

EQUIPPING YOUTH is a risk avoidance, primary prevention, positive youth development program for middle and high school students that enhances good decision making skills. It cultivates protective factors in teens by building youth development assets and enhancing self-regulation, motivating and equipping teens to make healthy choices in the five key high risk areas of drugs, alcohol, sexual activity, violence and tobacco/nicotine and builds students' developmental assets, enhancing successful life and academic achievement through intentional goal planning and implementation. Lessons are designed to include all four learning modalities and incentives enhance long term retention.

Session I: SMART GOALS

Key Word: FUTURE

Activities are designed to get students thinking about future in the short as well as long term. Students will learn the importance of writing SMART goals for the short and long term. They will also learn about choices they make that could hinder them from accomplishing their goals.

Session II : RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES

Key Word: CHOICES

Activities are designed to continue the theme that choices have consequences. Students are made aware of the potential consequences of risky choices, particularly in the area of Drugs, Alcohol, Sexual Activity, Violence and Tobacco, including vaping and E cigarettes.

Session III: SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

Key Word: MANIPULATION

Students learn what messages they are getting from all their media sources and how this social pressure can encourage them to make unhealthy choices. They learn how to process the unhealthy messages that encourage risky behaviors, particularly substance abuse, human trafficking and bullying and learn that contrary to media messaging, "Everyone is not doing 'it!'"

Session IV: PEER PRESSURE AND BOUNDARIES

Key Word: RESPECT

Students learn how to resist peer and social pressure, assertiveness techniques to avoid being pressured into risky behaviors and the difference between peers and friends. Students learn safe methods to stop/prevent bullying.

Session V: HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Key Word: COMMITMENT

Students learn signs of healthy versus unhealthy relationships both in friendship and romantic situations. They also learn appropriate ways to distance themselves from unhealthy relationships that pressure them into making unhealthy choices. Students learn the importance of making a commitment to themselves to make healthy choices and focus on their future.