In this topic, we will cover the differences between prevention and response and why it's important to consider both and see them as a continuum.

PREVENTION FOUNDATIONS—REFRESHER

PRIMARY, SECONDARY, AND TERTIARY PREVENTION

Primary Prevention

Stop violence before it starts

Secondary Prevention

Detect violence early and prevent the recurrence of violence

Tertiary Prevention (response)

Meet the immediate needs of survivors to limit the impacts of violence
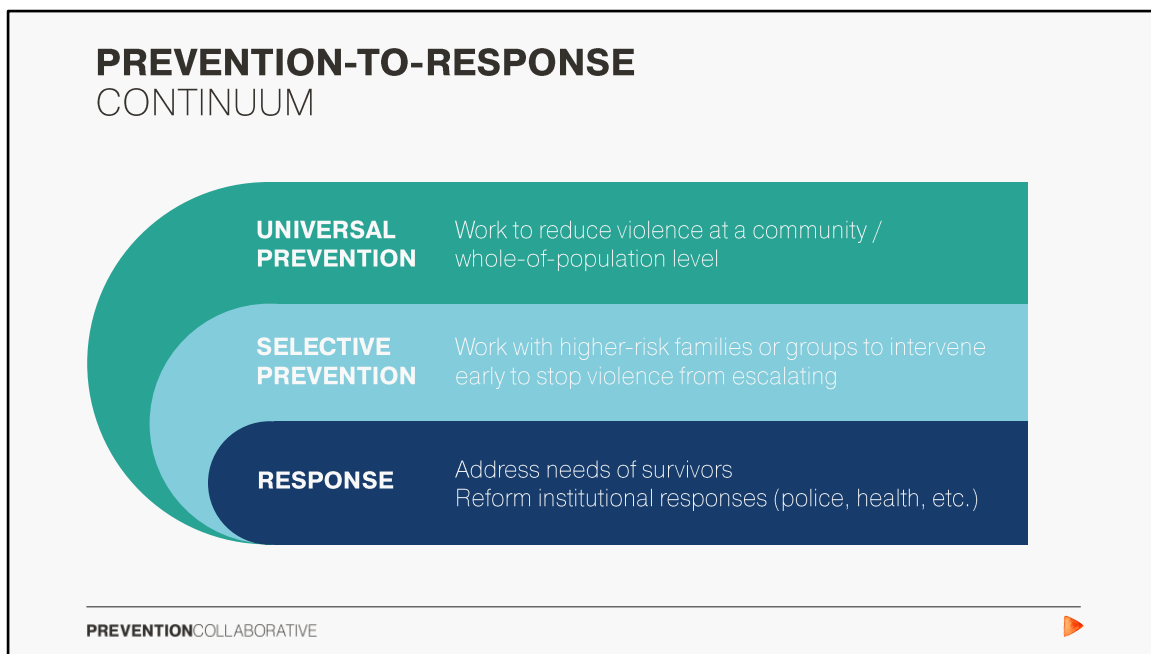
PREVENTIONCOLLABORATIVE ▶

In the public health sector, approaches have generally been categorised as primary, secondary, or tertiary prevention (also called response) depending on the timing of the intervention.

Primary prevention aims to stop violence before it starts.

Secondary prevention aims to detect violence early and prevent the recurrence of violence.

Tertiary prevention, or **response**, works to meet the immediate needs of survivors to limit the impacts of violence.

PREVENTION FOUNDATIONS—REFRESHER

PREVENTION-TO-RESPONSE
CONTINUUM

UNIVERSAL PREVENTION — Work to reduce violence at a community / whole-of-population level

SELECTIVE PREVENTION — Work with higher-risk families or groups to intervene early to stop violence from escalating

RESPONSE — Address needs of survivors. Reform institutional responses (police, health, etc.)
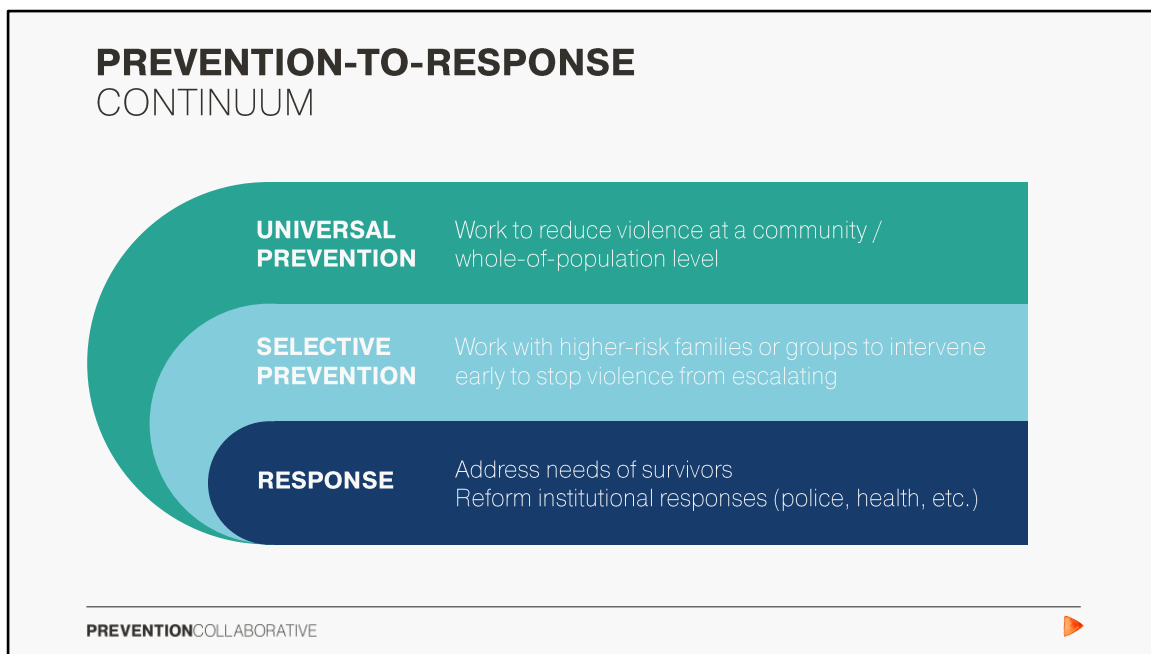
PREVENTIONCOLLABORATIVE

A more recent categorisation distinguishes between universal prevention programmes, selective prevention programmes, and response programmes.

Universal prevention programmes are directed at an entire population, community, or group regardless of whether programme participants have experienced or used violence or of their individual or family risk status.

Selective prevention programmes are directed at specific groups or individuals considered to be at higher risk. This could include, for example, families under stress and/or with mental health and substance abuse problems or individuals or families already experiencing violence.

Response programmes offer services to address the short- or long-term needs of survivors of violence. They usually work to strengthen institutional capacities to provide more accessible, relevant, timely, and high-quality services and be responsible and accountable to women.

PREVENTION FOUNDATIONS—REFRESHER

Universal and selective prevention and response initiatives complement one another. For example, as universal prevention targets the whole-of-population level, including social norms and structural inequalities, it inevitably reaches those who are already experiencing or perpetrating violence or who are at increased risk.

All levels of intervention across the prevention-to-response continuum are important for a comprehensive systems approach adapted to the local context. For example, when prevention work is undertaken in communities, it is common for more women to feel confident enough to speak out about the violence they are experiencing and seek help. Therefore, it is essential that there are accessible, quality response services that survivors can be referred to for this help.