

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PREVENTION FIRST
Building community capacity to prevent substance abuse

TIP SHEET

LIONS QUEST SKILLS FOR ADOLESCENCE: IMPLEMENTATION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence is a comprehensive positive youth development and prevention program that promotes social and emotional learning, addresses developmental assets, and targets risk and protective factors.

Skills for Adolescence is designed for grades 6-8 and consists of a total of 99 sequential 45-minute lessons, which are arranged into units. The program can be implemented in a variety of settings and formats. *Lions Quest* actively promotes the use of a three year implementation schedule, which affords booster lessons, continuous practice and skill-building throughout the middle school years.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ILLINOIS SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROVIDERS

To meet implementation standards, Illinois substance abuse prevention providers must implement 14 lessons during year one of the program and 12 lessons during year two of the program. To identify which specific lessons are required please contact CPRD or your Provider Network Specialist at Prevention First. Lessons can be implemented once or twice a week, with each lesson lasting 45 minutes.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Lions Quest highlights four phases to effectively teach each lesson: Discovering, Connecting, Practicing, and Applying. While each phase is essential to anchor learning and equip students to apply their new skills, the Discovering phase extends through every lesson for the duration of the program.

The purpose of the Discovering phase is to find out what students already know about the topic. Discovery is central to connecting with students in a meaningful way and effectively delivering the lesson. Discovery means meeting the student where they are and using that information to move them forward.

PREPARING TO TEACH THE PROGRAM

The following tips will help maximize the success and interaction of the *Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence* sessions.

- **Put some thought into arranging the classroom.** A way to increase participation and allow students to feel included in the discussions is to have students sit so everyone can see each other. Placing desks in a circle or rectangle can promote student interaction with both the teacher and other students.

- **Learn student’s names and use them often.** Make this a goal of your first lesson. You can share this goal with students and ask them to help you with your goal. Students will notice if you address some by name and others in a general fashion, so don’t underestimate the importance of knowing who they are.
- **Use open-ended questions.** Open-ended questions allow students to stop and consider what the question means to them and demonstrates the teacher’s interest in their perspective.
- **Give students time to think about questions before responding.** Allow time for students to fully develop their answers before eliciting a response. A good rule of thumb is 7-10 seconds, or simply take 3-4 breaths before prompting students for answers.
- **Don’t ask “why.”** Asking students “why” can put them on the spot or make them feel defensive. Using more neutral phrases for feedback such as, “how come” or “what do you think,” will promote open communication.
- **Be a model for open communication.** Always demonstrate positive, open, respectful communication skills with students. Ask the students to pay attention to the ways you communicate and tell everyone when they notice a communication skill they like.
- **Promote the lesson purpose.** You can write the lesson purpose on the dry erase board or project it onto a screen using your computer and projector or smart board. This should be done every lesson. It allows students to refocus the content of the discussion with the overall subject matter.
- **Use a “right to pass” policy.** In the spirit of mutual respect, students should know they have a right to pass when being asked for their feelings or opinions. This validates a student’s ability to act assertively.
- **Respond with respect.** When responding to students, avoid the tempting habit to repeat their answers to the group. Instead ask “did everyone hear that” and if not, ask the student to repeat their response if necessary.
- **Accept multiple answers when appropriate.** Accepting several responses from students reinforces a respect for many different perspectives. However, be sure to correct misinformation.
- **Use classroom energizers.** Energizers are brief activities that can help a group get acquainted, spark a discussion, reinforce a concept, change the pace, or bring closure to an activity. Each unit lists energizers that relate to the unit topic, but many of these activities can be used throughout the program.
- **Utilize the teacher materials and program support materials provided in the Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence curriculum:** The above teaching strategies are provided in the teacher materials for the curriculum along with many other strategies intended to help create a positive classroom, confidence in the teaching materials, and a deeper understanding behind the rationale and conceptual model for the Lions Quest program.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information about technical assistance or the services we offer, please contact providerservices@prevention.org or call 217-836-5346.

SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices – NREPP www.nrepp.samhsa.gov

Lions Quest Internet Support and Resources – www.lions-quest.org

Lions Quest Skills for *Adolescence curriculum*

Lions Quest Curriculum and Implementation Assistance

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