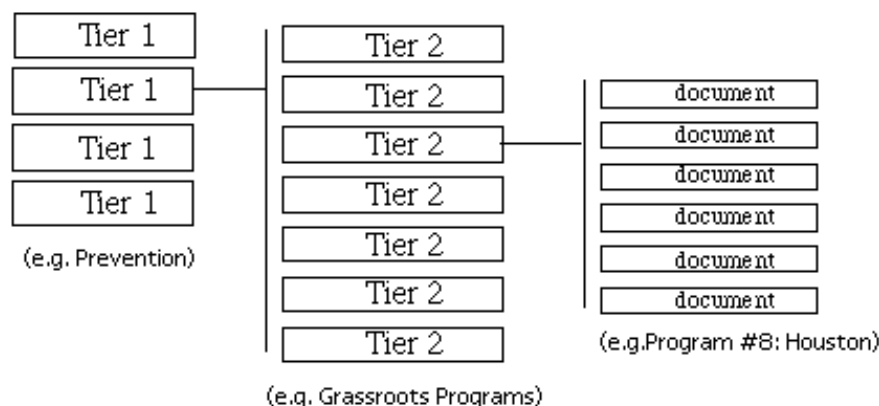


## General principles

It is our belief that content without value assessed is of only marginal value. Content with value assessed is information. The very large amount of content presented in the HIV Insite Web site requires us to apply organizing principles to its presentation. Our design will assess areas of content as being of higher or lower value to the user, and user navigation will be geared to reflect these values.

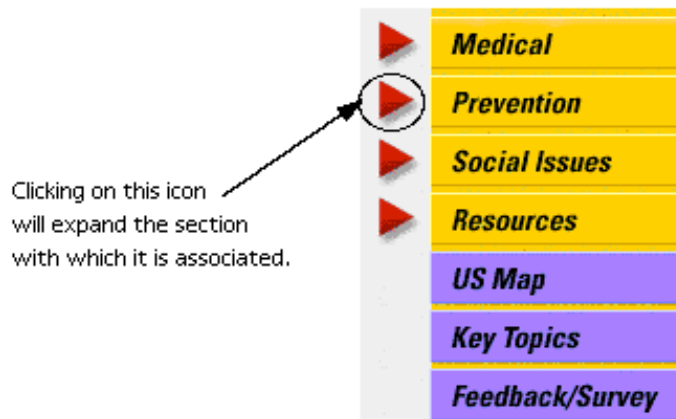
## Design principles as applied to the HIV site

Our designs for the Insite site focus around the grouping of major content areas in a display area that is constantly visible to the user. These content areas are presented in a color-defined left-hand margin of the HTML page, allowing the user a broad spectrum overview of the informational content of the site. These major content areas comprise the “main tier” of the site, structuring the presentation and the substance of the content into broad categories.



**Figure 1. The logical hierarchy of tiers.**

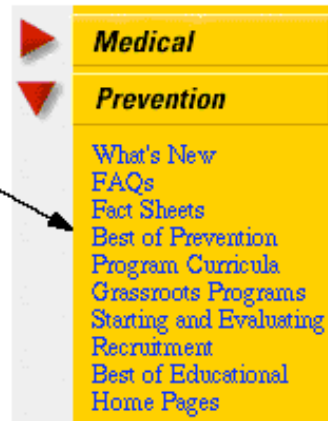
The “second tier” of the site is comprised of the major subdivisions of each of these broad categories. The “third tier” (or detail pages) contains the documents in the site. Users are encouraged to “explore” the site by using the “navigation-in-place mechanism”.



**Figure 2. The content display area.**

This mechanism allows a user to mouse-click on the icon associated with the content area in the left margin (in this case Prevention) and have that content area expand to show the contents of the tier beneath it as clickable hyperlinks (see Figure 3).

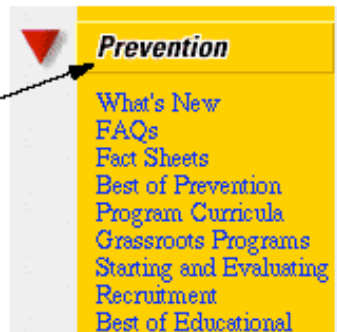
The expanded section (Prevention) displays the contents of the tier beneath it. These are clickable hyperlinks.



**Figure 3. Prevention expanded using “expand-in-place” mechanism.**

Users may navigate either to major content areas (where the content area they are in will be highlighted or otherwise uniquely identified)

Note that the title of the major content area is highlighted to indicate that you are now “in” that content area.



**Figure 4. Highlighting the current content area.**

or they may navigate directly to a content area beneath the first tier. This access to two levels of the site from the entrance page speeds user

navigation and enhances the user's perception of the site's "virtual space."

Significant functionality is placed on the second tier of the site, accessible through well-known symbols placed prominently on the main content pages. This functionality includes search capability, help and home buttons.

This functionality is included on all pages in the site. The top banner spanning the page locates these buttons in the top-right-hand corner of the page.



**Figure 5. Consistent functionality located in the top right corner.**

There are two ways to browse:

1. There is the fast way (for power-users). The fast way is a very important way to browse. It allows you to scan all the third-level content before visiting it. This empowers the user to a level not generally found in information-rich sites. The user expands the Prevention and Education page on the home page (either in the content display area or in the body). Then she clicks on the Grassroots Programs hyperlink under the Prevention item. From this page she clicks on the particular program of interest. Two clicks most of the time (because when you enter an content area the subsections are already expanded). It's also quicker to list the subsections than to go to them and load the entire page.
2. The slower way gives the user a more traditional experience. From the home page the user clicks on the Prevention and Education

label (in either the display area or body of text) and hyperlinks to that page. Then she mouse-clicks on the Grassroots Programs page. Finally, she would mouse-click on the individual program she is interested in (e.g. Program #8, Houston, Tx.). Three clicks in total to get to the page with the final content.

### **Main page design (Tier 1)**

Critical elements introduced on the main page (the entry page) to the site are:

- Help button (upper-right-hand corner of page)
- Search button (upper-right-hand corner of page)
- Content display tool - lists 1st and 2nd tier contents (left-hand side of page)
- Logo (upper-left-hand corner of page)
- What's New? (top center of the body area)

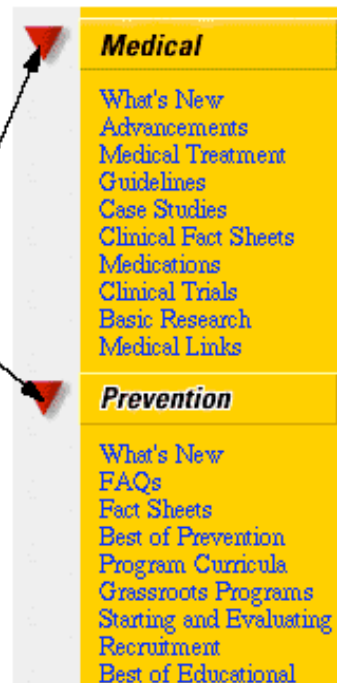


**Figure 6. Main page with Prevention expanded in body.**

Each major content area in the content display will have an icon representing state next to it. When users click on this icon, the page will be reloaded to show the subsidiary content areas beneath that major content area (see Figure 3). The state of the icon also changes to reflect the change in state of the page (e.g. change in vertical to horizontal orientation). A sideways orientation of the icon (a triangle) is the closed state. The expanded state is represented by the icon being vertically oriented (tip pointing toward the bottom of the page).

If the user clicks on either the subcategory label or on the icon for the content area, then they will make a hypertext jump to that page.

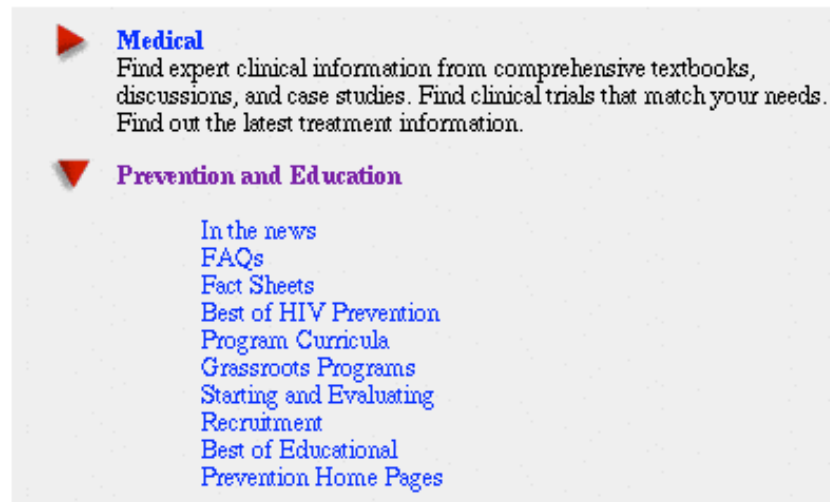
Two content areas simultaneously expanded.  
Note that "Prevention" is highlighted, indicating that the user is on the Prevention page and has expanded the Medical section to see what its contents are.



**Figure 7. Two content areas expanded at once.**

Alternatively, he or she may click on the icon a second time (collapsing the list) and choose another area to expand. More than one area may be expanded at once—allowing the user to see the entire site in the content display area without having to navigate through it.

The same icon used in the content display is used in the body of the page to allow users to examine the contents of a subcategory. The behavior is exactly analogous to the behavior of the icon within the content display.



**Figure 8. Expanding a content area in the body of the page.**

This replication builds an immediate feeling of familiarity in the user as she navigates through the site. It is very important that the home page establish this behavior for the user. It's redundancy sets up the expectation of consistent behavior throughout the site. The second tier expands to the third tier. This is particularly valuable for a browsing user.

## Second level page design (Tier 2)

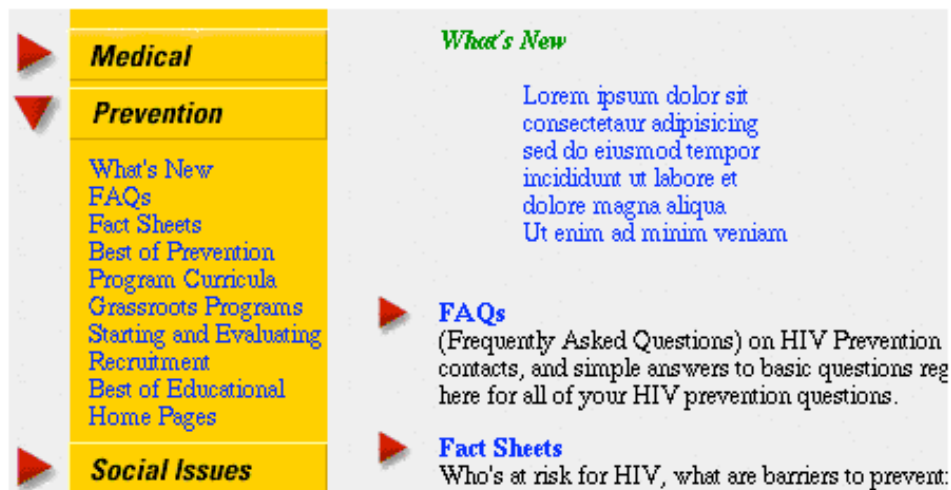
Items of notice on the second tier pages include the highlighted current major content area and the title of the page changing to reflect location.



**Figure 9. Typical content area (2nd tier) page.**

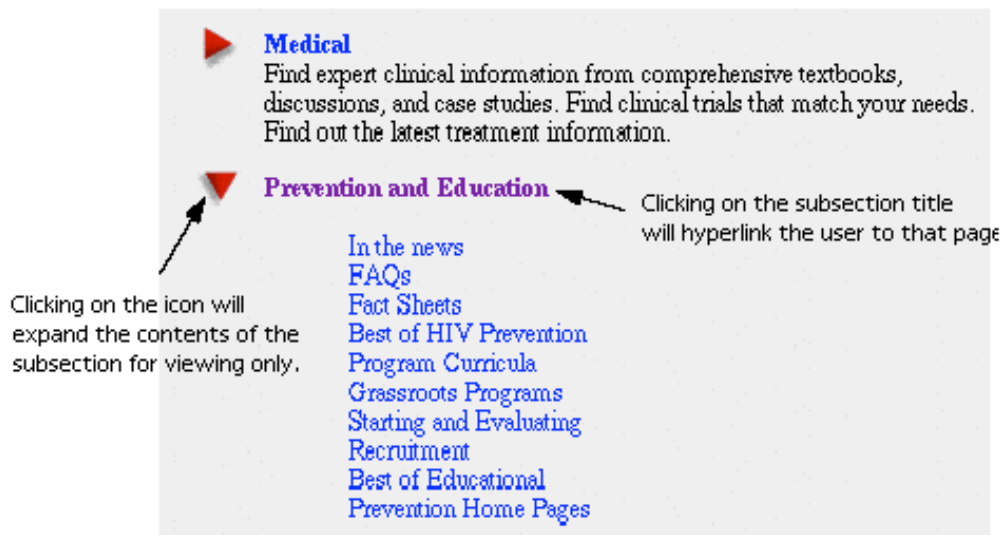
The design of this page is predicated on there being some half dozen to twenty subsections of the current content area. These sections are listed in the navigation bar (if expanded) or in the main body of the page (if not expanded).

Users will see a prominently placed “What’s New?” area in the body of the page (the content it describes will be local to the major subsection). In addition, they will have access to the search, help, and home functionality through the icons in the upper-right-hand corner of the page. To see the content available on the third level, users will make use



**Figure 10. “What’s New” located in the page body.**

of the icon in the body of text. Once expanded, they will be able to see the names of the documents in the third tier.



**Figure 11. Expanding a subsection in the body of the page.**

Users may view documents the documents by clicking on the hyperlinked title.

### **Third level page design (Tier 3)**

From the detail pages of the third level (the documents stored in the database), the user will be able to navigate to the subsection within which that page is located, to other subsections at the same level (second tier) within the current major content area, and to all the other major content

areas. The user will as always, have access to the search, help and home functionality.