

# Shifting the Lens on How We Talk About Adolescent Dating Abuse

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence

## The Need for New Messaging

- Although adolescent dating abuse is common, with one in four adolescents experiencing adolescent dating abuse each year, it rarely appears in the news.
- Between 2012 and 2014, only one story per month appeared in California papers and fewer than 10 substantive articles appeared in education journals in that same timeframe.
- When adolescent dating abuse is covered in the media, there is little discussion of solutions beyond awareness raising.
- Better communication about adolescent dating abuse will lead to improved school environments and policies that support and nurture healthy relationships.

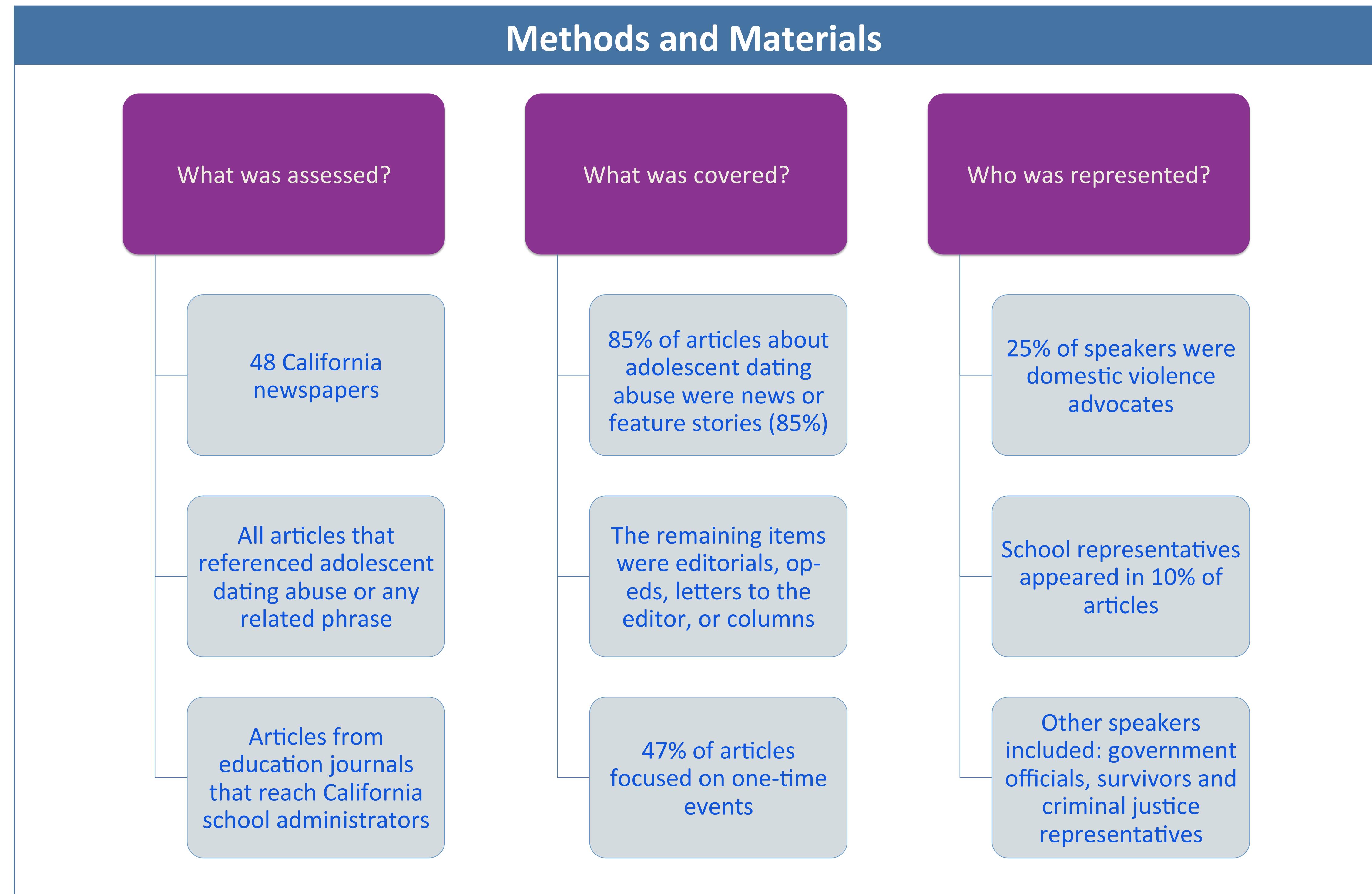
## What We Created

The Partnership developed and advocates for the usage of four messaging themes that promote the prevention of adolescent dating abuse. These messaging themes highlight:

- Schools as a part of the solution that need to support young people
- How educational outcomes are affected (in terms of attendance records, test scores, drop out rates, etc.) when adolescent dating abuse is not addressed
- Adolescent dating abuse prevention as an investment in the future
- Inviting allies and communities to talk about healthy relationships and participate in prevention solutions and policies.
- Connecting solutions to adolescent dating abuse with work on related policies or issues,

The four messaging themes include:

-  Schools have a responsibility to give students the skills they need to succeed in the classroom and in life.
-  Healthy relationships are the foundation for a strong and healthy community.
-  Students can't learn if they're hurting or don't feel safe.
-  Together we can prevent teen dating violence.



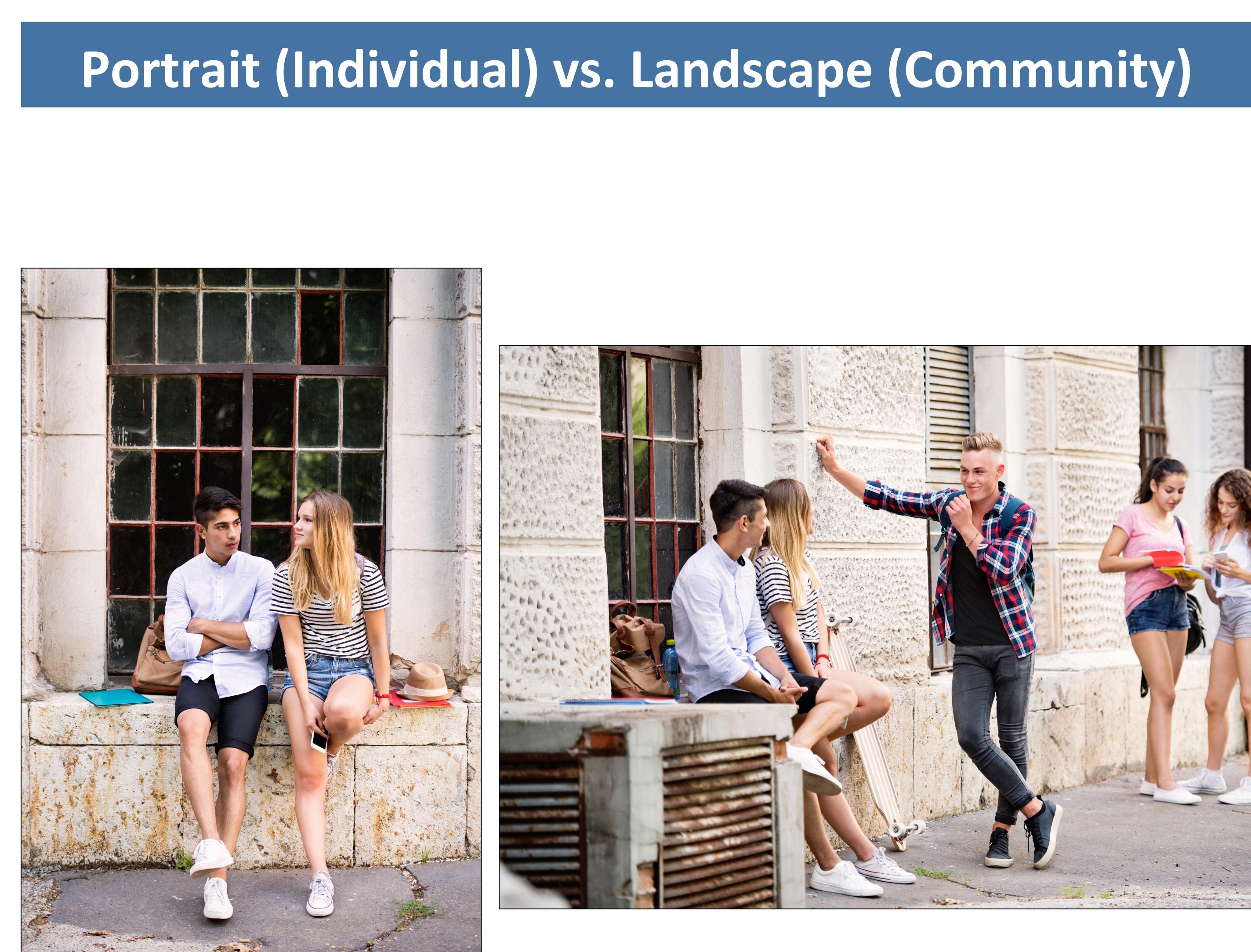
## Shifting the Frame

We know many stories focus on individual "portrait" stories that detail the individual profiled. This portrait view evokes:

- A system of personal responsibility, along with punishment and criminalization
- Suggestions that the solutions to adolescent dating abuse lie with greater personal responsibility

Far fewer stories pull back to show the "landscape" surrounding individuals. This landscape view focuses on:

- The systems, including schools, businesses, government, or other institutions, that impact and surround individuals
- Solutions that involve all societal structures playing a role in prevention



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## DELTA FOCUS

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