

LifeSkills Program

WHAT: The Botvin LifeSkills Program for Elementary Schools is a comprehensive, dynamic, and developmentally appropriate substance abuse and violence prevention program designed for upper elementary school students. This highly effective curriculum has been proven to help increase self-esteem, develop healthy attitudes, and improve elementary student knowledge of essential life skills – all of which promote healthy and positive personal development. The program is based on more than 30 years of rigorous scientific research. According to a study published in the Journal of Drug Education, more elementary schools in the US choose to use the LifeSkills Program over all other evidence-based prevention programs.

OBJECTIVES:

- *Personal Self-Management Skills* - students develop skills that help them enhance self-esteem, develop problem-solving abilities, reduce stress and anxiety, and manage anger.
- *General Social Skills* - students gain skills to meet personal challenges such as overcoming shyness, communicating clearly, building relationships, and avoiding violence.
- *Drug Resistance Skills* - Students build effective defenses against pressures to use tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE:

- Can be implemented into 3rd or 4th grades
- Program consists of 8 class sessions, running 30-45 minutes
- Sessions can be taught 2-3 times/week, or once/week, until program is completed

SESSION FOCUS:

1. *Self-Esteem* – to teach students about self-esteem and how it is developed.
 - Key Skills - sharing thoughts and feelings; reframing thoughts on personal abilities; demonstrating a personal skill to peers.
2. *Decision-Making* – to teach students a simple step-by-step process for making decisions.
 - Key Skills – group decision-making; sharing ideas in a small group.
3. *Smoking Information* – to introduce reasons some people smoke.
 - Key Skills – practicing pulse taking and exercising; small group discussion; questioning; cause and effect reasoning.
4. *Advertising* – to develop an awareness of how tobacco advertisers manipulate advertisements to entice people to smoke.
 - Key Skills – analyzing ad techniques; creating counter-advertisements.
5. *Dealing with Stress* – to teach students to recognize stress and to practice techniques to deal with stress.
 - Key Skills – practicing stretching and deep breathing; finding what works.
6. *Communication Skills* – to teach students how feelings are communicated.
 - Key Skills – group discussion of feeling words and verbal communication; practicing non-verbal communication; practicing “body language.”
7. *Social Skills* – To help students learn ways of building and maintaining friendships.
 - Key Skills – brainstorming/discussion; analysis of terms; sharing perceptions about friendship; drawing, bulletin board.
8. *Assertiveness* – to teach students refusal skills.
 - Key Skills – practicing and analyzing different ways to say “NO”; practicing refusal skills in pairs; practicing in small groups or in front of the class.