Are Schools Using Effective Drug and Crime Prevention Programs?

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Presentation Overview

• Youth alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use and school crime
• Prevention efforts in schools
• Identification of “research-based” prevention programs
• Adoption of research-based prevention programs
• Factors associated with adoption
Youth ATOD Use

• Good news: Youth ATOD use rates declining overall
• Bad news: Rates still too high
  ▪ Safety
  ▪ Effects on development
  ▪ Risk of dependence
Trends in Prevalence of Use: MTF 2008
(Johnston et al., 2009, in preparation)

Students reporting any use in last 30 days: 12th grade

- Alcohol
- Cigarettes
- Marijuana
Trends in Prevalence of Use: MTF 2008 (Johnston et al., 2009, in preparation)

![Line graph showing trends in the prevalence of use among 10th-grade students from 1999 to 2008. The graph compares the percentage of students reporting any use in the last 30 days for alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana.](image_url)
Trends in Prevalence of Use: MTF 2008 (Johnston et al., 2009, in preparation)

Students reporting any use in last 30 days: 8th grade

Year

Percent


Alcohol
Cigarettes
Marijuana
School Crime

• Good news: Level of school crime declining overall

• Bad news: Level still too high
  - Safety
  - Effects on development
  - Influence on learning
Trends in School Crime: NCVS 2005 (Dinkes et al., 2007)

Rate of crime reported by students, 12 to 18 years

Rate per 1,000 students

Year


Total
Theft
Violent
Serious Violent
Efforts to Prevent Youth ATOD Use and School Crime

• Program: Coherent set of activities intended to achieve well-defined objective(s)

• Delivery of diverse programs in schools
  - Objectives and target populations
  - Delivery approaches
  - Content

• Funding
Emphasis on Research-based Prevention Programs

- Research-based program: Program on which the evidence from rigorous research indicates desired effects achieved
- All other factors equal, expect research-based programs more likely to produce desired effects
- Funders are requiring use of research-based prevention programs (e.g., U.S. Department of Education and Center for Substance Abuse Prevention)
Lists of Research-based Programs

- Practitioners hungry for guidance on what programs qualify
- Proliferation of lists
  - Inclusion criteria
  - Emphases
  - Sponsors
- Criticism of lists (e.g., Gandhi et al., 2007)
  - Criteria (e.g., amount and quality of evidence required)
  - How criteria applied (e.g., consistency and transparency)
SDFS Study Efforts to Refine Lists of Effective Programs

• Based approaches on those used by others (e.g., What Works Clearinghouse)

• Began with 317 programs on existing lists

• Consistently applied several criteria
  ▪ Relevant to SDFSCA Program (school-based component, etc.)?
  ▪ Supported by implementation materials?
  ▪ Based on rigorous research on behavioral outcomes?
  ▪ At least two independent samples?
  ▪ Evidence of effectiveness?
Initial Lists of Programs (Mihalic, 2002)

1. American Youth Policy Forum
2. Blueprints for Violence Prevention
3. Center for Mental Health Services
4. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
5. Department of Education, Safe Schools
6. Communities That Care, Developmental Research and Programs
8. National Institute of Drug Abuse
9. Sherman et al. (1997)
10. Strengthening America’s Families
11. Surgeon General’s Report
12. Office of Juvenile Justice and Prevention, Effective and Promising Programs
Preliminary List of Research-based Programs

1. Adolescent Alcohol Prevention Trial (AAPT)/All Stars
2. Aggression Replacement Training
3. Alcohol Misuse Prevention (AMP)
4. Anger Coping Program
5. Adolescent Transitions Program
6. Brainpower (Attributional Intervention)
7. Child Development Project
8. Earlscourt Social Skills Group Program
9. Early Risers
10. Incredible Years
11. Know Your Body
12. Life Skills Training
13. Midwestern Prevention (Project Star)
Preliminary List of Research-based Programs (continued)

14. Positive Action
15. Project Alert
16. Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)
17. Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP)/Richmond Youth against Violence Project: Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways
18. Second Step
19. Too Good for Drugs (TGFD)*
20. Toward No Drug Abuse (TND)
21. Skills, Opportunities, and Recognition (SOAR) (also known as Seattle Social Development Program)*

*Added by U.S. Department of Education

Note: Not all programs currently support widespread dissemination.
Current Efforts to Refine Lists of Effective Programs

• Currently updating review (starting with 161 programs relevant to SDFSCA Program)
• Improving approaches to assess level of effectiveness and make process more transparent
To What Extent Are Schools Using Research-based Prevention Programs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>District or school level?</th>
<th>National or regional scope?</th>
<th>Definition of “research-based?”</th>
<th>Proportion with research-based programs (RBPs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hallfors &amp; Godette (2002)</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>On Drug Strategies list</td>
<td>59% of districts with &gt;1 RBP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pankratz &amp; Hallfors (2004)</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>On 1 or more of 5 lists</td>
<td>72% of districts with &gt;1 RBP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rohrbach et al. (2005)</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>On 1 or more of 5 lists</td>
<td>48% of districts with &gt;1 RBP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ringwalt et al. (2002)</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>On 1 or more of 5 lists</td>
<td>35% of middle schools with &gt;1 RBP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crosse et al. (2008, under review)</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>On list developed from other lists</td>
<td>41% of schools with &gt;1 RBP</td>
</tr>
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</table>
SDFS Study: Measuring Prevalence of Research-based Prevention Programs

• Selected national probability sample of 6,000 public elementary and secondary schools
• Surveyed schools on prevention programs in use during 2004-05 school year and on funding
• Compared reports on programs in use against list of research-based programs developed by study
• Also surveyed districts on overall prevention planning and implementation, and providers on implementation
SDFS Study: Preliminary Findings on Prevalence of Research-based Prevention Programs

- 85.2 percent of schools have > 1 prevention program
- 40.7 percent of schools have > 1 RBP
- 7.8 percent of prevention programs are research-based
- Vast majority of RBPs are curriculum programs
- Programs with SDFSCA Program funding no more likely to be research-based than other programs
What Factors Are Associated with Adoption of Research-based Prevention Programs by Schools?

- **District and school characteristics**
  - Urban status
  - District/school enrollment
  - Grade/instructional level

- **District-level factors**
  - Prevention coordinator time available
  - Prevention coordinator attendance at workshop/conference on prevention
  - Prevention coordinator/lead teacher experience
What Factors Are Associated with Adoption of Research-based Prevention Programs by Schools? (continued)

• State-level factors
  - District receipt of direction from states on selecting RBPs
  - District receipt of training from states on prevention
Next Steps for Strengthening Prevention Programming in Schools

• Deepen research base on prevention programs
• Continue to emphasize importance of research-based programming
• Promote list of research-based programs
• Pay more attention to factors associated with adoption and how programs are disseminated
• Offer assistance with matching programs to school needs
• Emphasize quality of implementation
Additional Questions???

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References (continued)


