Project Towards No Tobacco Use

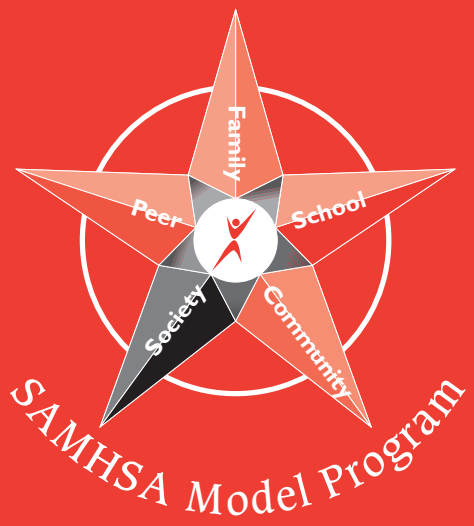
Project Towards No Tobacco Use (TNT) is a comprehensive, classroom-based curriculum designed to prevent or reduce tobacco use in youth 10 to 15 years old in grades five through ten. Upon completion of this program, students will be able to describe the course of tobacco addiction, the consequences of using tobacco, and the prevalence of tobacco use among peers. Delivered in 10 core and 2 booster lessons, TNT is proven effective at helping youth to—

- Resist tobacco use and advocate no tobacco use
- Demonstrate effective communication, refusal, and cognitive coping skills
- Identify how the media and advertisers influence youth to use tobacco products
- Identify methods for building their own self-esteem
- Describe strategies for advocating no tobacco use

Project TNT is designed to counteract several different causes of tobacco use simultaneously because the behavior is determined by multiple causes. This comprehensive approach works well for a wide variety of youth who may have different risk factors influencing their tobacco use.

INTENDED POPULATION

Project TNT was completed originally with seventh grade students. It has been successfully implemented with White, African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian American adolescents, 10 to 15 years old.



Effective Substance Abuse and Mental Health Programs for Every Community

Proven Results*

- Reduced initiation of cigarette use by approximately 26% when 1- and 2-year outcomes were averaged together
- Reduced initiation of smokeless tobacco use by approximately 30%
- Reduced weekly or more frequent cigarette smoking by approximately 60%
- Eliminated weekly or more frequent smokeless tobacco use

**Relative to control group in a large randomized field experiment.*

INTERVENTION

Universal

Selective

Indicated

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
www.samhsa.gov

OUTCOMES

The original experimental trial found that students in Project TNT reduced initiation of cigarette smoking by approximately 26 percent over the control group, when 1-year and 2-year followup outcomes were averaged together. Further, initiation of smokeless tobacco use was reduced by approximately 60 percent. Weekly or more frequent cigarette smoking by students in the Project TNT group was reduced by approximately 30 percent. For students in the Project TNT group, weekly or more frequent smokeless tobacco use was eliminated.

BENEFITS

At the completion of this program, students will be able to—

- Describe the course of tobacco addiction and related diseases
- Demonstrate effective communication, refusal, and cognitive coping skills
- Identify how the media and advertisers influence youth to use tobacco products
- Identify methods for building their own self-esteem

HOW IT WORKS

Implementing Project TNT involves the following activities:

- A comprehensive, 10-day, classroom-based social influences program that examines media, celebrity, and peer portrayal of tobacco use
- Training in active listening, effective communication, and general assertiveness development along with methods for building self-esteem
- Education on the course of tobacco-related addiction and diseases; correction of inflated tobacco-use prevalence estimates
- Learning tobacco-specific cognitive coping skills and assertive refusal techniques
- Practicing ways to counteract media portrayals of tobacco use, including social activism letter writing to make a public commitment to not using tobacco products
- Use of homework assignments, a classroom competition (i.e., the "TNT Game"), and a two-lesson booster program
- Longitudinal assessment material

Virtually any school or school district can implement Project TNT. Trained teachers in a classroom setting deliver it to standard class sizes.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

Successful replication of Project TNT involves delivering 10 core lessons and 2 booster lessons, each 40 to 50 minutes in length. The 10 core lessons are designed to occur during a 2-week period, although they may be spread over 4 weeks as long as all lessons are taught. The two-lesson booster is delivered 1 year after the core lessons in a 2-day sequence. However, the booster sessions may be taught one per week.

Project TNT offers an implementation manual that provides step-by-step instructions for completing each of the lessons, along with introductory and background materials. Other program materials include:

- Two videos, one on assertive refusal and the other on combating tobacco use-specific social images
- A student workbook
- An optional kit that includes posters and other instructional materials (e.g., evaluation materials, Project TNT outcomes papers)

Project TNT can provide a 1- to 2-day teacher training session prior to implementation. This training is highly recommended.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Project TNT was initially funded, from 1987 to 1993, with a grant from the National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The theory underlying Project TNT is that young people will best be able to resist using tobacco products if they 1) are aware of misleading social information that facilitates tobacco use (e.g., advertising, inflated prevalence estimates), 2) have skills that counteract the social pressures to achieve approval by using tobacco, and 3) appreciate the physical consequences that tobacco use may have on their own lives (e.g., the beginnings of addiction).

EVALUATION DESIGN

Five conditions (four programs and the "usual school health education" control) were contrasted using a randomized experiment involving 6,716 seventh-grade students from 48 junior high schools. Four curricula were developed. Three of these curricula were designed to counteract the effects of separate (single) program components (normative social influence, informational social influence, and physical consequences), whereas a fourth, comprehensive curriculum, Project TNT, was designed to counteract all three effects. To determine outcomes, 1- and 2-year followups were conducted after the initial intervention was delivered.

PROGRAM DEVELOPER

Steve Sussman, Ph.D., FAAHB

Dr. Steve Sussman is a professor in the Departments of Preventive Medicine and Psychology and the Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research at the University of Southern California. He has published more than 170 articles, chapters, and books in the area of drug abuse prevention and cessation. Recent projects include Project Towards No Drug Abuse and Project EX, one of the largest and most successful teen tobacco-use cessation trials to date.

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To order teacher's manual and student workbooks:

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RECOGNITION

Model Program—Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Programs That Work—National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Exemplary Program—U.S. Department of Education

Programs That Work—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services