



VIEWING YOUR PROGRAM THROUGH A PREVENTION PRINCIPLES LENS

Principles	How well does the program currently build these principles?	How could we improve the capacity of the program to build these principles?	How will we know whether we've been successful in improving it?
Prevention programs should enhance protective factors and reverse or reduce risk factors.			
Prevention programs should address all forms of drug abuse, alone or in combination, including the underage use of legal drugs; the use of illegal drugs; and inappropriate use of legally obtained substances, prescription medication, or over-the-counter drugs.			
Prevention programs should address the type of drug problem in the local community, target modifiable risk factors, and strengthen identified protective factors.			

This handout is adopted from the Prevention Principles found in the National Institute on Drug Abuse: Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents.



<p>Prevention programs should be tailored to address risks specific to population or audience characteristics, such as age, gender, and ethnicity, to improve program effectiveness.</p>			
<p>Family-based prevention programs should enhance family bonding and relationships and include parenting skills; practice in developing, discussing, and enforcing family policies on substance abuse; and training in drug education and information.</p>			
<p>Prevention programs can be designed to intervene as early as preschool to address risk factors for drug abuse, such as aggressive behavior, poor social skills, and academic difficulties.</p>			



<p>Prevention programs for elementary school children should target improved academic and social-emotional learning to address risk factors for drug abuse, such as early aggression, academic failure, and school dropout. Education should focus on the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-control; • Emotional awareness; • Communication; • Social problem-solving; and • Academic support, especially in reading. 			
<p>Prevention programs for middle or junior high school students should increase academic and social competence with the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study habits; • Peer relationships; • Self-efficacy and assertiveness; • Drug resistance skills • Reinforcement of antidrug attitudes; and • Strengthening of personal commitments against drug abuse. 			

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Prevention programs aimed at general populations at key transition points, such as the transition to middle school, can produce beneficial effects even among high-risk families and children. Such interventions do not single out risk populations and, therefore, reduce labeling and promote bonding to school and community.

Community prevention programs that combine two or more effective programs, such as family-based and school based programs, can be more effective than a single program alone.



Community prevention programs reaching populations in multiple settings—for example, schools, clubs, faith-based organizations, and the media - are most effective when they present consistent, community-wide messages in each setting.

When communities adapt programs to match their needs, community norms, or differing cultural requirements, they should retain the core elements of the original research-based intervention, which include:

- Structure (how the program is organized and constructed);
- Content (the information, skills, and strategies of the program); and
- Delivery (how the program is adapted, implemented, and evaluated).



<p>Prevention programs should be long-term with repeated interventions (i.e. booster programs) to reinforce the original prevention goals. Research shows that the benefits from middle school prevention programs diminish without follow-up programs in high school.</p>			
<p>Prevention programs should include teacher training on good classroom management practices, such as rewarding appropriate student behavior. Such techniques help to foster students' positive behavior, achievement, academic motivation, and school bonding.</p>			
<p>Prevention programs are most effective when they employ interactive techniques, such as peer discussion groups and parent role-playing, that allow for active involvement in learning about drug abuse and reinforcing skills.</p>			

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<p>Research-based prevention programs can be cost-effective. Similar to earlier research, recent research shows that for each dollar invested in prevention, a savings of up to \$10 in treatment for alcohol or other substance abuse can be seen.</p>			
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