

INTRODUCING

This is Not About Drugs: Perspectives

Peer-based Youth Substance Use Prevention Program



Building on the success of the This is Not About Drugs: Opioid prevention program, Overdose Lifeline has created a new youth prevention program which goes beyond opioids to take a comprehensive look at youth substance use prevention, addressing the underlying motivations behind substance use alongside the real risks associated with experimentation.

Overview

Perspectives combines powerful stories from young adults with lived experience and educational insights from subject matter experts, providing both personal perspectives and science-based explanations.

The program offers flexible ways to engage with the curriculum. Youth can access the core learning content through online, self-paced modules or through an in-person/classroom video series. Both options are paired with facilitator-led, peer-based group discussions and activities that encourage youth to reflect, ask questions, share perspectives, and apply what they are learning.

” Peer education defies the conventions of traditional formal education and allows young people to learn by more unstructured means, in more ‘real world’ ways, benefiting from meaningful examples and conversations with their peers.”

— Dodd, et al. 2022, [School-based peer education interventions to improve health](#)

Program Applied Theory

Raise awareness of how accurate and evidence-based information on addiction and substance use encourages non-substance use norms.

Learn from peer experiences around the initiation and progression of substance use and the stages of addiction, ultimately strengthening low-benefit and high-risk perceptions of misuse.

Increase awareness of the roles that peers, coping, family, and environment plays in substance use, initiating student pursuit of help-seeking behavior and self-efficiency.

Understand the role of physical feelings and thoughts in decision-making to reinforce healthy coping responses and self-efficacy in youth.

Program Approach

Perspectives was created in partnership with a team of experts with input from teen advisors. Grounded in peer education, the program reflects how young people learn best - through authentic, relatable experiences and meaningful dialogue.



Storytelling

The program uses narrative storytelling to provide context and meaning, making complex ideas more relatable and easier to understand. By creating emotional connection and deeper engagement, storytelling helps youth visualize concepts in real-world scenarios.



Peer-based

Structured discussion guides promote peer-based dialogue and active participation, reinforcing key concepts through shared learning and reflection. Complementary assignments deepen understanding by engaging youth in collaborative research and applied learning.

Through this combination of storytelling, lived experience, science-based education, and peer discussion, Perspectives helps youth better understand the complexities of substance use and addiction while building empathy, awareness, and skills for informed decision-making.

Implementation

Perspectives is a universal prevention program designed for youth in grades 7–12.

The program is structured into five Perspectives Chapters, each featuring a short film, a companion facilitator discussion guide, and supplemental activities and assignments, and built-in knowledge assessments and pre/post surveys to measure student learning and program impact.

Perspectives is designed to adapt to the needs of different youth-serving settings. Core learning content can be delivered through online, self-paced modules or an in-person/classroom video series, with both pathways supported by facilitator-led peer discussion and activities. Multiple models for the 5 chapters delivery.

This flexible approach allows schools and organizations to build Perspectives into existing schedules, learning environments, and programming while maintaining a consistent educational experience and program objectives.

Perspectives Five Chapters Include:



**Online modules or
In-person video**
15-20 minutes each



Group discussion guides
30 minutes each



**Supplemental activities
and assignments**
optional



**Targets youth in grades 7-12,
with priority on transitional years**



**Companion parent and community
programming available**



**ODL
education**

The Training and Education
Division of **Overdose Lifeline**

Have Questions?
Talk to Our Education Specialists
844-554-3354
learning.overdoselifeline.org



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Program Learning Objectives

Over the course of the complete program, youth will:

- › Understand why using drugs as a teenager makes a person more likely to develop addiction.
- › Recognize various risk factors that can lead a person to choose drug use.
- › Reduce the belief that drug use can be a valuable coping strategy.
- › Reduce shame and stigma of substance use and people with addiction.
- › Recognize physical feelings of emotional responses and identify what makes a coping strategy healthy.



Chapter Learning Objectives

Chapter 1 Escalation

- › How recreational use can quickly escalate to compulsion
- › Definition of addiction
- › How addiction can change motivations
- › Definition, consequences, and examples of stigma
- › Different types of drugs and their effects
- › Proper and improper use of prescriptions

Chapter 3 Chaos

- › Drug use can delay important brain development
- › Tolerance, reliance, and dependence
- › Using one drug makes it more likely to try another
- › Definitions and effects of withdrawals
- › Misuse is possible even with prescribed drugs

Chapter 5 Reflections

- › Addiction as a treatable disease
- › Importance of asking for help
- › Harm reduction techniques
- › Healthy vs. unhealthy coping strategies
- › Resiliency, growth mindset, and self-efficacy

Chapter 2 Vulnerability

- › Trauma and adverse childhood experiences
- › Role of genetics in addiction
- › Drug use impact on brain development
- › Dopamine's role in addiction and drug use
- › Emotional regulation
- › Types and examples of peer pressure
- › Definition and impact of stress

Chapter 4 Isolation

- › Negative consequences of addiction and drug use
- › Impact of drug use on personal identity
- › Effects of addiction on friends and family
- › Connection of mental illness and addiction
- › What happens during an overdose, and how to recognize
- › Effects of naloxone, and how to administer
- › Fentanyl and counterfeit pills

Facilitator Training Process

Get certified to facilitate the program within your community. All training is conducted online. On-site training can be arranged for groups of five or more, with additional travel expenses.

New facilitators will be required to complete two online prerequisite courses (approx. 4-5 hours) to provide informational background needed for implementation.

- Brain and Disease of Addiction
- Removing the Shame and Stigma of Substance Use Disorder

Upon completing the prerequisite courses, trainees will join a virtual training session in which implementation processes are covered. This training session takes approximately 4 hours.

Program Fees

Fees: \$675 per person, includes

- \$200 license per person (group licenses available)
- \$400 training and continued technical support
- \$75 online prerequisite courses (2)

Requires Annual License Renewal

Program Discounts

- 15% for 6+ facilitators
- 15% for multi-program purchases
(discounts cannot be combined)

CONTACT US TODAY!

Ask us about our other youth prevention, family, and community programs.

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Companion Youth Prevention Programs

This is Not About Drugs: Opioids / Fentanyl Prevention Program

Features personal stories from 12 young people with lived experience and offers an interactive, guided group discussion that helps youth explore the risks associated with opioids—including prescription pain medications, fentanyl, heroin, and the dangers of fentanyl-laced street drugs and counterfeit pills. overdose.

PreVenture Mental Health and Early Intervention Youth Program

An evidence-based prevention program that uses personality targeted interventions to promote mental health and skill development and delay youth substance use. The program is designed for youth ages 12–18 and helps them build coping skills set meaningful long-term goals, and better understand how their personality influences their choices

EXPLORE all of our youth and family programming

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