



*Effective Substance Abuse and
Mental Health Programs
for Every Community*

Too Good For Drugs

Too Good For Drugs (TGFD) is a school-based prevention program proven to reduce the intention to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs in middle and high school students. Developed by the Mendez Foundation for use with students in kindergarten through 12th grades (5 to 18 years old), TGFD has a separate, developmentally appropriate curriculum for each grade level, and is designed to develop:

- Personal and interpersonal skills relating to alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use
- Appropriate attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use
- Knowledge of the negative consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and benefits of a drug-free lifestyle
- Positive peer norms

The program's highly interactive teaching methods encourage students to bond with prosocial peers, and engage students through role-play, cooperative learning, games, small group activities, and class discussions. Students have many opportunities to participate and receive recognition for involvement. TGFD also impacts students through a family component used in each grade level: "Home Workouts" in kindergarten through 8th grade, and "Home Pages" in high school.

INTENDED POPULATION

TGFD is intended for kindergarten through twelfth grade students, 5 to 18 years old. It was developed in Hillsborough County (Tampa), FL, the Nation's twelfth largest school district, and tested there in six middle schools. The program was later tested in three Hillsborough County high

Proven Results*

TGFD* reduced students' intentions to:

- Smoke cigarettes: middle school 33%; high school 58%
- Drink alcohol: middle school 38%; high school 50%
- Smoke marijuana: middle school 25%; high school 45%
- Fight: high school 45%

** Compared to students in control groups.*

INTERVENTION

Universal

Selective

Indicated



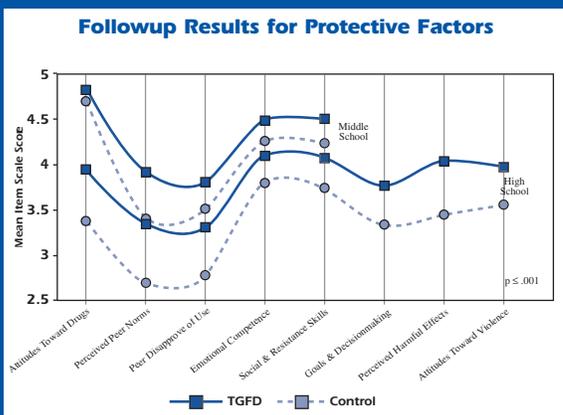
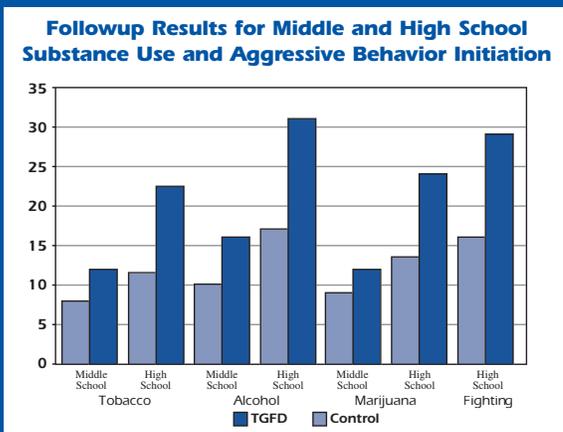
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
www.samhsa.gov

OUTCOMES

Each of the five studies showed positive effects on other risk and protective factors relating to student alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and violence, including significant increases ($p \leq .001$) in:

- Attitudes toward drugs
- Attitudes toward violence
- Perceived peer norms
- Peer disapproval of use
- Emotional competence
- Social and resistance skills
- Goals and decisionmaking
- Perceived harmful effects

Positive effects on substance use and protective factors continued to be seen both short- and long-term. Outcomes in comparison to controls include significant increases in students' protective factors ($p \leq .001$).



schools and all Lake County, FL, high schools. Through this testing, TGFD was proven effective with African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, and White students in rural, urban, and suburban areas.

BENEFITS

- Reduces risk and enhances protective factors that affect alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use
- Reduces intentions to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs
- Develops more appropriate attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs
- Improves decisionmaking, goal setting, and peer resistance
- Increases friendships with peers less likely to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs

HOW IT WORKS

TGFD consists of sequential curricula, developmentally appropriate to each grade level, which builds on skills learned in the previous years. While one year of TGFD has produced measurable positive effects, multi-year programming prevents or reduces degradation of these effects. For maximum effectiveness, TGFD should be implemented each school year. TGFD uses proven, research-based strategies, including:

- **Multilesson, Multigrade-Level Programming:** 10 lessons per grade level, kindergarten through 8th grade; 26 high school lessons, with 14 core lessons delivered in the same class and 12 infusion lessons included in other academic classes, all over the course of a single grade level.
- **Normative Education:** provides accurate information about the percentage of youth that use drugs and the percentage that would disapprove if their friends used drugs.
- **Information on Harmful Effects of Drug Use:** raises students' perception of risk.
- **Prosocial Skills Development:** features goal setting, decisionmaking, coping, communication, and peer refusal skills.
- **Diverse Role-Play Situations:** relating to alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and associated problem behaviors provide many opportunities for practice.
- **Cooperative Learning:** promotes prosocial skills and academic development.
- **Parental Involvement:** promotes discussion and reinforces concepts and skills students learn in TGFD.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

For successful implementation, TGFD requires skilled, committed, enthusiastic teachers who personally exhibit the attributes encouraged by TGFD, e.g., non-smokers and non-substance abusers, possessing positive social skills, showing empathy and kindness.

For maximum effectiveness, teachers should deliver:

- One lesson per week for 10 weeks (K-8th grade) and “Home Workouts” for parents
- One lesson per week for 14 weeks (in one high school grade level) or twice a week, if needed, and “Home Pages” for parents
- Twelve high school infusion lessons within subject areas

To attain the best result, each school should:

- Conduct a needs assessment
- Set measurable goals and objectives
- Appoint a schoolwide TGFD coordinator and grade-level coordinators, if desired
- Plan program implementation
- Conduct “TGFD & Violence—Educators” staff development workshop or present overview of TGFD for faculty, and teacher training
- Observe lessons; provide feedback; conduct process evaluations
- Conduct pre- and posttests
- Write evaluation report; recommend implementation changes, if needed

Staff and Administrative Support

Ideally, implementation begins with “Too Good for Drugs & Violence—Educators,” a 10-hour staff development program attended by all school personnel—from teachers and secretaries to janitors and food service workers. This course is designed to evaluate and improve school and classroom climate, establish positive norms, and increase students’ bonding with the teacher and school. At minimum, begin with an overview of TGFD for the entire school staff.

Training/Technical Assistance

One- or two-day teacher/staff training on how to use each grade-specific curriculum is strongly recommended. Training and technical support are provided by The Mendez Foundation.

Resources/Materials

TGFD includes 10 lessons (kindergarten–8th grade), a 14-lesson core curriculum plus 12 infusion lessons in high school, and 10 staff development sessions. Each grade-level kit includes a scripted curriculum, participant

HERE'S PROOF PREVENTION WORKS

workbooks, and teaching materials. Each lesson includes rationale, objectives, materials list, recommended resources, lesson extenders, and a “Home Workout” or “Home Pages” for parents.

Space, Equipment, and Resource Requirements

TGFD is designed for a classroom with a cassette player and overhead projector. Staff-to-program participant ratio is 1 teacher for 30 to 35 students.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Mendez Foundation began providing drug prevention education in Hillsborough County, FL, in 1978. TGFD began as a sixth-grade program taught in a single school. Since then, it has become a comprehensive K-12 program.

After a national television documentary featured TGFD and other promising programs in 1983, the Foundation received calls from leaders around the country who wanted to replicate the program in their own communities. In response, the Foundation began to publish manuals and offer curriculum training and training of trainers. Revised in 1998, to incorporate leading-edge research, TGFD has been implemented in more than 2,500 districts nationwide.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Five studies conducted by independent evaluator Tina Bacon have examined TGFD's effectiveness in reducing adolescents' intention to use tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana, reducing fighting, and strengthening protective and resiliency factors. All of the studies examined pretest equivalence between treatment and control groups; potential bias of loss of student data over time; quality of program implementation; and estimates of reliability and validity of assessment tools.

Middle school studies used a repeated measures treatment-control group design. Middle schools from the Hillsborough County school district were stratified based on location, size, academic performance, and socioeconomic status. Sixth-grade students (n = 1,318) were pre- and posttested following the delivery of the TGFD program, 20 weeks, and 1 year later.

High school studies used a pretest/posttest randomized design. Sample populations included students from one large high school from the Nation's 12th largest school district (n = 201) and students from six high schools in a small, rural Florida school district (n = 303).

PROGRAM DEVELOPER

The Mendez Foundation is a not-for-profit organization nationally recognized as an innovative leader in prevention education. Since 1978, the Foundation has been dedicated to helping adults and children develop the skills to live safe, healthy, balanced lives. The staff includes 25 teachers/prevention specialists, trainers, a researcher, and a curriculum development team. Administrators have master of education degrees and certified addiction prevention professional certification. Hundreds of thousands of students nationwide have successfully completed Mendez Foundation prevention programs.

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RECOGNITION

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

Department of Health and Human Services

Excellence in Prevention—American Medical Association

Shining Star Award—Southeastern Drug-Free Schools

First Place in Prevention—Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association/Department of Children and Families Best Practices Conference