Positive Choices
Drug and Alcohol Information
Get informed, stay smart, stay safe

Recommended program

OurFutures: MDMA & Emerging Drugs Module



Evidence ratings:

This resource is supported by multiple published studies. See our Help/Q&A section for more details.

Year: Year 9–10

Targeted Drugs: Emerging Drugs (“Legal Highs”), MDMA/Ecstasy

Tags: OurFutures, Climate Schools, social influence approach, harm minimisation, "party drugs"

Time Allocated: 1-6 lessons

Links to National Curriculum:
ACPPS089 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS090 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS091 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS092 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS093 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS094 (Yr 9–10), ACPPS095 (Yr 9–10), AC9HP10P01 (Yr 9-10), AC9HP10P02 (Yr 9-10), AC9HP10P08 (Yr 9-10), AC9HP10P09 (Yr 9-10), AC9HP10P10 (Yr 9-10)

Origin: Australian

Cost:
Costs Involved

Available

The OurFutures programs are managed by the OurFutures Institute, a not-for-profit joint venture between Climate Schools and the University of Sydney.
Click below to be directed to the OurFutures website for information on accessing the programs.

Access OurFutures

Developers

OurFutures was developed by researchers currently based at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney, Australia, formerly based at the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), School of Psychiatry, and the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use at UNSW Sydney.

Format

This curriculum-aligned online program is designed to be administered by teachers within classrooms. The program involves 4 x 40-minute lessons, each with two components:

- A 20-minute computer-based component
- Teacher delivered classroom activities

The OurFutures: MDMA and Emerging Drugs Module is designed to be implemented during Year 10 Health and Physical Education classes (can also be run in Year 11 as a wellbeing initiative). No specialist teacher training is required.

Summary

The OurFutures: MDMA and Emerging Drugs module was developed for 15-17 year-olds and aims to prevent and reduce drug use and related harms. Designed to be implemented within the school health curriculum, OurFutures is based on a social influence approach to prevention and uses cartoon storylines to engage and maintain student interest and involvement.

Students follow four episodes of an online cartoon-based drama about a group of teenagers and their experiences with MDMA and emerging drugs to impart information about these substances. The cartoons are designed to equip students with the skills needed to reduce drug-related harms, stay safe, refuse drugs and resist peer pressure. Through the storyline, students learn about MDMA and emerging drugs, the impact on relationships and finances, the dangers of mixing MDMA with alcohol or other drugs, the law, and effective communication and refusal skills.

Stop & Think activities are embedded in the cartoons and each episode includes a short quiz to assess and consolidate learning. The class and homework activities are designed to reinforce the material taught in the cartoon and encourage students to apply the preventative messages and practice skills. Feedback indicates that teachers and students enjoy the program, and implementation within the classroom environment is highly feasible.

Training and Costs

Pricing is based on student enrolment numbers. Contact the OurFutures team for more information and pricinghere.

Expected Benefits

Studies that have tested this resource (see sources below) have found evidence for the following benefits:

- Reduces intention to use emerging drugs
- Increases knowledge of MDMA and emerging drugs

Evidence Base

The OurFutures program was evaluated, and the evidence was published, using the name Climate Schools. Benefits of the OurFutures: MDMA & Emerging Drugs Module have been demonstrated in Australia in one research trial, published in the two papers below. The OurFutures programs have also been endorsed by a number of organisations as listed below.

Sources

Champion, K.E., Newton, N. C., Stapinski, L. A., Teesson, M. (2018). Cluster randomised controlled trial of an online intervention to prevent ecstasy and new psychoactive substance use among adolescents: Final results and implications for implementation. *BMJ Open*, 8, 020433.

Champion, K.E., Newton, N. C., Stapinski, L. A., Teesson, M. (2016). Effectiveness of a universal internet-based prevention program for ecstasy and new psychoactive substances: a cluster randomized controlled trial. *Addiction,* 111, 1396-1405.

The OurFutures programs received a three-star rating from the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) following their comprehensivesystematic review of alcohol education programs. OurFutures was the only Australian program to receive the maximum evidence rating.

The OurFutures programs were recognised at the 2014 Society of Mental Health Research conference with the Australian Rotary Health Knowledge Dissemination award.

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