

2020 K-12 ALCOHOL & DRUG PREVENTION PLANNING GUIDE

OVERVIEW

Reality Check offers school districts guidance to develop and implement comprehensive prevention plans to reduce youth and staff alcohol and drug use, abuse, and addiction, using a variety of strategies.

The long-term goal is to provide schools with the tools to implement a comprehensive, year-round culture of prevention to positively impact students, districts, and the communities that feed them for generations to come. Together we can develop **resilient individuals and connected communities, making intentional shifts in how we invest in our youth and young adults**. Progressively advocating for prevention initiatives and its long-term sustainability within district budgets, helps ensure successful futures for our youth, school personnel, parents, and the communities we live in.

~ COMPONENTS OF YEAR-ROUND PREVENTION PLAN ~

PREVENTION CURRICULUM - EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION CURRICULUM

- ✓ **Life Skills Training (5 stars / evidence-based)**
Proven to reduce youth substance abuse and violence while building coping skills for major social and psychological factors that could lead to substance use and other risky behaviors. A 1-2- day workshop equips teachers to practice strategies using lessons. K-12 curriculum trainings arranged at your school.
- ✓ **Project Success (high school)** - goals are centered around Social-Emotional domains with objectives built into curriculum; delivered in monthly workshops in English/Language Arts class.
- ✓ **ALL-STARS (middle school)** – for grades 4 – 12, curriculum delays the onset of risky behaviors, can be implemented in both classroom and community-based settings.
- ✓ **Prime For Life** – (high school) -alcohol and drug program for people of all ages. It is designed to gently but powerfully challenge common beliefs and attitudes that directly contribute to high-risk alcohol and drug use. The program goals are to reduce the risk for health problems and impairment problems.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Reality Check helps administer the **Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)** for students in grades 9-12, and the **Teen Assessment Project (TAP)** survey for students in grades 6-8. Both surveys measure behaviors on eating, exercise, sleeping, relationship, substance use, parental engagement, and much more. The YRBS is a 150-question survey administered every other year, and the TAP survey is administered every three years; both surveys help districts prioritize behaviors and substances needing to be addressed.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES MODIFICATIONS

We work with school districts to develop more supportive, less punitive policies & procedures for students:

- ✓ Allow on-site space and time for support groups for students to strengthen their recovery
- ✓ Replace out-of-school suspension with in-school online substance use education modules & certificates
- ✓ Behavior Team meeting with parents within 12 hours to assess/discuss options/treatment referrals
- ✓ Allow students to make up missed work ensuring they are current in work
- ✓ Secure treatment for students and provide post-treatment reintegration recovery support
- ✓ Allocate funding for prevention, treatment, recovery help, and addictions professional development

STAFF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING - improve school staff skill sets in responding to the increasingly diverse needs of students:

- ✓ Brief Assessments & Treatment Referrals
- ✓ Identifying Suicidal Ideation & Suicide Post-vention
- ✓ Youth & Adult Mental Health First Aid
- ✓ Using Trauma-Informed Best Practices
- ✓ Post-treatment Student Reintegration Supports
- ✓ Supporting Families of Veterans
- ✓ Narcan Training and kit dissemination
- ✓ Signs & Symptoms of Use
- ✓ Families & Addiction Dynamics

YOUTH CAMPAIGNS - Youth driven and adult supported. Choose from list or create your own.

- ✓ Red Ribbon Week & National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week
- ✓ Yellow Tulip Project – national suicide prevention and awareness program
- ✓ Youth Coalitions & After School Programs
- ✓ Police, Fire, and Rescue apprentice programs
- ✓ Media Power Youth <http://mediapoweryouth.org/> (partner with colleges)
- ✓ Above the Influence - broad messaging focusing on substances abused by teens, has an anti-meth campaign to increase awareness of drug use impacts; and encourages parents and caregivers to discuss the dangers of drug use. The goal is to help teens stand up to negative pressures and influences.
- ✓ Prevention Messaging

MENTORING

We believe all youth need a mentor or someone they feel comfortable confiding in. This is an essential strategy for building self-confidence, a sense of inclusion and belonging, social connection, and feeling a part of a larger world. High school students can mentor middle school, and middle school students can mentor elementary students. We encourage schools to offer students community service credits for volunteering in this capacity.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

A great communication plan includes:

- ✓ Weekly and monthly electronic prevention messages for parents with updates (FOP)
- ✓ Signs and symptoms of possible mental health issues or drug use issues for students and parents
- ✓ Resources for intervention, referring to treatment, and finding recovery supports
- ✓ Distribute prevention messaging cards at Prom, Graduation, and other celebrations
- ✓ Data presentations, trainings, workshops, seminars, media ads and press releases
- ✓ Student-developed prevention messaging played on morning announcements and the radio, put in school newsletter, parent communications, and on school website, & announced at athletic or schoolwide events

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Free After School Program with UMBUNTU character-building curriculum
- ✓ Employment / Apprenticeship programs with local trades
- ✓ Health Fairs, Parenting Classes, and Tutoring Programs
- ✓ 4-H Monadnock Robotics and Sea-Perch Underwater Robotics, UNH (school year)
- ✓ Community Service & Volunteerism
- ✓ Media Literacy Campaigns and Videography with local colleges
- ✓ Youth Coalitions, Councils, and Committees

SOCIAL NORMS CAMPAIGN

Positive messages about healthy behaviors and attitudes avoiding moralistic messages from authorities about how you “should” behave. Presents the healthy norms already existing and it builds on the assets already in the community, through participation by community members, and by highlighting those who make healthy choices.

For more information about developing a prevention plan for your school

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