



## **Substance Use Prevention**

The approach and philosophy of the Positive Action program support the prevention, intervention, and treatment of substance abuse, including alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, methamphetamines, opiates, stimulants, steroids, hallucinogens, inhalants, and prescription drugs. The Positive Action approach helps individuals become aware of the negative consequences of using substances.

Positive Action teaches students a basic philosophy about the value of positive actions and the consequences of the negative action of substance use. . Instead of scare tactics, short-term strategies, or information-only approaches, the Positive Action program teaches students daily how and why they can be strong and live without drugs.

The Positive Action philosophy explains that the good feeling we all want about ourselves (a positive self-concept) is developed only by doing positive actions. They can apply this philosophy in any given situation, including those in which they may be pressured to drink, smoke, or use drugs.

Educators can teach Positive Action with confidence because researchers have found that this program reduces substance use in general, as well as use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. The analysis from two randomized trials has been featured in three peer-reviewed journal articles.

[Click here](#) to review the substance use research outcomes.

[Click here](#) for an overview on suspension reductions.



## Alcohol Use Prevention

Alcohol use by students remains extremely high in the U.S., with recent-use prevalence at 70 percent.<sup>[1]</sup> Of most concern are students under the age of 15 who are exposed to alcohol use; they are five times more likely to develop a dependence or abuse in adulthood. <sup>[2][3]</sup>

It's important that prevention efforts begin at school, and researchers have identified the most effective components: School-based strategies should be comprehensive in approach and include social development, family involvement and strategies for resisting peer pressure. <sup>[4][5]</sup>

Positive Action works effectively as an alcohol use prevention program because it includes all of these components and teaches students the importance of comprehensive health. It features lessons that explicitly address the health and social consequences of alcohol use.

In addition to specific lessons on the dangers of alcohol, students learn healthful personal habits that discourage substance use and encourage a healthy lifestyle. Students receive lessons that explain how alcohol can directly affect their self-concept and how it affects the [TAF Circle](#) (Thoughts-Actions Feelings). Students quickly learn that alcohol use is a negative action that will produce negative feelings.

The program addresses these topics with a holistic approach that covers the health implications but also teaches students important tools to use within their social groups. Additional lesson content focuses on strategies to handle peer and social pressure to drink alcohol.

This comprehensive approach is most effective when an entire school is learning Positive Action. It's easier for students to decline invitations to drink when a majority of the students are learning and practicing Positive Action.

The Drug Education Kits further these efforts with additional lesson material (games, stories, and role-playing) specifically designed to extend coping strategies. With this additional reinforcement, students are better prepared to deal with peer and social pressure associated with alcohol consumption.

[Click here](#) to review the alcohol use research outcomes.

[Click here](#) for an overview on attendance improvement.

#### References:

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