



Guidance for Effective Prevention Programs, Strategies and Activities

The U.S. Department of Education's *Principles of Effectiveness*, require that programs, strategies and activities be based on the findings of the needs assessment and should clearly contribute to the established measurable outcome objectives. Districts must design and implement their drug and/or violence prevention programs based on research that provides evidence that the strategies and/or activities being utilized prevent or reduce drug use, violence, tobacco use or disruptive behavior. For the purposes of the Title IV (Safe & Drug-Free Schools)/State Chemical Abuse Application, the following definitions apply:

Prevention Program: a set of strategies intended to reduce drug use, violence or disruptive behavior.

Strategy: a component in the broader prevention program. Strategies should not stand alone as they are usually not effective by themselves.

Activity: a component of a strategy.

Prevention Programs

When selecting effective research-based prevention programs schools must:

- be certain that the program implementation faithfully replicates the program as it was initially conceptualized, implemented and tested;
- review whether chosen indicators are moving in the appropriate direction. If not, the schools must decide whether they are truly replicating the program faithfully, or if local factors mean that they should select a different program.
- determine if the program is clearly based on accepted research;
- **not** select programs that have been proven ineffective.

How can a school take a prevention program and implement it effectively?

It is important to recognize that greater effectiveness is achieved when a program retains the core elements of the original research-based intervention, including its basic structure, content, and delivery. It is necessary to maintain the number of sessions and boosters and stay within the critical age or description of the target audience. Maintenance of the most effective content components, inclusion of both peer refusal skills training and social norm development in curricula; inclusion of family communications training in family programs and development of specific training manuals. There should also be a provision for appropriate staff training and monitoring to ensure quality implementation.

Critical Elements of Prevention Programs:

- ✓ research-based, theory-driven
- ✓ target multiple systems that include family, peer, media and community components
- ✓ begin in the primary grades and are reinforced across grade levels
- ✓ developmentally appropriate
- ✓ social resistance skills training
- ✓ interactive teaching techniques
- ✓ cultural sensitivity
- ✓ teacher training and support

Prevention Strategies

If a district is not using a commercially-developed “proven effective” prevention program, a combination of effective strategies (locally or commercially developed) may be utilized. Some examples of effective strategies include:

- ✓ Building School Capacity
- ✓ Addressing School Climate/Environment
- ✓ Developing Policy
- ✓ Addressing Norms
- ✓ Conflict Resolution Programs
- ✓ Peer Mediation Programs
- ✓ Mentoring Programs
- ✓ Peer Leadership Programs
- ✓ School Resource Officer/Juvenile Probation Officer and relevant Law-Related Education
- ✓ Addressing Risk and Protective Factors
- ✓ Addressing Developmental Assets
- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ Teaching Strategies
 - Interactive teaching techniques
 - Cooperative learning
 - Role playing
- ✓ Skill Development
 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation
 - Refusal/resistance skills
 - Social skills training
 - Life skills training
 - Social influences training
 - Parenting/family skills training

Strategies That Have Not Been Proven Effective

- ✓ using scare tactics that show pictures or videos of violent scenes
- ✓ adding a prevention program to a school system that is already overwhelmed
- ✓ segregating aggressive or anti-social students into a separate group for any reason
- ✓ using instructional programs that are too brief and not supported by a positive school climate
- ✓ using programs that focus exclusively on self-esteem enhancement
- ✓ using programs that only provide information

Guidance for Prevention Activities

All Title IV/State Chemical Abuse grant expenditures must support a measurable outcome objective on the Title IV/State Chemical Abuse Application and meet the Principles of Effectiveness.

Alternative-to-Suspension Program/Detention Classroom

These programs must include a prevention education component that meets the Principles of Effectiveness.

Character Education

Character education programs are an allowable expense if they are a component of an effective, research-based drug and/or violence prevention program; or a school-developed initiative (school climate, bullying, behavior/discipline). Justification must be provided on how it will be used in combination with the prevention program to meet the measurable outcome objective.

Incentives/Rewards/Awareness raiser supplies (i.e. Red Ribbon supplies)

These items are allowable if they are an integral part of an effective, research-based program or strategy. An explanation must be included on how they will be used to help meet the measurable outcome objective.

These items are capped at 5% of the total budget.

One-time Events (i.e. assemblies, guest speakers, etc.)

These types of events have been shown to be too brief to lead to a reduction in problem behaviors.

These events may be allowable if they are used as a component of an effective, research-based drug and/or violence prevention program; or a school-developed initiative (school climate, bullying, behavior/discipline). An explanation must be included on how it will be used in combination with the prevention program to meet the measurable outcome objective.

These items are capped at 5% of the total budget.

Security-Related Expenses

These items may be allowable if they are used as a component of an effective, research-based drug and/or violence prevention program; or a school-developed initiative (school climate, bullying, behavior/discipline). An explanation must be included on how it will be used in combination with the prevention program to meet the measurable outcome objective.

A cap of 20% of Title IV funding (0% of State Chemical Abuse) may be used for security related expenses. An additional 20% may be used for security personnel who interact with students in support of approved youth drug and/or violence prevention activities.

Student Drug Testing

Not an allowable expense unless drug testing is part of an effective, research-based comprehensive drug prevention program. Justification must be provided on how drug testing will be coordinated with other programming to achieve the measurable outcome objective.

Drug-sniffing dogs are not an allowable expense unless this activity is part of an effective, research-based comprehensive drug prevention program. Justification must be provided on how utilizing drug-sniffing dogs will be coordinated with other programming to achieve the measurable outcome objective.

Student Planners/Agendas

Not an allowable expense.

RESOURCES

Effective Prevention Programs:

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)

<http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov>

<http://casat.unr.edu/bestpractices/search.php>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov>

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence- Blueprints

<http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/index.html>

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), [Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents: A Research-Based Guide](#). <http://165.112.78.61/Prevention/Prevopen.html>
[Drug Strategies](#), *Making the Grade* (1996 & 1999), and *Safe Schools, Safe Students* (1998).

CSAP's Decision Support System

www.preventiondss.org

Comparison Matrix of Science-Based Prevention Programs

<http://about.preventiondss.org/html/documents/ACETools/CM.pdf>

Florida Safe and Drug-Free Schools Project

<http://www.unf.edu/dept/fie/sdfs/>

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Additional Resources

The National Coordinator Training and Technical Assistance Center

<http://www.k12coordinator.org/>

U.S Department of Education, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02>

Society for Prevention Research

<http://www.preventionscience.org/>