

Background and Purpose

In January 2023, Arizona Department of Health Services led a statewide initiative that included a focus on enhancing the resilience of communities through promoting physical activity and active lifestyles. The initiative aimed to connect practitioners, community leaders, and researchers focused on physical activity and conduct a needs assessment of active living across the state. Recognizing the need for a guiding model, the group sought to identify existing resources, health needs, and disparities.

A workgroup of subject matter experts, including university researchers, state and local health department practitioners, parks and recreation, and leaders from community organizations was convened to draft the Hierarchy of Physical Activity Needs (HOPA) Framework (Figure 1) based on existing research, practice-based evidence, and community members throughout the state. The HOPA framework summarizes the multiple levels and factors that impact physical activity behaviors and active living lifestyles. Adapted from Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, which suggests that basic needs are fundamental to supporting more complex needs, the HOPA framework includes six levels addressing needs related to access, support, and fulfillment.

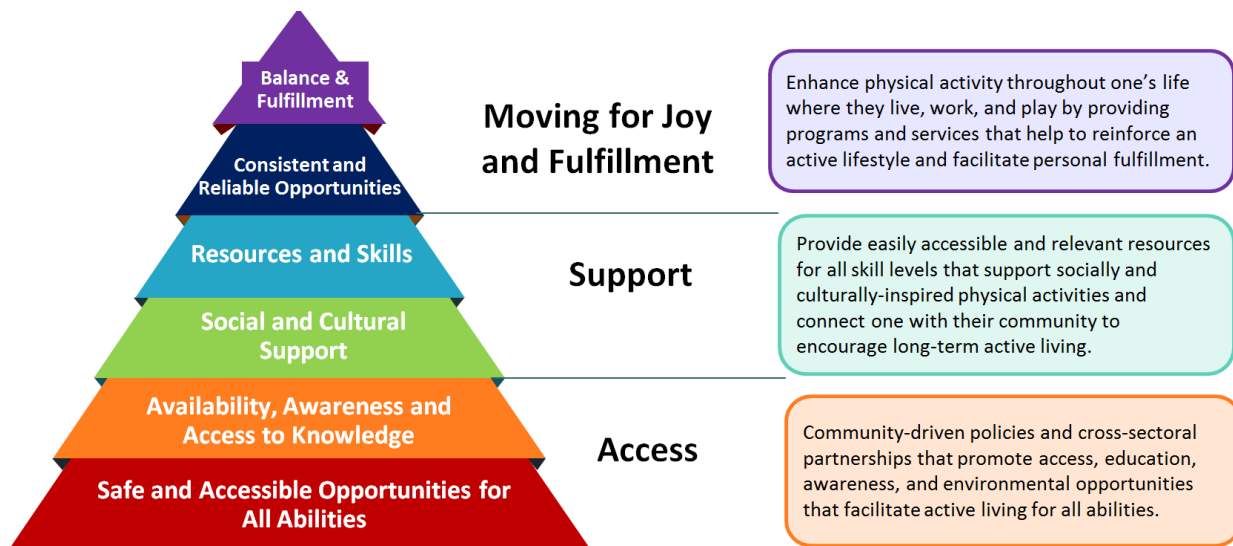


Figure 1. Hierarchy of Physical Activity Needs (HOPA) Framework.

Description

To ensure the framework aligned with individual needs, a panel of 365 community members representing the diverse state population was recruited to provide feedback to the workgroup and inform iterations of the HOPA framework. A statewide survey and interviews followed exploring physical activity needs, barriers, motivators, and supporting programs and services. The survey and interviews, which encompassed 1,006 households across Arizona highlighted specific physical activity needs for each of the six levels, focusing on access, support, and fulfillment. Community members from lower socioeconomic households reported higher needs across all 33 subcategories compared to the statewide average.

Using the HOPA Framework

Physical activity and active living are critical for good health and well-being. The HOPA framework will be used to inform a statewide active living needs assessment and can be used broadly as a guide to understand the most pressing needs to support physical activity and prioritize programming efforts to support active living and bridge the gap from policy to practice.

Contact

Jacques Watson, AZ Health Zone Active Living Specialist, Arizona Department of Health Services

Email: jacques.watson@azdhs.gov, Phone: 480.532.7254, Website: azhealthzone.org