

Evaluation of an infused alcohol and drug prevention programme

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Abstract:

Purpose: Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drugs use typically increases in prevalence and frequency during middle and late adolescence. School health instruction often focusses on providing facts and rarely provides tools for addressing the psychosocial risk factors needed to prevent substance use. The purpose of this paper is to report about the effectiveness of a prevention programme delivered in US high school health classes. The intervention augments typical instruction by providing teachers with activities that can be infused in their daily teaching. **Design/methodology/approach:** In total, 26 schools were randomly assigned to receive the intervention or serve as controls. Pupils were pretested near the beginning of the school year, posttest near the end of the school year and administered a final test near the beginning of the following school year. Teachers in treatment schools were provided with activities designed to target psychosocial variables known to mediate substance use onset and self-initiated cessation. These include normative beliefs, intentionality, lifestyle incongruence, beliefs about consequences of use, peer pressure resistance skills, decision-making skills, goal setting skills and stress management skills. **Findings:** Hierarchical modelling analytic strategies revealed the intervention to have definable positive impacts on alcohol and cigarette use. Moreover, the intervention had strongest effects on alcohol and cigarette use among pupils who were identified at pretest as being lower-than-average risk. **Originality/value:** This research provides support for providing teachers with a strategy for preventing alcohol, tobacco and other drugs that can be used in a flexible manner to augment the instruction they are already mandated to provide.

Keywords: Alcohol | School health promotion | Evaluation of interventions | Adolescent tobacco prevention and cessation

Article:

*****Note: Full text of article below**