

The Applicability of Project ALERT to Tobacco Use Prevention Education

This evaluation was conducted to determine the degree to which tobacco use prevention education topics are addressed by Project ALERT. The evaluation is based on the operational definition of Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) curricula issued by the California Department of Education for tobacco surtax funds. This definition identifies four instructional goals, the TUPE Essential Topics, which are addressed by a comprehensive tobacco use prevention education curriculum. The TUPE Essential Topics are:

1. Immediate and long-term undesirable physiologic, cosmetic, and social consequences of tobacco use
2. Reasons adolescents say they smoke or use tobacco
3. Peer norms and social influences that promote tobacco use
4. Refusal skills for resisting social influences that promote tobacco use

In any given lesson in Project ALERT, each of the TUPE Essential Topics may be:

- Not dealt with at all
- Mentioned but not directly addressed
Example: the consequences of tobacco use is mentioned in the discussion of the social influences for tobacco use, but are not the focus of discussion.
- Addressed within the context of another topic
Example: the consequences of tobacco use are stressed in the portion of refusal skills lessons when the "give a reason" method of refusal is discussed or used.
- A major emphasis of the lesson

The Project ALERT lesson materials, videos, and teen leader training materials were evaluated as to the degree that the TUPE Essential Topics are addressed. The results of this evaluation are listed in the first three tables that follow. The cells of each table contain both check marks and numbers. The numbers indicate the lesson activities in which the TUPE Essential Topic is addressed. The number of check marks indicates the degree to which the TUPE Essential Topic is addressed:

- NA** Not addressed at all
3 Mentioned but not directly addressed
33 Addressed within the context of another topic
333 A major emphasis of the lesson

Table 1: Project ALERT Sixth/Seventh Grade Curriculum

Lesson Title (Title of video, if any)	Tobacco use refusal skills	Norms and influences for tobacco use	Undesirable consequences of tobacco use	Reasons adolescents say they use tobacco
Introduction (<i>Let's Talk About Marijuana</i>)	NA	333 3,6	333 3,6	333 3,6
Consequences of Cigarettes and Marijuana (<i>Pot: The Party Crasher</i>)	NA	3 1	333 1,2,4,7	3 1
Drinking Consequences and Alternatives (no video)	3 5	NA	NA	NA
Introduction to Pressures (no video)	3 6	333 2,3,4,5,7	3 7	333 2,3,4,5,7
Social Pressures to Use Drugs (<i>Lindsey's Choice</i>)	333 2,3,4,5,6,7	33 2,5	33 2	3 2
Resisting Internal and External Pressures to Use Drugs (no video)	333 2,3,4,5,6	33 3,4	3 3,6	33 3,4,6
Practicing Resistance Skills (<i>Pot or Not?</i>)	333 3,4,5	NA	3 7	NA
Inhalant Abuse (no video)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Review and Practice of Resistance Techniques (no video)	333 2,3,4,5	3 3,4	33 5	NA
Smoking Cessation (<i>Clearing the Air</i>)	3 4	333 2,3,4,5,6	33 3,4	33 3,4
Benefits of Not Using Drugs (<i>Saying "No" to Drugs: Teenagers Speak Out</i>)	3 4	33 2,3	33 2,3,4	33 2,3

Table 2: Project ALERT Seventh/Eighth Grade Curriculum

Lesson Title (Title of video, if any)	Tobacco use refusal skills	Norms and influences for tobacco use	Undesirable consequences of tobacco use	Reasons adolescents say they use tobacco
Motivating Resistance to Drugs (no video)	33 5	333 4,5	333 2,7	333 4,5,7
Practicing Resisting External and Internal Pressures (<i>Paul's Fix</i>)	333 4,5,8	33 6	33 5	33 3,6,8
Benefits to Resisting Drugs (<i>Resisting Peer Pressure: Teenagers Speak Out</i>)	33 2,3,5	3 5	3 6	3 5

Table 3: Project ALERT Teen Leader Training

Lesson Title (Title of video, if any)	Tobacco use refusal skills	Norms and influences for tobacco use	Undesirable consequences of tobacco use	Reasons adolescents say they use tobacco
Session I (<i>Project ALERT: A Guided Tour</i>)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Session II	NA	333 3	333 3	333 3
Session III	NA	NA	333 2	NA
Session IV (<i>Lindsey's Choice</i>)	333 5	333 2,5	3 5	333 2,5
Session V	333 3,5,6,7	3 3	3 3	NA
Session VI	333 3,5	3 5	3 5	NA
Session VII	333 3,4	33 2	3 3	3 2
Session VIII (<i>Pot or Not?</i>)	333 4	NA	3 4	NA
Session IX	333 4	3 3	3 4	3 3
Session X	333 3	NA	33 3,4	NA
Session XI (<i>Saying "No" to Drugs: Teenagers Speak Out</i>)	3 5	33 4	333 4,5	33 4
Session XII	NA	NA	NA	NA

California school districts may choose to use tobacco surtax funds to provide financial support for the implementation of Project ALERT curriculum in the classroom (including purchase of curricular materials, staff inservice training in curricular delivery, and payment of substitute teachers to release staff to attend inservice training). The following percentages are a recommended limit of support from Tobacco Surtax Funds for the implementation of Project ALERT. This recommended percentage is determined by dividing the number of lessons that emphasize one or more TUPE Essential Topics by the total number of lessons.

Table 4: Recommended limit of support for Project ALERT from tobacco funds

Project ALERT Curriculum Component	Total No. of Lessons	No. of TUPE Lessons	Recommended Limit of Support
Grade 6/7	11	9	82%
Grade 7/8	3	2	67
Teen Leader Training	12	10	83

This evaluation was conducted by Glenn Dodd, a consultant in Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Education with the Center for Health Education, Los Angeles County Office of Education, in an independent agreement with BEST Foundation for A Drug-Free Tomorrow, administrators of Project ALERT. For further information, call (800) ALERT-10.