



PREVENTING DRUG USE AMONG YOUTH

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The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) recently published its second edition of "Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents." This is a research-based guide designed to assist parents, educators, and community leaders in their planning, selection, and delivery of drug prevention programs.

Research-based prevention principles are presented for three categories: risk and protective factors; prevention planning; and prevention program delivery. Below 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 program 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.