Climate Schools: Ecstasy and 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”), “Party Drugs”/MDMA/Ecstasy
Tags: 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)

Origin: Australian
Cost: Costs Involved

Developers
NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use, National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW.

Available
Access Climate Schools

Format
This curriculum-based online program is designed to be administered by teachers within classrooms. The program involves 4 x 40-minute lessons, each with 3 components:

• A 20-minute computer-based component
• Teacher-led lesson summaries
• Teacher delivered classroom activities

The Climate Schools: Ecstasy and Emerging Drugs Module is designed to be implemented during Year 10 Health and Physical Education classes. No specialist teacher training is required.

Summary
The Climate Schools: Ecstasy and Emerging Drugs module was developed for 15-16 year-olds and aims to prevent and reduce drug use and related harms. Designed to be implemented within the school health curriculum, Climate Schools 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 ecstasy 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 ecstasy and emerging drugs, the impact on relationships and finances, the dangers of mixing pills with alcohol or other drugs, the law, and effective communication and refusal skills.

Each episode includes a short quiz to assess and consolidate learning, and allow students to reflect on drug-related situations. The class and homework activities are designed to reinforce the material taught in the cartoon and encourage students to apply the preventative messages and skills. Feedback indicates that teachers and students enjoy the program, and implementation within the classroom environment is highly feasible.

Training and Costs
There are costs associated with the Climate Schools programs. Refer to the website for registration and subscription details.

Benefits
• Reduces intention to use emerging drugs
• Increases knowledge of ecstasy and emerging drugs

Evidence Base
Benefits of the Climate Schools Ecstasy & Emerging Drugs module have been demonstrated in Australia in the following research study:


The Climate Schools programs received a three-star rating from the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) following their comprehensive systematic review of alcohol education programs. Climate School was the only Australian program to receive the maximum evidence rating.
The Climate Schools programs were recognised at the 2014 Society of Mental Health Research conference with the Australian Rotary Health Knowledge Dissemination award.