

Longitudinal study yields positive results

Results from a nationwide longitudinal effectiveness study show that students who participated in the ySTART™ Program with the PreventPak™ addiction simulator “improved significantly more in attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, intentions, and level of self-control concerning a tobacco addiction than students who received their school’s tobacco education only or had no tobacco education.”

According to researcher Min Qi Wang, Ph.D., University of Maryland, “Results from post-interventions surveys conducted one and three months after program completion show that the ySTART Program with the PreventPak addiction simulator is an effective educational tool in influencing middle school students’ attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, intentions, and level of self-control toward tobacco usage and may be suitable for middle school health education curricula.”

Learn more about the ySTART Program with the PreventPak interactive addiction simulator at www.realityworks.com or www.smokingkids.com. The PreventPak brings lessons about addiction, risky behavior and peer pressure to life. Behavioral conditioning, real-life refusal skills and dynamic activities organized into an easy-to-administer program—life skills for lifelong results!

Educator Feedback



“By using the PreventPak, students realize that they are not in total control; the addiction starts to take control. The realism of the Pak is important. Students that participated in this program had strong negative reactions from people in the community when they had the Pak for the weekend.”

Stacy Bolder
Health and Physical Education Teacher at Tomahawk Middle School
Tomahawk, Wisconsin — site of the first pilot ySTART Program



“[ySTART] allows students to experience first-hand how an addiction interrupts and interferes with all aspects of an individual’s life, and provides an opportunity for students to rehearse how they could resist pressure to use tobacco. Students begin the simulation thinking that it is cool to carry around the PreventPak, and end the weekend never wanting to see it again. Their whole concept of what it means to be a smoker is forever changed.”

Kathleen (Keenie) Bugenhagen
Springville Griffith Institute Middle School, Springville, New York



“As a health educator it is crucial to create ‘real-life’ situations so our students are better equipped to face them out in the real world. The ySTART Program, along with the PreventPak, is the closest experience I’ve seen for students to get a ‘real-life’ effect involving tobacco addiction while providing opportunities to use refusal skills. Students come away with an extremely valuable experience that they won’t forget.”

Ryan Erbe
Felix Festa Middle School, West Nyack, New York

Parent Feedback

These comments were collected by our research staff during testing:

“As much as it annoyed her, the repetition and increasing frequency was beneficial. I think it helped her realize she needs to stand firm against repeated and annoying peer pressure.”

“Because of this experience we’re talking about this habit. I smoke and so does his father, so he’s pushing us to try to quit for our own health and some money savings, too!”

“I believe listening to someone lecture a child not to do drugs is boring. An individual learns much more by going through a simulated experience and has longer realistic effect. I was very impressed with this lesson.”

“Thanks for letting my child experience this. It has helped him in a positive way. It shows him the risks and consequences of smoking cigarettes.”

Student Feedback

“The simulation was annoying but I didn’t know what an addiction was until I did this.”

“I always would say ‘No’ even if it was my best friend who asked me.”

“I will never smoke. I now know that addictions are annoying.”

“I learned that smoking can really get you hooked and I never want to try a cigarette.”

Six Engaging Lessons. One Life-Changing Experience. No More Smoking Kids.

If 6,000 U.S. kids are still trying their first cigarette every day in spite of our best efforts at smoking prevention, we must do more. ySTART prepares youth early, uncovering the truth about tobacco and giving them hands-on skills to make their own decision not to smoke.

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2709 Mondovi Road • Eau Claire, WI 54701 USA
800.830.1416 • +1.715.830.2040
www.realityworks.com