



Developing the Precision Paradigm

Theories of Behavior Change Survey
 Early Results – Feedback to Intervention Researchers

March 2022

Thank You!

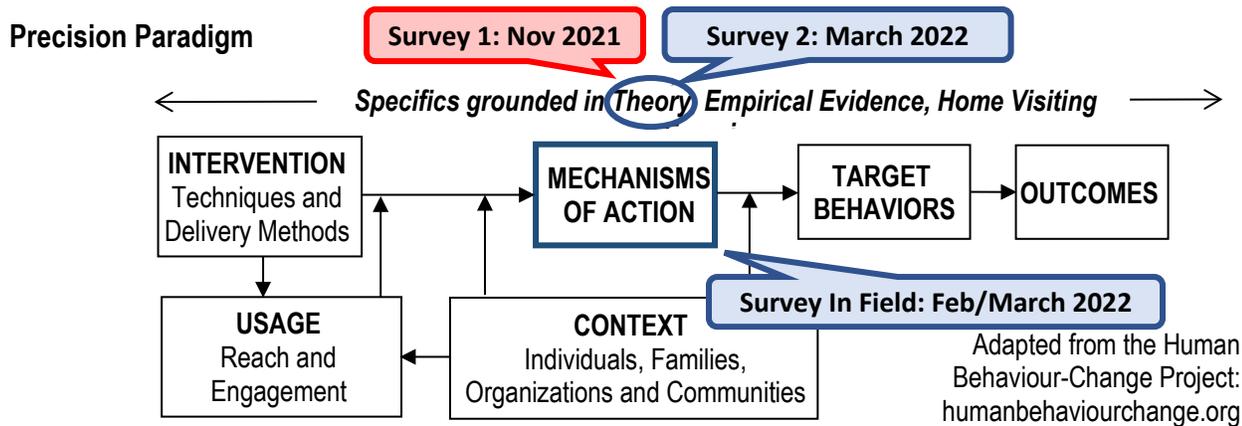
Thank you for being one of **over 100 intervention researchers across the country** helping to specify the **Precision Paradigm**.

Precision Paradigm

The Precision Paradigm is the foundation for innovative research to learn, *What interventions within home visiting (HV) work best, for which families, in which contexts, why and how?*

With help from researchers and many others with an interest in HV, we are specifying each part of the Precision Paradigm to build a common framework and language for such research. Click here for brief video:

We are sharing what we learn each step of the way. This email shares results from our **November 2021 survey** of intervention researchers regarding Theories of Behavior Change.



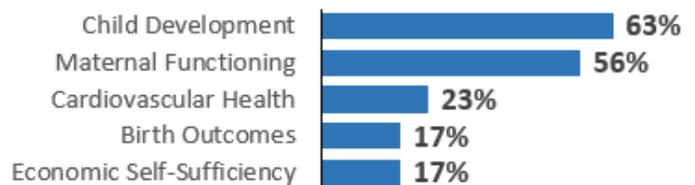
Why We Did the Survey

Theory is part of the foundation for intervention design. There are many theories of behavior change. We want our research resources to feature well-recognized theories rated to be high quality and relevant for HV research. We surveyed researchers to learn their familiarity with theories and how they rated the quality and relevance of theories familiar to them.

How We Did the Survey

- We invited 100 intervention researchers to complete the web-based survey.
- The survey asked about 48 theories of behavior change cited in the literature.
- It asked respondents to rate the quality – the generalizability, clarity, coherence, and evidence-base – of theories familiar to them, and the theories’ relevance for HV and precision research.
- We received responses from 85 researchers with expertise in five outcome areas.

Primary or Secondary Area of Expertise



Highlights of What We Learned (Table 1)

What theories were familiar to researchers?

- Every theory was familiar to at least a few researchers.
- 15 of 48 theories were familiar to most researchers in at least one outcome area.
- Only 4 theories were familiar to most researchers in all five outcome areas.

How did researchers rate the quality and HV relevance of the theories familiar to them?

- 12 were rated high quality by at least 50% of researchers;
- 11 were rated relevant for HV research by at least 50% of researchers; and
- 10 were rated both high quality and relevant for HV research by at least 50% of researchers.

An Unexpected Finding – What Constrained Researchers’ Ratings of Quality?

- Researchers familiar with a theory were often unsure how to rate its generalizability, clarity, coherence, or evidence base to rate its quality.

Table 1. Intervention Researcher Familiarity and Ratings of Theory Quality and Relevance (n=85)

Theory	Familiarity by Area of Researcher Expertise ¹					High Quality ^{2,3}	High Relevance for HV ^{2,4}	Unsure How to Rate Quality ⁵
	BO	CD	MF	CVH	ESS			
Self-Efficacy Theory						86%	78%	11%
Cognitive Behavioral Theory						82%	66%	13%
Social Cognitive Theory						80%	70%	19%
Social Ecological Model of Behavior Change						62%	67%	27%
Self-Determination Theory						66%	54%	27%
Operant Learning Theory						65%	35%	10%
Social Learning Theory						60%	53%	31%
Transactional Model of Stress/Coping						52%	60%	35%
Transtheoretical Model/Stages of Change						76%	65%	10%
Health Belief Model						52%	52%	30%
Self-Regulation Theory						57%	49%	43%
Theory of Planned Behavior						50%	57%	35%
Change Theory						39%	46%	48%
Theory of Reasoned Action						48%	32%	39%
Attribution Theory						43%	51%	46%

Key: BO=Birth outcomes; CD=Child development; MF=Maternal functioning; CVH=Cardiovascular health; ESS=Economic self-sufficiency; ¹Theories where ≥50% of intervention researchers were familiar are shaded in blue; ²Of those at least somewhat familiar with the theory; ³Agreed to all four quality items; ⁴Agreed to both relevance items; ⁵Percent of researchers who were familiar with the theory but unsure how to rate 1 or more of the 4 quality items.

Implications

- We are on the right track in engaging experts in diverse outcome areas.
- Researchers’ perspectives are useful in identifying theories to feature in our research resources.
- Many researchers themselves could benefit from education on well-recognized theories.

Ongoing Work & Next Steps

- **Currently** fielding a survey on mechanisms of action and will share early results with you in April.
- **Currently** drafting training and TA resources for theories of behavior change for the HARC website.
- **Later this month**, we’ll conduct a second theory survey of more general, explanatory theories of behavior.
- **Future activities** will elicit input on theories and mechanisms of action from a broader range of HV partners, specifically HV models and local program leadership and staff.