

# *Alcohol & drug abuse prevention*

## **Wide range of problems and solutions**

Different communities and different individuals within communities have different issues around drugs, and thus need a wide range of options to choose from in dealing with their specific drug and alcohol problems. Both prevention and cessation are important strategies.

Where designer drugs are a problem, resisting peer pressure is an important intervention technique. Kids using depressants are more likely to need help managing their feelings. Kids involved in selling drugs need help in predicting consequences. Regular marijuana users need to learn how to relax and relate to others without drugs. Meth users need to be alerted to the serious short term dangers of that drug. Heroin users need to access community resources to deal with their addiction.

Ripple Effects social learning software is comprehensive. The teen program includes 80+ topics directly related to substance abuse. You decide what does and doesn't fit for your group of students. This way all students and communities can be assured they are getting best practices in prevention regardless of what their particular emphasis is.

## **A full range of proven strategies**

Experts agree that a range of strategies can be effective with substance abuse prevention:

- Social skill training, especially in assertiveness so students are able to resist peer pressure
- Cognitive-behavioral training in managing feelings so they are not as tempted to use alcohol or drugs to manage emotional discomfort
- Training in decision making skills so they can realistically predict consequences and develop viable options (other than being social rejects!)
- Bonding students to their schools and families, so that they have a net of support that reduces the chances they'll turn to drugs and alcohol
- Training in norm setting, so students recognize drug and alcohol use as something that is wrong

## Goals of intervention

### Students will:

- Strengthen norms against use of drugs or alcohol
- Improve social skills, especially in assertiveness
- Master cognitive-behavioral techniques for controlling self talk
- Learn stress management techniques
- Develop stronger bonds to community
- Develop decision-making skills and problem-solving strategies
- Adopt an exercise program matched to their temperament and body type

## A suggested scope and sequence

### SKILL TRAINING TOPICS

#### Self awareness

Goals  
Strengths  
Risk factors  
Resilience  
Norms

#### Assertiveness

Refusing  
Resisting pressure  
Standing up for beliefs

#### Decision making

Predicting consequences

#### Managing feelings

Physical sensations  
Self talk  
External triggers  
Handling stress  
Relaxing

#### Connecting to community

Making friends  
Getting help  
Quitting habits

### CHALLENGE TOPICS

#### Alcohol

**Drugs** (by street & technical names):  
[antidepressants, date rape drugs, depressants, designer drugs, hallucinogens, inhalants, marijuana, opiates, ritalin, stimulants, ice, meth/crank, oxycontin, ecstasy, crack, cocaine, steroids]

Alcoholic  
Alcoholic parent  
Depression  
Driving drunk  
Nervous habits  
Nail biting  
Quitting drugs  
Relapse  
Recklessness  
Smoking, chew  
Selling drugs