

Title of Intervention: Social Influence Smoking Prevention Program

Intervention Strategies: Group Education, Campaigns and Promotions, Individual Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To prevent smoking among adolescents

Population: Students in grades 8 and 9

Setting: Schools from district health centers in the Netherlands; school-based

Partners: School district, national and international singers and sport personalities

Intervention Description: Schools were assigned to one of two programs: social influence program or social influence program plus decision-making. In addition, half of all intervention schools received booster materials.

- **Group Education:** The social influence smoking prevention program consisted of five lessons given in weekly sessions. Peer-led activities were conducted with groups of four or five students. Teachers coordinated the lessons, stimulated students and assisted peer-leaders. The lessons included video presentations, peer-led activities and feedback. The first session focused on reasons why people do or do not smoke, why people quit smoking and the difference between direct and indirect pressure to smoke. The second lesson dealt with the short-term effects of smoking, the dangers of experimentation with smoking, passive smoking, addiction and quitting smoking. Students received a brochure about how to quit smoking. The third lesson focused on resisting peer pressure and acquiring skills to resist pressure. The fourth lesson discussed how to react when bothered by smoke, indirect pressure to smoke from adults and advertisements and measures from the government against smoking. The fifth lesson focused on alternatives to smoking, making decisions to smoke or not and a commitment to non-smoking behavior. At the end of each lesson, teachers handed out a written summary of the lesson, which could be added to the manuals. To increase commitment to non-smoking, students were asked to conclude a non-smoking contract (anonymous commitment) and write their name on a non-smoking poster that could be seen in the school and by other students (public commitment). As a reward for their non-smoking, non-smokers received a non-smoking poster. In the decision-making program, the student manual discussed the five steps toward making a decision. Students were asked to follow this process: (1) what is the situation in which you have to make a decision (2) what are the possible decisions (3) what are the pros and cons of the possible decisions (4) make a decision based on the pros and cons and (5) implement the decision.
- **Campaigns and Promotions:** The booster included the development of three magazines to discuss information similar to that contained in the video. The magazines contained well-known national and international singers and sports personalities as non-smoking models who gave their opinion on smoking. They also contained interviews with non-smoking actors from the video and with a Greenpeace employee. Information was given on the effects of smoking, passive smoking, helping other people to quit smoking and on reasons for not smoking. Also each magazine included a competition, a cartoon about smoking and letters to the editors from students. The teachers distributed the magazines to the students.
- **Individual Education:** Students were assigned homework activities after every lesson.

Theory: Social Inoculation Theory, Model of Planned Behavior, Attitude, Social Influence and Efficacy Model

Resources Required:

- **Staff/Volunteers:** Teachers, peer leaders
- **Training:** Video training and manuals for teachers and peer-leaders
- **Technology:** Audiovisual equipment
- **Space:** Space for lessons
- **Budget:** Not mentioned
- **Intervention:** Student manual, lesson summary sheets, educational materials, booster magazine, video, brochure, commitment contract, commitment poster, anti-smoking poster
- **Evaluation:** Questionnaires, interviews

Evaluation:

- Design: Randomized controlled trial
- Methods and Measures:
 - Student questionnaires assessed age, gender, type of school, class, knowledge, attitudes, social norms, encountered pressure to smoke, perceived smoking behavior, intentions and smoking behaviors, the effect of the program and the extent to which the boosters were used.
 - Teacher questionnaires assessed the level of implementation and use of the programs.
 - Teacher interviews assessed program usage.

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: The most successful program was the social influence program with boosters, which resulted in a significantly lower increase in smoking rates compared to the control group at both 12 and 18 months follow-up.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Boosters can be an effective tool for maintaining or increasing the effectiveness of smoking prevention programs. It is recommended that the SI program with the booster be implemented at the national level, since this intervention showed the greatest behavioral effects.

Citation(s):

Dijkstra, M., I. Mesters, et al. (1999). "Effectiveness of a social influence approach and boosters to smoking prevention." *Health Educ Res* 14(6): 791-802.