

NEW D.A.R.E. "TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE"

National Prevention Study Supports Value of D.A.R.E. Delivery Network

~ Study Findings Highlight Role of D.A.R.E. Officers~

A new D.A.R.E. research-driven curriculum known as "TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE" is now in the fifth and final year of evaluation by leading prevention experts at the University of Akron. With funding from the world's largest health care philanthropy, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, over 19,000 students in six cities have been monitored from the 7th through 11th grades with regular surveys on attitudes and behaviors.

Preliminary study findings show that instructor type matters to teens. Police instructors were perceived as more credible than non-police instructors. In addition to examining the impact of the new curricula for D.A.R.E., the study also was interested in the degree to which the D.A.R.E. officers delivered the curricula as designed. D.A.R.E. officers' delivery of program content ranked in the very high end of the range as compared to other studies, which suggests that D.A.R.E. officers are equal to, and in some cases, better than other types of instructors in delivering substance abuse prevention programs as designed.

According to Dr. Sloboda, the principal investigator of the study, "The D.A.R.E. network has the ability to rapidly diffuse through national training new and effective prevention programs and to monitor the quality of delivery," says Sloboda, "Simply put, there is no comparable national prevention delivery network like D.A.R.E. in the US."

The five-year study, (formally known as the Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention Study) is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is one of the nation's largest and most comprehensive prevention research effort to date. It is currently underway in six U.S. cities—Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Newark (NJ), New Orleans, and St. Louis. It involves over 19,000 students from 83 high schools and their 122 middle schools. These high schools and middle schools were randomly assigned to receive the program or to a control group for comparison purposes. Final study results will be available in late 2006.

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