

SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS

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SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Goals of Substance Use Prevention:

- *Create safe spaces to learn (open dialogue)
- *Promote critical thinking
- *Teach skills (coping-socializing-recreation)
- *Delay the age of first-time use
- *Shift view of substance use from a moral failing to a health issue



Stigma

Stigma promotes:

- *assumptions
- *exclusion
- *shame
- *concealment
- *isolation

Stigmatized Language	Preferred Language
Addict	Person with a substance use disorder
Addicted to X	Person with a substance use disorder
Addiction	Substance use disorder
Alcoholic	Person with an alcohol use disorder
Clean	Abstinent
Clean screen	Substance-free
Dirty	Actively using
Dirty screen	Testing positive for substance use
Drug habit	Person who uses drugs
Reformed addict or alcoholic	Person in recovery
Opioid replacement	Medication-assisted Treatment
Recreational or casual user	Person who uses drugs for nonmedical reasons
Experimental user	Person who is new to drug use

PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE:

Relationships

What Matters:

- *relationship
- *care
- *demeanor

What Doesn't Matter:

- *job title
- *credentials
- *specific knowledge about substance use



Canadian Student Alcohol & Drug Survey 2023/24



Within the past 30 days:

22% used alcohol

15% used vapes

12% used cannabis

Gr 7's most likely to unaware of the risks of use

13-20% did not believe regular use would be harmful

Survey done every 2 years

Grades 7-12

Public & private schools

BC Adolescent Health Survey 2023



Vaping:

*26% “ever vaped”

*15% “daily use” (of those who used vapes)

*8% “10-12 days per month”

*age of 1st use:

24%	at 13
21%	at 14
15%	at 12
15%	at 15

Done every 5 years in 33 BC communities

Ages 12-19

BC Adolescent Health Survey 2023



Alcohol:

38% “Ever used “beyond a few sips”

33% Used 1-2 days per month (of those who drank)

14% used 3-5 days per month

Age of 1st use: 20% at 14

18% at 13

18% at 15

BC Adolescent Health Survey 2023



Cannabis:

22% “Ever used”

61% 1-2 days per month (of those who used it)

15% 20+ days per month

9% daily uses

Age of 1st use: 23% at 14

21% at 15

18% at 13

BC Adolescent Health Survey 2023

Identified Reasons for Use:

To have fun	61%
Wanted to try/experiment	32%
Friends were doing it	30%
Because of stress	22%
I felt sad/down	20%
Boredom	11%
To manage physical pain	6%
To help with focus	5%
Felt pressured to	3%
Addiction	5%

Youth Substance Use

Community Collaboration



Meeting with community partners to coordinate education, prevention & intervention in schools

***Abby Schools**

***Fraser Health**

***Archway Community Services**

***Impact Society**

***Foundry Abbotsford**

Prevention Initiatives



Staff Professional Development

Parent Education Nights

Youth Opioid Awareness Program (YMCA)

You & Me, Together Vape Free (Stanford University)

PreVenture Program (Foundry BC)

You & Me, Together Vape Free



- *Developed by Stanford University
- *5 lesson curriculum, evidence-based
- *Elementary, middle & secondary levels
- *addresses key aspects of youth vaping
 - misperceptions on vaping
 - coping with stress
 - refusal skills
 - the role of marketing & social media

You & Me, Together Vape Free

Includes activities, games,
quizzes, worksheets,
presentations

Being delivered in
elementary & middle
schools



PreVenture Program



Offered in partnership with Foundry BC



Developed by University of Montreal



Endorsed by WHO, UNESCO, US Surgeon General



Evidence-based

Identifies & explores
4 distinct personality
traits that may be
associated with risk
taking or negative
outcomes

ANXIETY SENSITIVITY

SENSATION SEEKING

IMPULSIVITY

NEGATIVE THINKING

Program Details



Screening questionnaire identifies youth with elevated scores in one area

Targeted workshops (2-3) are delivered for each trait by school staff

Pilot project at one middle school this year with hopes for future expansion

Thank You!

Questions
welcome

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