



# **ECHO IDAHO:** **K12 Substance Use Prevention & Treatment**

## **Youth Substance Use Prevention Programs and Curriculum Integration**

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Please keep in mind that your School District policies and Health Services procedures, medication administration protocols, process guidelines, remain the guiding principles to your practice.

None of the planners or presenters for this educational activity have relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

# Learning Objectives

- Understand key components of effective prevention
- Importance of effective prevention programs
- Explore ways to integrate substance use prevention into school curricula.
- Highlight successful program examples

# Current Landscape of Youth Substance Use

- According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse
  - The percentage of adolescents reporting they used illicit substances in 2023 continued to hold steady below pre-pandemic levels reported in 2020 according to the “Monitoring the Future Survey” results.
  - 10.9% of 8th graders.
  - 19.8% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders.
  - 31.2% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders
- Although data shows lower use of illicit substances, overdose rates among teens have risen in recent years.
- This increase is largely attributed to illicit fentanyl.

# Current Landscape of Youth Substance Use

- Delta-8-THC was measured for the first time in 2023, with 11.4% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reporting use in the past year and will continue to be surveyed according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse.
- Increased Social Media and Marketing are exposing adolescents to substance related content, normalizing risky behaviors and influencing experimentation.
- **“Research has shown that delaying the start of substance use among young people, even by one year, can decrease substance use for the rest of their lives. We may be seeing this play out in real time,”** said Nora Volkow, M.D., NIDA director.

# Principles of Effective Prevention Programs

- Evidence-based practices
- Addressing risk and protective factors
- Engaging youth, families and communities
- Cultural and developmental relevance

# Types of Prevention Strategies

- Universal: Aimed at all youth (school-wide programs)
- Selective: Targeting at-risk groups
- Indicated: Focused on individuals already experimenting

# Integrating Prevention into Curriculum

- Cross-curricular approaches (health, science, social studies)
- Examples:
  - Science: Effects of substances on the brain
  - Social Studies: Decision-making and peer influence
  - Health: Developing critical life skills
- Aligning with educational standards
  - Example: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health (mental, physical and social) and avoid or reduce health risks.
  - This ensures the curriculum not only teaches important content but also adheres to established educational frameworks for comprehensive learning.

# Interactive Learning Techniques

- Role-playing scenarios
- Peer-led discussions
- Technology-based tools (apps, videos)
- Creative projects (art, writing)



# Examples of Successful Programs

- Botvin LifeSkills Training: Skills for building resilience
- Too Good For Drugs: Comprehensive curriculum integration
- Project ALERT: Evidence-based drug prevention lessons
- [Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health – Appendix B: Evidence-Based Prevention Programs and Policies](#)
- [New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports Evidence-based Prevention Programs](#)

# Components of Successful Prevention Programs

## Building Resilience and Life Skills

- **Refusal Skills:** Strategies to say no confidently.
- **Recognizing Influences:** Understanding the impact of media, peers and other external factors.
- **Understanding Addiction:** Awareness of how addiction develops and its effects.
- **Identifying High Risk Situations:** Learning to navigate and avoid potential risks.
- **Resilience Skills:** Building strength to cope with challenges.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Techniques for managing disagreements effectively.
- **Self-Respect and Respect for Others:** Fostering positive relationships and self-esteem.
- **Anger Management:** Tools for handling emotions constructively.
- **Healthy Relationships:** Navigating personal connections with confidence.
- **Drug and Alcohol Education:** Understanding the consequences of substance use.
- **Mental Health Awareness:** Developing critical skills for emotional well-being.

# Community and School Collaboration

- Involvement of parents and caregivers
  - Hosting parent workshops to build awareness of substance use risks.
  - Providing parents resources to reinforce prevention strategies at home.
- Partnerships with local organizations
  - Collaborating with health departments, nonprofits and law enforcement, for example, diversion programs
- Role of teachers, counselors and administrators
  - Educating students on substance use prevention through evidence-based curricula.
  - Identifying and supporting at-risk students with counseling and intervention.
  - Leading efforts to create a positive, supportive school climate.

# Challenges in Implementation

- Funding and resources
- Training for educators
- Resistance to discussing sensitive topics

# Strategies to Overcome Challenges

- Securing grants and funding
- Professional development for teachers
- Creating a supportive school culture

# The Role of Advocacy

- Advocating for policies that support prevention education
- Engaging policymakers and community leaders
- Starting conversations in your schools and communities
- Leveraging available resources and training
- Commit to prioritizing youth well-being

# Key Points

- Importance of early prevention
- Curriculum integration as a sustainable strategy
- Collaboration and advocacy

# References

- <https://nida.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/2023/12/reported-drug-use-among-adolescents-continued-to-hold-below-pre-pandemic-levels-in-2023>
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- <https://toogoodprograms.org/collections/too-good-for-drugs>
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