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

Game

PlaySmart



Evidence ratings:

This resource has undergone expert review. See our Help/Q&A section for more details.

Year: Year 11–12
Targeted Drugs: Drugs (General), Heroin, Prescription Medication
Tags:
Time Allocated: 1-6 lessons
Origin: International
Cost:
Costs Involved

Available

PlaySmart is available through Playbl.

Access 'PlaySmart'

Developers

The play2PREVENT Lab at the Yale Centre for Health and Learning Games, Yale University.

Summary

PlaySmart is a game aimed at preventing opioid misuse among adolescents aged 16-19 years. In the game players complete six storylines that provide knowledge, skills, and mental health resources. PlaySmart aims to build coping, refusal, and communication skills to address opioid use and substance use more broadly.

Whilst developed for an American audience PlaySmart is still highly applicable to Australian adolescents, though students may be unfamiliar with some of the terms used. Information about local support services may compliment the game, such as the 'Where to get help' page on Positive Choices.

Format

The game includes 6 different storylines to complete with total game time of approximately 6-8 hours. Players are not required to finish the game in one sitting.

Expected Benefits

- Increased knowledge and understanding of the effects of opioid misuse.
- Increased self-efficacy and decision-making skills.

Evidence Base

PlaySmart has been developed by researchers at the Yale Centre for Health and Learning Games in consultation with adolescents and school-based health care providers. The content is factual and was informed by the health belief model, the theory of planned behaviour, and social cognitive theory.

Potential benefits associated with playing PlaySmart are currently being evaluated in a randomised controlled trial. A protocol and development paper are available.

Pendergrass Boomer, T. M., Hoerner, L. A., Fernandes, C. F., Maslar, A., Aiudi, S., Kyriakides, T. C., & Fiellin, L. E. (2023). A digital health game to prevent opioid misuse and promote mental health in adolescents in school-based health settings: Protocol for the PlaySmart game randomized controlled trial. *PloS one, 18*(9), e0291298.

Aneni, K., Fernandes, C. F., Hoerner, L. A., Szapary, C., Pendergrass Boomer, T. M., & Fiellin, L. E. (2023). A Video Game Intervention to Prevent Opioid Misuse Among Older Adolescents: Development and Preimplementation Study. *JMIR serious games, 11*, e46912.

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