

SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION EDUCATION

GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT THE SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE-BASED CURRICULA

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INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to be helpful to any school or district seeking tobacco and substance use prevention education curricular materials that are aligned with the National Health Education Standards and which will help meet the requirements set forth in the Vermont statutes 16 V.S.A. § 909 and 16 V.S.A. § 906. More comprehensive information on substance use prevention in schools will be released in a separate document.

The curricula listed in this document were selected from several existing registries including the one provided by the [Blueprints program at University of Colorado](#). The Blueprints registry has a comprehensive process for identifying programs as either certified (with promising, model or model-plus ratings) or non-certified (ineffective, harmful or lacking strong evidence). If the program you're interested in does not appear in the search at the link above, it may appear in a search on their [non-certified programs registry](#). Several other registries were also consulted.

Caveats:

- This is intended to simplify the search for curricula, not to *prescribe* or endorse any one curricula.
- This list is distilled from existing registries to include mostly programs that have been deemed “effective” or “top tier” and a few deemed “promising,” and which are likely to work for a universal audience while meeting the National Health Education Standards. This list is not exhaustive.
- If there is a program not included on this list that you would like to explore, we can work together to see if it has been studied.
- This list includes only prevention, not intervention, programs.
- No curriculum is perfect. Some programs may not have been updated recently. Many schools find that one curriculum is a good fit for some grades but not others.
- The effectiveness relies on administering it with fidelity and—as with any program-- on the teacher’s ability to engage students and find ways to make the content meaningful.

Universal Programs

Below are some universal programs: these are intended for any student and cover the full gamut of substance use information along with (usually) a great deal of social-emotional skills and other health information and skills which are related to and help with prevention of substance use. They typically cover a wide range of grades.

- [Life Skills](#)—K-12—consistently recognized as “model”/ “top tier”
- [Project Towards No Drug Abuse](#)--ages 14-19; [Project Towards No Tobacco](#)--Grades 5-9
- [Good Behavior Game](#)—elementary grades
- [PROSPER](#)—multi-age/school and family—combines Life Skills, Strengthening Families and Lions Quest. [UVM Extension](#) can help you implement this.
- [Too Good for Drugs](#) (deemed promising/*potentially* effective)—K-12

Below are a few programs that you may find useful which are geared more toward social-emotional learning and may have a family component or may be implemented outside of school time.

- [Positive Action](#)—School-wide social-emotional learning, all ages
- [Guiding Good Choices](#)—contact ctr4ctc@uw.edu to purchase
- [Raising Healthy Children](#)—all grades; social-emotional skills
- [Coping Power](#)—late elementary/middle school—social-emotional learning
- [Second Step](#)—Pre-K-8; social-emotional learning
- [The Incredible Years](#)

The following are modules or programs which are specific to certain substances and which may be helpful as supplements to your existing programs (but which do not contain a full scope and sequence of substance use prevention). They are all free.

Lesson plans, searchable for different topics

- <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/teachers/lessonplans#/questions>

Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)/ “vaping”/JUUL:

- [CATCH My Breath e-cigarette curriculum E-cigarette lesson plan](#)
- [Scholastic activity](#) intended for grades 9-12
- [“The Real Cost of Vaping” An activity for grades 9-12](#)
- [Vermont Department of Health Electronic Vapor Product \(EVP\) Toolkit](#)

Cannabis Prevention

- [Stanford Cannabis Prevention Toolkit](#)

Tobacco/Nicotine

- [Stanford Tobacco Toolkit](#)

Prescription Drug Safety

- OperationPrevention.com

Please contact Beth Keister at beth.keister@vermont.gov if you need support identifying or evaluating materials or if you just want to share information. Feedback and comments on the content and implementation of these programs is welcomed so that this information can be shared with others to save them time and to improve their experiences.

For more information on the process of determining levels of evidence, see [these infographics](#) for definitions of “evidence-based” per the Every Student Succeeds Act guidelines.