Healthy People 2020*
2. Healthy People 2020 Goal: **Improve HRQOL for all individuals**
3. HRQOL is a **multi-dimensional concept** that includes domains related to **physical, mental, emotional, and social functioning**.
4. **Well-being (i.e., wellness)** is a **relative state** where **one maximizes his or her physical, mental, and social functioning** in the context of **supportive environments** to live a **full, satisfying, and productive life**.
5. *Instead of the traditional view of prevention as only avoiding or minimizing illness and risk factors, well-being also focuses on disease resistance, resilience, and self-management*

[https://archive.cdc.gov/www\\_cdc\\_gov/hrqol/index.htm](https://archive.cdc.gov/www_cdc_gov/hrqol/index.htm)

# SAMHSA's Wellness Initiative (2010)

- **Definition:** Not the absence of disease, illness, and stress, but the presence of a **positive purpose in life, satisfying work and play, joyful relationships, a healthy body and living environment, and happiness.**
- 1. **Wellness Integrates Behavioral and Physical Health:** The wellness approach recognizes that the mind and body are interconnected and that **behavioral health is inseparable from physical health.**
- 2. **Wellness Is Empowering and Prevention Oriented, Unlike the Disease Treatment Model:** This approach **emphasizes having positive goals, learning self-management skills, and developing healthy habits** (Swarbrick et al., 2011, p. 329; Swarbrick, 2014, p. 11).
- 3. **Wellness Is a Journey, Not a Destination:** Wellness is a lifelong journey of striving for good mental and physical health and quality of life.

<https://library.samhsa.gov/product/what-health-providers-and-organizations-need-know-about-wellness/sma16-4951>



Is wellness also important or even essential for drug prevention?

# Well-Being & the Prevention of Substance Use Disorders

1. There is a **clear relationship between problematic substance use and poor well-being** across different age groups.
2. The **pathways** that influence the risk of **developing mental health issues overlap with** those that build **resilience and well-being**.
3. **Universal interventions**, which include **multiple components, such as nutrition, physical exercise, and self-regulation** are likely to have **greater effects on well-being and mental morbidity**.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10911324/>





# Wellness and Drug Use Prevention

1. **Research** indicates that **wellness, or well-being, is clearly linked to substance use and mental health.**
2. **Programs promoting wellness are important for preventing problematic substance use and mental health issues.**
3. **Wellness-promoting lifestyle behaviors** like regular physical activity, healthy nutrition, sleep and self-care **promote mental health and less substance use.**

<https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/lifestyle-to-support-mental-health>

# 6 Reasons Why Prevention Should Include Wellness

Youth are exposed to multiple health risks

Health risks are interconnected and influence each other

Wellness protects against substance use/misuse

Wellness protects and improves mental health

Wellness fits with and completes prevention

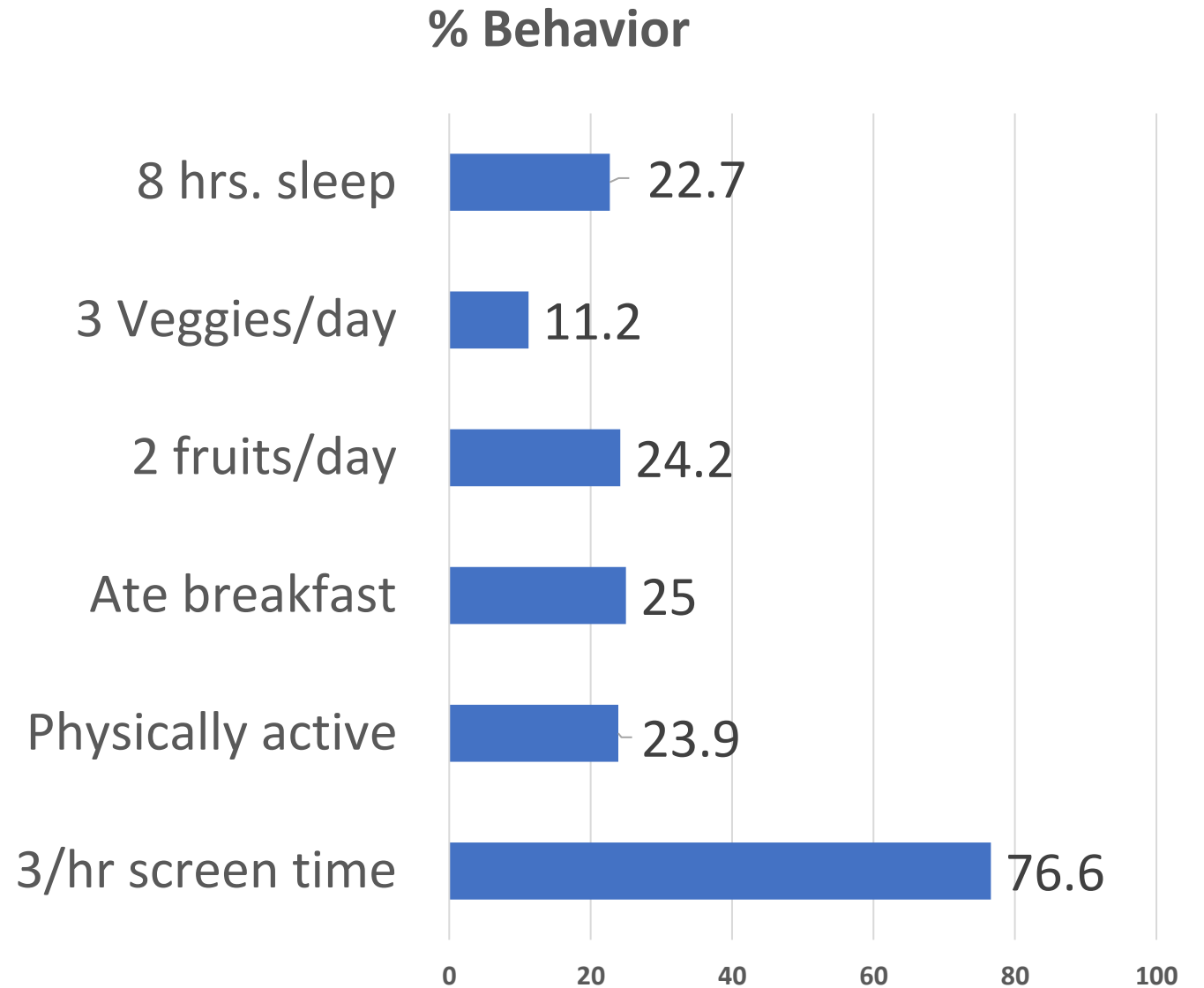
Wellness empowers youth to choose positive identities and behaviors



## #1: Youth Experience Multiple Health Risks

- Youth are at risk not only of substance use and misuse, but physical inactivity and excessive screen time, skipping breakfast and other unhealthy eating habits, lack of sleep and uncontrolled daily stress requiring a holistic approach.

# US HS Adolescent Healthy Behaviors (YRBS, 2021)



## #2: Healthy Behaviors Protect and Improve Mental Health

1. **Research shows that wellness-promoting behaviors protect against mental illness and promote mental health.**
2. **In other words, the mind and body are connected and physical and behavioral health are one.**
3. For example, a review of research published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* (2020) found **that greater physical activity, less sedentary time and greater sleep duration were associated with better mental health indicators for children and adolescents:**  
<https://ijbnpa.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12966-020-00976-x>

# #3: Wellness Empowers One To Choose Positive Identities and Healthy Habits

1. **Wellness emphasizes having positive goals, learning self-regulation skills, and choosing a healthy identity and habits.**
2. **Providing youths and young adults with knowledge of the benefits of engaging in healthy behaviors, offers young people empowering images for adopting future identities.**
3. **These images include choosing to engage in healthy behaviors to be more fit and active, healthy and strong, energetic and rested, and calm and stress-free.**
4. **The *Behavior-Image Model* indicates that wellness-based positive images of ourselves in the future and of our peers motivate youth to set health behavior goals to achieve desired identities and healthy behaviors, and in doing so, increase self-regulation skills and self-efficacy.**

# #4: Wellness Is The Ultimate Goal For All Youth and Adults

1. **Wellness is not just about reducing health risks, but promoting good physical and mental health, performance, and happiness.**
2. **As professionals and parents, we all want our youth to develop to their maximum capabilities, to live healthy and successful lives, have joyous relationships and work, to contribute positively to society, and to be happy.**
3. **Therefore, the ultimate goal for prevention is healthy youth development and wellness, not just the absence of addiction.**



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# #5: Promoting Wellness and Healthy Behaviors Protects Against Substance Use/Misuse

1. **Wellness-promoting behaviors work to counter substance use initiation and addiction, just as they support successful treatment and recovery.**
2. For example, a study published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* (2012) found that **sleep patterns and duration predicted adolescent's cigarette, alcohol and marijuana use:** <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10964-012-9784-5>
3. Another study published in *Prevention Science* (2005) found that a **brief multi-health behavior intervention (SPORT PPW) that targeted fitness and other wellness habits prevented multiple substance use behaviors** while increasing healthy habits among adolescents: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11121-005-0012-3>

# #6: Health Risks are Interconnected and Influence Each Other

1. Wellness-promoting behaviors interact with each other and together promote optimal health or wellness.
2. **Engaging in wellness-enhancing behaviors while also avoiding substance use/misuse permits healthy youth development and promotes overall wellbeing.**
3. ***Providing one without the other limits possible health outcomes and the level of wellness achieved for youths and young adults.***





# SAMHSA's 8 Interactive Dimensions of Wellness

The background of the slide features a photograph of two individuals jumping joyfully on a rocky shore at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The people are silhouetted against the bright sky, with their arms raised and legs in mid-air, conveying a sense of freedom and happiness. The water of the ocean is visible in the lower part of the image, reflecting the sunset light.

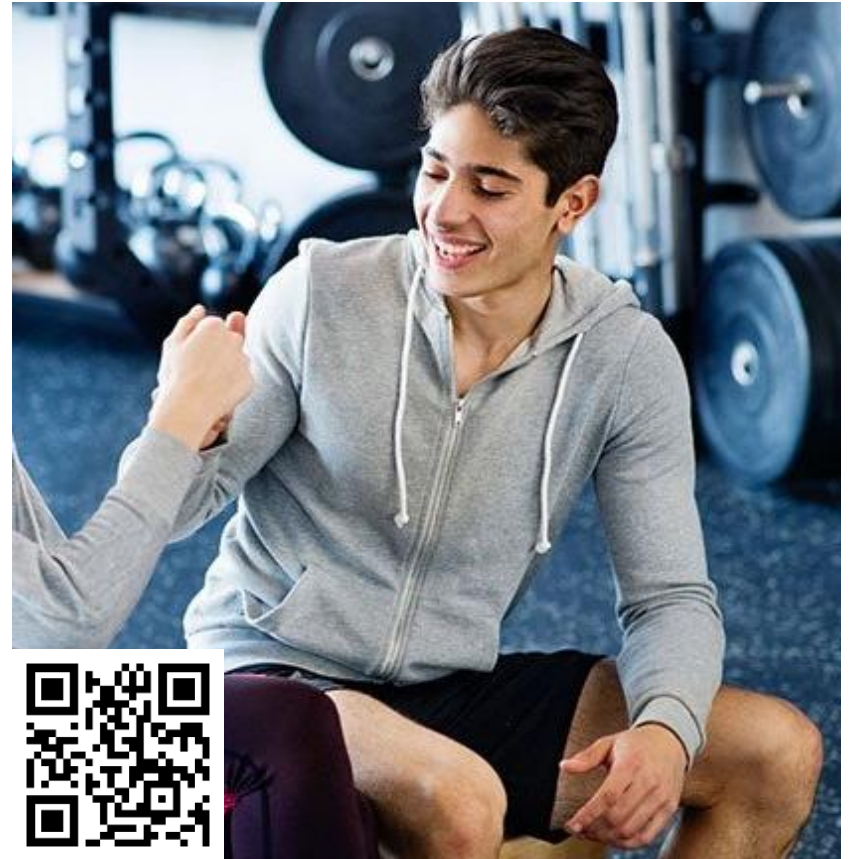
## SAMHSA's 8 Interactive Dimensions of Wellness

- 1. Physical**
- 2. Intellectual**
- 3. Financial**
- 4. Environmental**
- 5. Spiritual**
- 6. Social**
- 7. Occupational**
- 8. Emotional**

# SAMHSA's Physical Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application

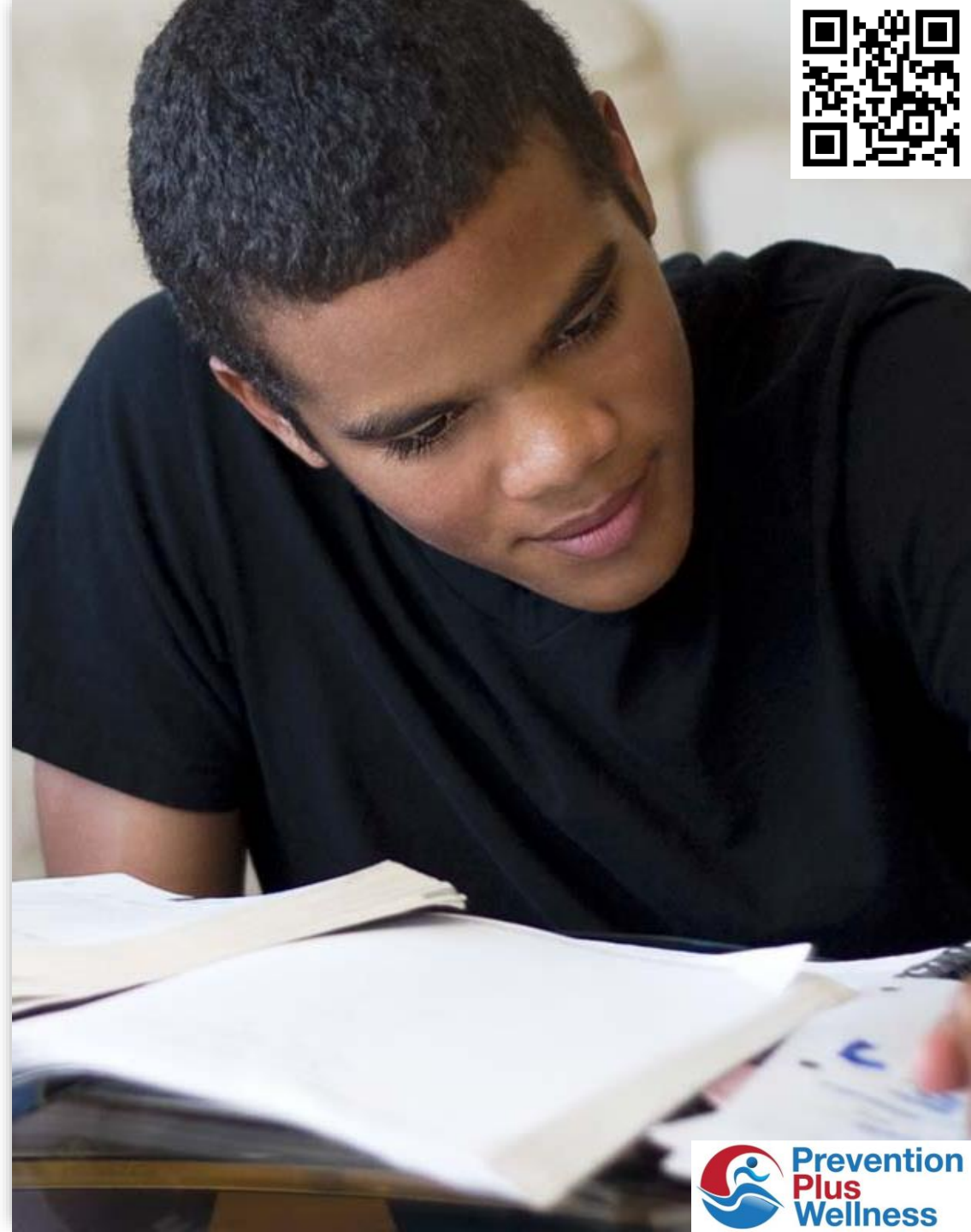
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- 1. Description:** Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition.
- 2. Prevention Application:**
  - Communicate the benefits of healthy behaviors and how they help avoid drug use and promote mental and physical wellbeing, performance and happiness.
  - Discuss how substance use harms one's ability to engage in healthy habits and achieving personal improvement goals.
  - This is the Prevention Plus Wellness Model for integrating behavioral & physical health messaging.



# SAMHSA's Intellectual Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application

- 1. Description:** Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.
- 2. Prevention Application:**
  - Have youth explore new hobbies, experiences and activities that interest them and promote mental and social development.
  - Discuss how drug use harms brain development, thinking, learning and educational success.



# SAMHSA's Financial Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application



- 1. Description:** Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.
- 2. Prevention Application:**
  - Share resources with students about local opportunities for part-time work and opportunities to make money.
  - Have youth create a prioritized list of what they'd like to spend their money on and show how the cost of drug use and addiction would significantly reduce their purchasing options.

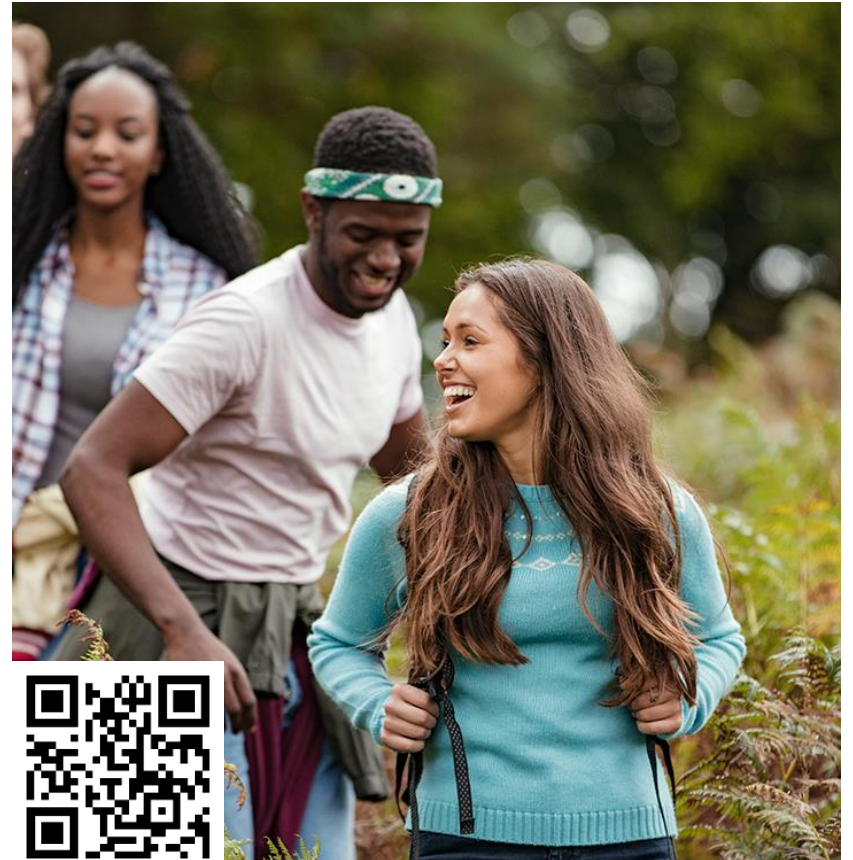
# SAMHSA'S Environmental Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application

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1. **Description:** Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.

2. **Prevention Application:**

- Encourage youth and give them opportunities to get outside in nature or visit a park to walk, play sports, exercise, meditate or relax.
- Have students identify an indoor space where they can go to experience quiet and contemplate, relax, listen to quiet music or nature sounds and experience peace and calm to promote mental health and reduce stress.



# SAMHSA's Spiritual Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application

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**1. Description:** Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning in life.

**2. Prevention Application:**

- Give youth opportunities to meditate, practice deep breathing or pray to enhance inner peace, reduce daily stress and find meaning in their lives.
- Provide students with resources and opportunities to act on their values by volunteering to help others in their school and community, such as serving on a youth drug prevention coalition.



# SAMHSA's Social Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application

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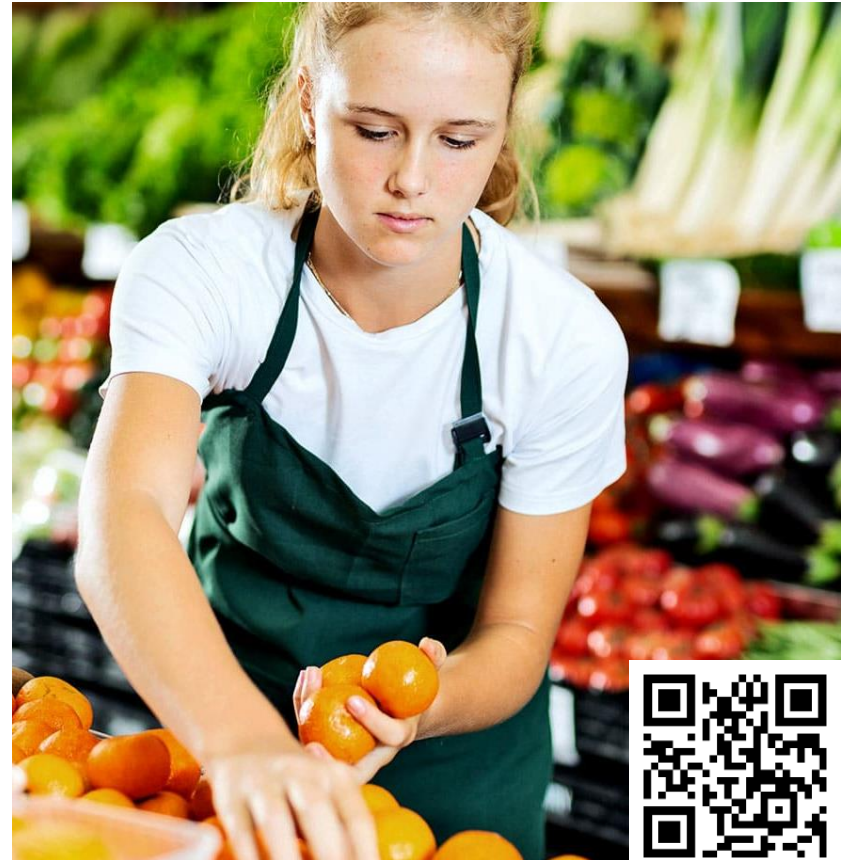
- 1. Description:** Developing a sense of connection, belonging, a well-developed support system.
- 2. Prevention Application:**
  - Have students make a list or a chart showing their relationships and communication patterns (direction, amount of time) with friends and family members, and how they'd like them to change in the future.
  - Have youth set a goal to go places or do things to make new friends, especially those that would support their goal to live



# SAMHSA's Occupational Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application

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- 1. Description:** Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived through one's work.
- 2. Prevention Application:**
  - Share resources with students about available local, regional and state careers and work options and have them make a list of possible careers/work they would like to learn more about and report on one of them.
  - Introduce youth to careers in the substance abuse, prevention and mental health fields.



# SAMHSA's Emotional Dimension of Wellness: Description & Prevention Application

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- 1. Description:** Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.
- 2. Prevention Application:**
  - Have students make a list of their strengths to positively express emotions and feelings and handle stress in their lives, and those emotions/feelings/stress aspects they'd like to improve.
  - Have youth set a short-term goal to improve their ability to identify and express their emotions or reduce stress in their lives, including avoiding substance use which increases stress and blunts emotional expression.



# Conclusion

- While **wellness** is often identified as a **critical component of successful recovery**, it is also **essential for preventing substance use and improving the mental health** of young people.
- Substance use prevention professionals and others who work with youth and young adults should **use the dimensions of wellness to develop creative strategies for integrating wellness and prevention for improving well-being**.

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