PALS: Prevention Through Alternative Learning Styles (PALS)

TARGET AUDIENCE

This program is for middle school students.

SUMMARY

PALS: Prevention Through Alternative Learning Styles (PALS), a school-based program, intends to increase students’ knowledge of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD), help participants develop their refusal skills when presented with ATOD, and decrease their intentions to use ATOD. This program is also designed to help teachers recognize unique student learning styles and adapt a prevention curriculum to meet these different needs.

EVIDENCE

An evaluation of the PALS program demonstrated increases in students’ knowledge about alcohol, tobacco, drugs, learning styles, and peer pressure and showed decreases in their intentions to use ATOD; however, there were no changes in refusal skills or other behavioral skills that the program teaches.

COMPONENTS

The PALS program consists of five units and uses various information dissemination methods, such as interactive group activities, scientific laboratory demonstrations, videos, games, creative writing, arts projects, and small group discussions. The curriculum’s unit titles are as follows:

- Understanding Differences and Learning Styles: Describes the different approaches to learning and helps students determine their preferred method;
- Effects of Alcohol; Effects of Tobacco; and Effects of Other Drugs: Identifies the consequences of using these substances on the brain and body to help prevent or delay usage; and
- Peer Pressure and Healthy Choices: Explains four types of peer pressure, offers suggestions on approaches to say no, and provides positive alternatives to ATOD use.

Six additional, optional lessons that reinforce the curriculum are available on the program's website in the student section. A peer mentoring program section is available that provides more information on curriculum topics.

PREVIOUS USE

Developed in 1992 as a training model for special and regular education teachers and rehabilitation professionals, the PALS program has been delivered to more than 5,000 students and rehabilitation participants.
**PALS: Prevention Through Alternative Learning Styles (PALS)**

**TRAINING**
A required, 1-day, on-site teacher training, which includes online training videos, costs $3,000 for up to 20 people plus developer's travel expenses. An optional, 1-day, on-site consultation costs $1,500 plus travel expenses. An optional booster training and telephone consultations are available. These costs vary dependent on site needs.

**CONSIDERATIONS**
Considerations for implementing this program include acquiring school administration, teacher, and participant buy-in; ensuring teachers receive training; finding funds to pay for required training; and finding time within an existing curriculum for program lessons.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**IMPLEMENTATION**
If you are interested in implementing PALS, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you!

Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

Implementation time information was not located.

**COST**
The curriculum binder costs $300 and includes email assistance. Storybooks are $5 each or $125 for a set of 30.

**EVALUATION PLAN**
To move the PALS program to the Promising category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence, at least one evaluation should be performed demonstrating positive effects lasting at least one year from the beginning of the program or at least six months from program completion.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**CONTACT**
Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program.

Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact Jo Ann Ford by phone 1-937-775-1452 or email jo.ford@wright.edu or contact Judson Workman by phone 1-937-775-1481, email judson.workman@wright.edu, or visit pals.wright.edu

**SOURCE**
http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=231 and pals.wright.edu

---

This material is the result of a partnership funded by the Department of Defense between the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy and the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture through a grant/cooperative agreement with Penn State University.