

# Deliver effective alcohol and other drug education

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School staff are best placed to deliver effective alcohol and other drug education to students in all phases of learning.

Alcohol and other drug (AOD) education builds students' resilience by:

- focusing on social and emotional learning
- increasing student knowledge of AOD
- providing students with skills they can use in AOD situations (e.g. drug refusal skills)
- exploring AOD values and attitudes
- encouraging students to be involved with their school and community
- promoting healthier behaviours to prevent, delay or reduce AOD related harms.

Effective AOD education:

- is delivered by classroom teachers with specific knowledge of their students and school
- promotes an evidence-based or evidence-informed, best-practice approach.

Support is available to help school staff deliver effective AOD education including:

- consultancy services to develop a whole-school AOD education plan
- resources which are aligned to the curriculum
- professional learning for classroom teachers.

## Key considerations before you use guest speakers or external organisations

School staff are best-placed to deliver drug education because they build relationships with students throughout their years of schooling. This can offer an opportunity for ongoing learning, skill development and early intervention. These are the key elements of effective health education.

When considering guest speakers or external organisations to deliver presentations, be aware that personal stories of former drug use can:

- have a negative emotional impact on students
- encourage risk taking behaviour
- have limited positive impact on student health or to discourage AOD use.

Before engaging a guest speaker, consider:

- How does the presentation support your whole school AOD plan?
- How does the presentation enhance your existing comprehensive approach to AOD education?
- The evidence base of the presentation. Look for content that:
  - is informed by evidence
  - uses effective approaches to prevention education.
- The content of the presentation in the context of your school and students. Look for content that:
  - delivers age-appropriate information on AOD use
  - is tailored to the individual learning needs of the students.
- The potential impact of the presentation, including:
  - Could students could be negatively impacted by the presentation?
  - How will your school will monitor the impact of the presentation?
  - What support services are in place for students who are negatively impacted by the presentation?

### **Develop a whole-school AOD education plan**

Drug education activities are best understood and practiced as part of a comprehensive and holistic approach to promoting health and wellbeing for all students. Through a whole school approach schools can provide a coherent and consistent framework for their policies, programs and practices. Support is available to develop a drug education plan that includes:

- procedures for incident management and intervention support
- resources to deliver AOD education
- the roles and responsibilities of staff
- the process for when school staff should seek help from external agencies.

### **Access AOD education resources and professional learning**

[Challenges and Choices](#) provides teaching and learning strategies that:

- are classroom ready
- are age-appropriate
- use a resilience approach to AOD education
- are for students in Kindergarten to Year 6 and Years 7 to 9.

[Drug Talk](#) is an interactive, online tool to help build Year 10 to 12 students':

- knowledge about alcohol and other drugs
- personal and social skills to manage and navigate AOD-related risky situations.

School staff can access professional learning to support the delivery of AOD education for all years of schooling. Register for professional learning in [PLIS](#).

### **Contact**

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