

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

NIDA Releases Updated Guide to Preventing Drug Use Among Youth

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) recently published its second edition of "Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents," a research-based guide designed to assist parents, educators, and community leaders in their planning, selection, and delivery of drug abuse prevention programs throughout their communities. Research-based prevention principles are presented for three categories: 1) risk and protective factors; 2) prevention planning; and 3) prevention program delivery. Following is an abbreviated list of the 16 principles presented in the guide. A copy of the full publication is available online at <http://www.nida.nih.gov/Prevention/Prevopen.html>.

Risk and Protective Factors

- Prevention programs should enhance protective factors and reverse or reduce risk factors.
- Prevention programs should address all forms of drug abuse, including the underage use of tobacco or alcohol.
- Prevention programs should be tailored to address risks specific to population audience characteristics, such as age, gender, and ethnicity, to improve program effectiveness.

Prevention Planning

- 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.
- 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.
- Prevention programs for elementary school children should target improving academic and social-emotional learning to address risk factors for drug abuse, such as early aggression, academic failure, and school dropout.

Prevention Program Delivery

- Prevention programs should be long-term, with repeated interventions to reinforce the original prevention goals.
- Prevention programs should include teacher training on good classroom management practices, to help foster students' positive behavior, achievement, academic motivation, and school bonding.
- Prevention programs are most effective when they employ interactive techniques that allow for active involvement in learning about drug abuse and reinforcing skills.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, "Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents: A Research-Based Guide," 2003.

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