The guiding principles of health promotion

- Health promotion addresses health issues in context and recognises that many individual, social and environmental factors interact to influence health.

- It supports a holistic approach that recognises and includes the physical, mental, social, ecological, cultural and spiritual aspects of health.

- It requires a long term perspective as it takes time to create awareness and build understanding of health determinants.

- It supports a balance between centralised and decentralised decision-making on policies that affect people where they live, work and play.

- Health promotion is multisectoral. While programme initiatives often originate in the health sector, little can be done to change unhealthy living conditions and improve lifestyles without the support of other people, organisations and policy sectors.

- It draws on knowledge from a variety of sources, depending on formal knowledge from the social, economic, political, medical and environmental sciences. It also depends on the experiential knowledge of people.

- Health promotion emphasises public accountability. Those providing health promotion activities need to be accountable and to expect the same commitment from other individuals.