



Title IV – TUPE Prevention-Intervention-Assets

Project Alert

Project ALERT is a drug prevention curriculum for students 11 to 14 years old, which has been scientifically proven to dramatically reduce both the onset of substance abuse and their regular use. The two-year, fourteen lesson program has been taught in all science classes for five years by all intermediate schools in the district. It focuses on substances that adolescents are most likely to use: alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and inhalants. Project ALERT uses participatory activities and strategies to help motivate adolescents against drug use by teaching them the skills and strategies needed to resist pro-drug pressures, and by establishing non-drug using norms. Guided classroom discussions and small group activities stimulate peer interaction and challenge student beliefs and perceptions, while intensive role-playing activities help students learn and master resistance skills. Homework assignments also facilitate parent-child discussions of drugs and how to resist using them.

Achievement Reinforcement Center (ARC)

The Achievement Reinforcement Center works collaboratively with parents, district personnel, and law enforcement, to maintain truant, suspended, and expelled students in the educational mainstream and reinforces students' educational progress and achievement. Individualized assessments are given in order to determine appropriate services and intervention. The ARC provides a continuum of services, including meaningful incentives, consequences and referrals to community resources such as law enforcement, mental health, social services, and community agencies. Students attending the ARC receive academic, life skills - and drug, gang, and violence prevention lessons. Guest speakers and community colleges provide students with motivational messages and encourage students to continue with their education. A system for information sharing was developed between the ARC, schools and agencies to reduce the duplication of services for multiple-issue youth and their families. Parents are strongly encouraged to supervise and monitor their children so their child's behavior does not result in serious truancy violations, criminal, and other unacceptable behavior. Parents are informed that they will be held legally accountable for the supervision and control of their children. They are made aware of the legal penalties that may be imposed if they fail to ensure that their minors are in school.

In addition to enforcing California's truancy laws, the ARC is intended to be rehabilitative in scope. Legal sanctions will only be used to promote compliance with the law and encourage truant, suspended, and expelled students and their

families to seek and follow through with ARC referrals to agencies and services that will reinforce the educational success of the student.

Strengthening Families Program

The curriculum is designed to reduce environmental risk factors and strengthen protective factors with the ultimate objective of increasing personal resiliency to the negative influences that affect students' academic performance such as, drug and alcohol use in at-risk youth. The program is scientifically proven to be effective in improving family relations, increasing parenting skills, and increasing children's communication skills.

Parent evaluations and administrator feedback validate its success in meeting the need for parent education and training at these sites. Due to the great demand for Strengthening Families, and school size, some schools received the program twice.

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is one of the most powerful programs for family change in the country. Both parents and their children are involved in a process that assists them in acquiring family management skills. The two and a half hour weekly sessions includes a family dinner provided by the program. Parents are taught family management and parenting skills while students learn skills to increase socially acceptable behaviors through work with a program therapist. In the second hour parents and children are united for family skills' training that provides them with the opportunity to put into practice what they learned in their individual sessions.

Too Good for Drugs Program (TGFD)

Too Good for Drugs (TGFD) is a school-based prevention program designed to reduce the intention to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs in elementary school students. Developed by the Mendez Foundation for use with students in kindergarten through fifth grades, TGFD has a separate, developmentally appropriate curriculum for each grade level, and is designed to develop: personal and interpersonal skills relating to alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use; appropriate attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use; knowledge of the negative consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and the benefits of a drug-free lifestyle; and positive peer norms. It builds children's resiliency by teaching them how to be socially competent and autonomous problem solvers. It focuses on five skills to increase children's sense of control, responsibility and self-efficacy, goal setting, decision-making, bonding with others, identifying and managing emotions, and communicating effectively. The program's highly interactive teaching methods encourage students to bond with pro-social peers, and engages students through role-play, cooperative learning, games, small group activities and class discussions. Students have many opportunities to participate and receive recognition for involvement. TGFD also impacts students through a family component used in each grade level: "Home Workouts" is available for use with families to further support the attainment of valuable resiliency skills.

Project Toward No Drug Abuse (TND)

Project TND is a highly interactive program designed to help high school youth (14 to 19 years old) resist substance use. A school-based program, TND consists of twelve classroom lessons that include motivational activities, social skills training, and decision making components that are delivered through group discussions, games, role-playing exercise, videos, and student worksheets. Project TND teaches participants increased coping and self-control skills that allow them to—Grasp the cognitive misperceptions that may lead to substance use (e.g., substance use myths, denial) and express a desire not to abuse substances; understand the sequence of substance abuse and the consequences of using substances; correct myths concerning substance use; demonstrate effective communication, coping, and self-control skills; and state a commitment to discuss substance abuse with others. Project TND involves teacher-led student participation in interactive program components that include: Education on the progression of substance use to substance abuse; exercises to motivate against substance abuse (e.g., exercises include a mock “Talk Show” that provides empathy lessons, discussions on stereotyping, and the effects of being labeled a substance abuser); interpersonal skills development (e.g., communication, active listening); coping skills development (e.g., learning the value of personal health in daily living and life goals); self-control training (e.g., social self-control skills, understanding positive and negative thought and behavior loops, violence prevention); cognitive misperception correction; tobacco cessation strategies; decision-making skills development; and commitment building.

Below are other Title IV/TUPE activities and programs based on principles of effectiveness that promote positive youth behaviors, build resiliency, and prevent suspensions and expulsions:

Safe and Civil Schools

The Safe and Civil Schools Program (SCS) was presented and approved by all intermediate school principals to address the need to reduce suspensions and discipline referrals while providing support for the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. The goal of the program is to help educators create positive and proactive behavior management techniques and strategies that are tailored to each classroom, school, and our district. The program will help schools improve safety and civility across all school settings utilizing instructional techniques to help all students behave responsibly and respectfully. Using data collected from each site, objective information will be used to organize and promote successful student behavior through student, teacher, and community collaboration. The reduction of behavioral and discipline issues will reduce the number of suspension and expulsion referrals.

Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) and Friday Night Live (FNL)

These programs are peer-to-peer outreach programs that empower caring students to assist their peers in making healthy life choices. They help create a caring school environment that enhances students' sense of connectedness to their school. When students find their school environment to be supportive and caring they are less likely to become involved in substance abuse, violence, and other problem behaviors. The greater the number of developmental assets and protective factors a student develops the lower the high-risk behaviors.

Peer Mediation

Students are trained to be conflict mediators and gain confidence in their leadership and communication abilities. They provide models of effective communication and cooperation for fellow students, thereby reducing violence and other at risk behaviors that result in suspensions or expulsions.

Maria Mojarro