Protecting You/Protecting Me®

Protecting You/Protecting Me® (PY/PM) is a 5-year, classroom-based alcohol-use prevention curriculum for elementary students in grades one through five (6 to 11 years old). Designed to reduce alcohol-related injury and death in our Nation's youth, PY/PM—

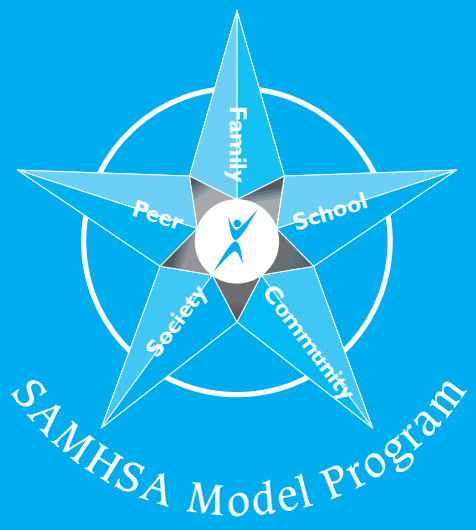
- Is proven to change children's knowledge about their brains and personal development
- Increases children's intentions not to ride with an impaired driver
- Improves children's vehicle safety skills—their ability to protect themselves when they have no option but to ride with an adult who is not alcohol-free

Because the program is delivered in elementary school, it reaches children before they have fully formed their attitudes toward alcohol. The curriculum—

- Incorporates the latest research on human brain development
- Focuses on the immediate risks of using alcohol before age 21
- Includes parental involvement activities

The program can be taught by trained high school students, as well as by teachers, with high school student teachers deriving short-term outcomes including reduced alcohol use and increased perceptions of the risks of underage alcohol use.

All program materials are available in English and Spanish.



Effective Substance Abuse and Mental Health Programs for Every Community

Proven Results*

Elementary students receiving PY/PM showed a—

- 51% increase in vehicle safety skills
- 56% increase in knowledge about the brain
- 9% increase in media literacy

High school students teaching PY/PM—

- Reduced use of liquor 64%
- Reduced use of beer 45%
- Reduced use of wine coolers 42%; wine 17%
- Reduced binge drinking 72%
- Showed a 32% increase in perceptions of the harmfulness of underage alcohol use

** Elementary school results relative to control groups.*

INTERVENTION

Universal

Selective

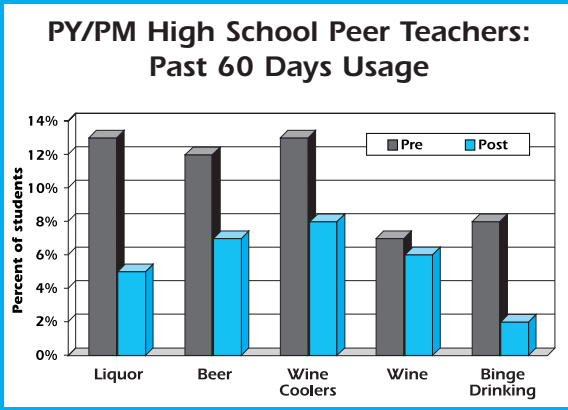
Indicated

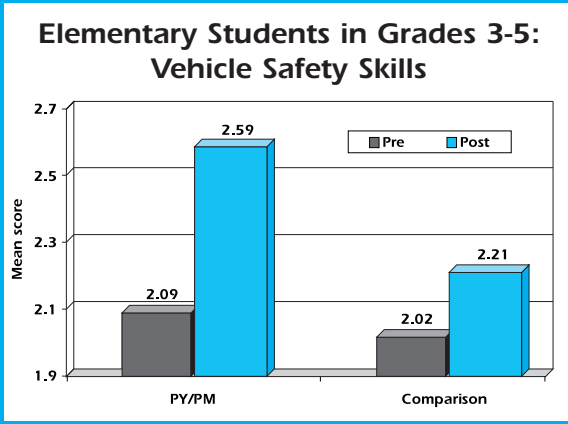
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
www.samhsa.gov

Outcomes

Elementary students receiving PY/PM relative to controls showed:

- Increased vehicle safety skills—ability to protect themselves when they have no option but to ride with an impaired driver
- Increased media literacy and ability to resist advertising appeals
- Increased knowledge about the brain and personal development
- Increased stress management and decisionmaking skills





INTENDED POPULATION

The intended population for PY/PM is the universal population of students enrolled in grades one through five in elementary school. (PY/PM is designed to be taught each year over a 5-year period as students progress from first to fifth grades.) PY/PM is applicable to children from all socio-economic, racial/ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. More than 3,500 students in elementary schools in California, Connecticut, Guam, Michigan, Montana, and Texas have participated in PY/PM, including students living on Tribal Reservations. Currently, more than 2,000 students in Montana, New Mexico, and Texas are participating in two different evaluation studies, initiated in 1998.

BENEFITS

- Increases non-use attitudes and decisions regarding underage alcohol use
- Increases knowledge about the human brain and immediate risks posed by exposure to alcohol during development
- Increases awareness of the law and positive attitudes toward the use of rules and laws
- Increases refusal and self-protection skills with regard to riding with impaired (unsafe) drivers
- Increases media literacy and ability to resist advertising appeals
- Increases stress management and decisionmaking skills

HOW IT WORKS

Protecting You/Protecting Me is a 5-year continuum of interactive classroom modules providing 42 lessons (8 lessons in each of grades one through four and 10 in grade five) and 40 required reinforcement activities (8 in each grade) that promote students' ownership. PY/PM is designed to be infused into a school's core curriculum, and each lesson carefully integrates several standard educational objectives, including those related to health behaviors and information, personal and interpersonal skills, and identifying influencing factors.

Trained school staff, prevention specialists, or high school students enrolled in a peer mentor/leadership course can teach the lessons, which last from 30 to 50 minutes, depending on the grade. The curriculum addresses eight topics:

- Our Brain
- Growth and Development
- Health and Safety
- Rules and Laws
- Friends

- Choices and Decisions
- Media Awareness
- Communication (especially with adults)

PY/PM's interactive and affective teaching processes include role-play, small group and classroom discussion, reading, writing, story telling, surveys, art, and music. All 42 lessons are correlated to educational achievement objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

Successful replication of the PY/PM model requires:

- Student involvement from first through fifth grades
- PY/PM lessons taught once or twice a week over the course of 8 weeks
- Teacher- or high school peer leader-training prior to curriculum implementation
- Curriculum reinforcement using parent involvement activities

Program Materials

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) offers an implementation manual for each grade level with step-by-step instructions for completing each lesson. Program materials also include:

- Full-color classroom posters
- Three *Big Book* story books for use in first grade
- Copy of 5 Rules For Safe Riding Poster
- Evaluation materials, including online access
- Fidelity assessment checklist to monitor implementation quality

Training and Technical Assistance

MADD can provide training of classroom teachers, counselors, prevention specialists, high school peer leaders, teachers of high school peer leaders, or others providing prevention services to schools. Technical assistance is provided through a special PY/PM online link.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

In September 1998, MADD changed its mission statement to include prevention of underage drinking. With this change, MADD began examining how it could make a significant contribution to the substance abuse prevention field. Protecting You/Protecting Me was developed by MADD in response to requests from educators and community volunteers for an alcohol-use prevention program for elementary school students that could be infused into the core curriculum and that also addressed the risks posed to

children as passengers riding with alcohol-impaired drivers. MADD developed PY/PM, from the outset, to include the latest brain research, provide science-based evaluation, meet SAMHSA Model Program standards, and provide all curriculum and training materials necessary for national replication.

EVALUATION DESIGN

PY/PM was developed based on initial field tests and three pilot tests using different modes of delivery: classroom teachers, MADD volunteers with education backgrounds, and high school peer leaders.

PY/PM has been tested in two evaluation studies. One study, in which high school peer leaders teach PY/PM to elementary school students, a pre-post followup experimental design with random assignment of classes was used. This study is now in its third year in 28 sites in Texas and involves more than 4,000 students. In the second study, using matched comparison design, classroom teachers provide the curriculum. Approximately 3,000 students in grades one through five in 10 selected schools in Montana, New Mexico, and Texas have participated in this study, now in its fourth year.

All evaluations have assessed known mediating variables, including decision-making, stress management, social skills, media literacy, and use of rules, in addition to factors related to underage alcohol use, drinking and driving, riding with alcohol-impaired drivers, vehicle safety skills, and knowledge about the brain and personal development. Alcohol use has also been assessed among the high school students teaching PY/PM.

PROGRAM DEVELOPER

Kappie Bliss, M.Ed., LPC

For more than 25 years, Kappie Bliss, executive director of Bliss, Inc. and the director of elementary projects for MADD, has been involved in substance abuse prevention. She has served as the project director for the development of PY/PM, guiding the process from inception through development, evaluation, and implementation. Other project team members are Karen Williams, M.S.W., PY/PM curriculum developer, and Mary Lou Bell, M.A., M.B.A., president of The Bell Group, PY/PM evaluator. Ms. Bliss is known for her ability to be a bridge between research and the field, and creates materials that are both effective and user-friendly. She has extensive experience working with schools, communities, tribes, social service providers, and State and Federal agencies.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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RECOGNITION

Model Program—Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Statewide Replication Program

Endorsed by the National Elementary Principals Association

Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics