

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PREVENTION FIRST
Building community capacity to prevent substance abuse

TIP SHEET

TOO GOOD FOR DRUGS MIDDLE SCHOOL: IMPLEMENTATION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Too Good for Drugs (TGFD) is a science-based prevention program designed to reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors related to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use. TGFD is an effective school-based prevention program for kindergarten through 12th grade students, which focuses on five interwoven components that appear throughout the curriculum. These five components include goal setting, decision making, bonding with pro-social others, identifying and managing emotions, and communicating effectively.

TGFD has interactive, developmentally appropriate curriculum for each grade level. For every grade level, lessons include rationale, objectives, materials needed list, recommended resources, and lesson extenders. TGFD “Home Workouts” extend learning into the home environment, encourage students to engage in discussions and activities at home with their parents, and are centered on what they are learning during the Too Good for Drugs lessons.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ILLINOIS SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROVIDERS:

- Too Good for Drugs is approved for implementation for 6th through 8th grade.
- Two consecutive grade levels must be implemented to meet the SAPP requirements for the TGFD program.
- Providers are required to teach all 10 sessions of the core program and all 10 sessions of the booster program.
- Session length must be at least 30 minutes, but can be as long as 60 minutes. If your lesson time is only 30 minutes you will need more than 10 scheduled lessons to cover all material.
- Too Good for Drugs sessions can be taught once or twice a week.

TEACHING STRATEGIES:

The Too Good for Drugs program approaches prevention with a combination of normative education, information about the consequences of drug use, and the development of pro-social skills. Interactive activities allow youth an opportunity to internalize the skills they learn in the program. The following tips will help maximize the success and interaction of the TGFD sessions.

Make Activities Fun

TGFD is filled with interactive activities designed to engage students in active learning. The curriculum relies heavily on role-play scenarios. These activities are popular with youth upon completion of the program. Taking some extra time to prepare for these role-plays will make them more effective and enjoyable. Use simple props to illustrate characters in the skit. For example, a store security guard might have sunglasses and a badge. The school nurse might have a vest and a toy stethoscope. You might be able to find these props around your house, in your agency, or for a small cost at your local dollar store. Putting a little extra effort into these activities will encourage youth to fully participate and enjoy the lesson. You will also find yourself smiling, laughing, and enjoying the student's role-plays, too!

Establish Clear, Consistent Rules for Peer-Refusal Role Playing

Again, the TGFD curriculum relies heavily on role-play scenarios. It is important to provide rules at the beginning of each role-play so students know your expectations and what will happen if they break the rules. If a student does break a rule while role-playing, stop the role-play and select another volunteer. TGFD suggests these simple role-playing rules:

- **Keep it short.** The sooner you can get yourself out of the situation, the better off you will be. Don't argue. Say no and start moving in another direction.
- **Keep it clean.** No profanity allowed.
- **Keep your hands to yourself.** No physical contact allowed. In real life, kids don't twist their friends' arm to get them to do things. Words should be used, and verbal persuasion encouraged.

Build a Collection of Advertising Articles

Examples of tobacco and alcohol advertising are needed for some of the lessons in TGFD. Use a folder to house your ads and continuously add to your collection. You may want to laminate your ads or put them in a plastic sleeve, so they hold up over several years. The more examples of advertising you have to analyze with students, the more effective the lesson will be. While you may have access to magazines with advertisements in them, an affordable way to add to your collection is to print off tobacco and alcohol ads from the internet. You can also check with the local school and/or public library as they give away old magazines.

Instructions for Normative Education

Many students overestimate the percentage of people who engage in problem behavior such as violence and drug use. Normative education teaches that most people are not involved in these behaviors, and that most people do not think drug use and violence are appropriate or cool. It is very important to be aware of the negative norms promoted by our culture, so you will not inadvertently reinforce them. For example, many young people have the misperception that everyone does drugs or that it's normal for teens to experiment with tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs. Paying too much attention to students who express these negative norms during discussions, for example, can reinforce the negative norm. Lastly, during discussions, be sure to correct students who express a negative norm and reframe the discussion to include a positive message based on a positive norm. So, for the student who expresses the opinion that it is normal for teens to experiment with alcohol, you would reframe the negative norm and focus on a positive norm by pointing out that through the lessons the young person will learn many ways to get what they want and need without using alcohol or other drugs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information about technical assistance please contact providerservices@prevention.org or call 217-836-5346.

Too Good for Drugs Implementation Assistance

Kim Menendez kmenendez@mendezfoundation.org or 1-800-750-0986 x213

Laura Marolf lmarolf@mendezfoundation.org or 1-800-750-0986 x214

Too Good for Drugs Internet Support – www.mendezfoundation.org

SAMHSA's Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center - <https://www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center>