



An Evidence-based Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Education Intervention Program

Executive Summary

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Problem: Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States. Four out of every five persons who use tobacco begin before they reach adulthood. Tobacco prevention activities should focus on school-age children and adolescents.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Solution: Project Breathe™ is a web-based tobacco prevention education and cessation program that meets the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC's) Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs, and the requirement of **No Child Left Behind** federal law that requires only curriculum products based on scientific research be selected to bolster student achievement. **Project Breathe** is an evidence-based education program that is emerging as a significant tool that increases student understanding of cardiovascular and respiratory health and modifies student behaviors and attitudes regarding tobacco and smoking.

Supplemental Curriculum and Enrichment: **Project Breathe** is aligned with national standards for health and physical education, science, language arts and math. **Project Breathe** also serves as a resource for school nurses, coaches, athletic trainers and student assistance programs to reduce tobacco initiation among school-age youth. **Project Breathe** has been scientifically designed in accordance with the phases of critical inquiry: initiation, exploration, integration, testing the hypothesis. (Garrison, Anderson and Archer 2000)

Coordinated School Health: **Project Breathe** enables schools to implement a coordinated school health approach to tobacco control through its multi-disciplinary curriculum, parental involvement, staff health improvement and integration with community programs. On-site and online professional development and instructional support are available.

Results: **Project Breathe** users stated fewer intentions to smoke cigarettes after completion of the **Project Breathe** activities than before exposure to the online learning tool. Results also show new student learning was demonstrated in the academic areas of scientific problem solving, smokeless tobacco, and spirometry, a medical lung health assessment screening device. Youth who completed 8 or more sessions of tobacco education were less likely to have intentions toward using tobacco products than students who completed no sessions and those who completed between 1 and 5 sessions, suggesting a dose effect. Qualitative data from the sample provide support for **Project Breathe**. There are many positive testimonials that the project influences youth behaviors.

Conclusion: **Project Breathe** has been shown to be an evidenced based program with promise to make measurable differences in attitude, behavior, and educational outcomes based on its unique content, validated format, and innovative design.