



Introduction

(<https://tinyurl.com/3e3e6tvn>)

The Methods Manual for Community Guide Systematic Reviews, hereafter referred to as the manual, provides a comprehensive overview of the Community Guide systematic review methods that serve as the basis for Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) recommendations and findings. The Community Guide Office (CGO) developed the **manual** to broadly explain how CPSTF and CGO conduct the Community Guide reviews. It is not intended as a step-by-step, “how-to” guide to conducting a systematic review.

After reading the manual, the user should be able to better understand the description of the systematic reviews that support specific CPSTF recommendations and findings. This information is intended to help decision-makers be more

A systematic review (<https://tinyurl.com/3z4dwsed>) is a process by which a body of literature is reviewed and assessed using systematic methods which are intended to reduce bias in the review process and improve understandability.

confident in their choice of recommended interventions to adopt and implement, and help researchers critically assess the Community Guide findings and identify areas of research to strengthen the body of evidence or fill identified research gaps.

This manual is divided into two parts.

- **Part 1** of the manual describes the steps in conducting a systematic review of the effectiveness evidence for a specified intervention approach (service, program, or policy). It also describes how the systematic review findings and CPSTF recommendations are disseminated to key partners and the public.
- **Part 2** describes the steps in conducting a systematic review of the economic evidence to identify the economic impact of interventions.

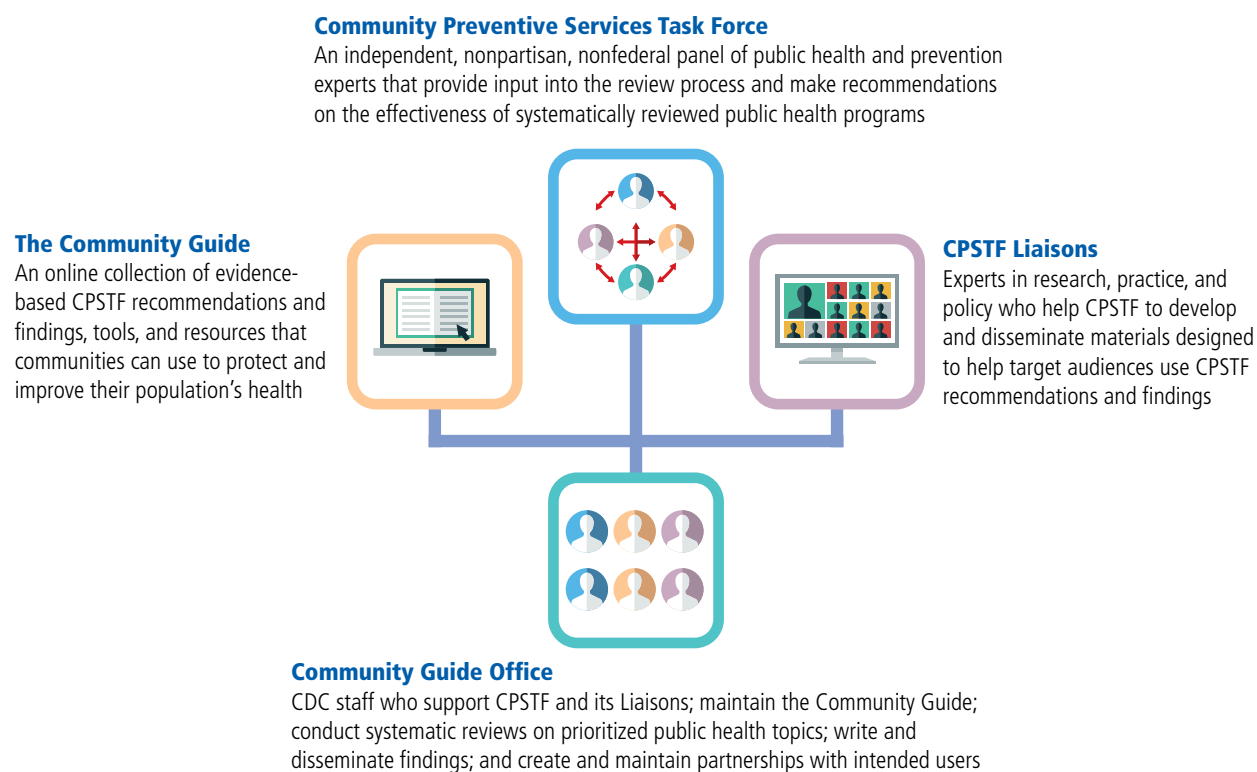
The manual was designed to enhance learning about the Community Guide systematic review methods. Links throughout the document refer the reader to specific examples. Graphics and other visuals support descriptions of sometimes complex processes. Each section includes an “In Brief” box to capture the key points.

The Community Guide methods were developed and described in a series of published papers.²⁻⁴ This manual is based on those publications.

Key Participants and Responsibilities

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) (<https://tinyurl.com/4f6m4yxd>) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonfederal panel of public health and prevention experts whose members are appointed by the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). CPSTF provides findings and recommendations for a wide range of decision makers on services, programs and environmental or policy interventions aimed at improving population health. CPSTF is supported by staff at the Community Guide Office (CGO) within the Office of the Associate Director for Policy and Strategy at CDC. Systematic review teams comprised of CGO staff, with guidance from 1-2 CPSTF members, 1-2 CPSTF Liaisons, and other partners and subject matter experts conduct the systematic reviews of interventions on various topics. Results are presented to the full CPSTF, which uses them to issue evidence-based findings to the public health community. CPSTF members and Liaisons (<https://tinyurl.com/52ez2dtx>) help disseminate findings to end users.

Figure 1: Key Components Involved in Determining CPSTF Findings



CPSTF findings, and the systematic reviews of the evidence on which they are based, are compiled in The Guide to Community Preventive Services (the Community Guide [<http://www.thecommunityguide.org/>]), an online resource for state and local health departments and other public health and community organizations to help improve health and prevent disease in their state, community, or school. This manual is designed to provide an overview of the steps involved in the process of developing systematic reviews for the Community Guide.