NCADD
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

SPOTLIGHT: NCADD Middlesex Develops New Media Literacy Program

---

We're Not Buying It (WNBI) is an original, research-based prevention education program developed by NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. to provide a media literacy program targeting middle school age students in grades 6-8.

It was developed with the goal of preventing or at least delaying the onset of alcohol, marijuana, and non-medical prescription drug use, and to prevent bullying.

WNBI capitalizes on the fact that today's middle school students have spent their entire lives surrounded by various types of media. The program takes the perspective that the media is a significant source of misinformation for young people, so WNBI uses the media to provide true information. Whereas previous media literacy programs relied solely on print media,

WNBI is the first to focus solely on digital audio/visual media. Multiple learning styles are incorporated into each lesson of the curriculum –just as the media uses multiple formats and techniques to sell their "product" to youth. WNBI is comprised of six lessons.

Each lesson is approximately 38-45 minutes in length to correspond with class times for students. Media and other spheres of influence are addressed in two sessions.

Topics on various types of substance use and bullying are addressed through the lens of a different form of media:

- Marijuana - Music
- Alcohol – Movies
- Prescription Drugs – Internet, Email, Pop-Ups
- Bullying – YouTube and Social Media

The program is grounded in Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior, a theory of health behavior change that has been well-supported by research spanning a variety of behaviors including alcohol and other substance use. The theory posits that behavioral intention is a critical determinant of

behavior, and that behavioral intent is influenced by an individual's attitude toward a behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control.

At its core, the rationale of WNBI is to help students understand how normative messages reach them, the truth behind the messages portrayed and how to make their own choices by being educated media consumers.

With a proper understanding of the marketing messages directed toward today's youth to engage in unhealthy behaviors, students are able to resist those messages and make decisions based on accurate facts and say with confidence, "**We're not buying it**!"

!" WNBI 2.0 WE'RE NOT BUYING IT

WNBI was accepted into SAMHSA's (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) Service to Science Academy in 2012 and an additional technical assistance award was granted to NCADD by SAMHSA in 2013 to expand our evaluation capacity.

A preliminary evaluation was conducted by the Rutgers School of Social Work in March 2014 to analyze the impact of a WNBI implementation for 114 seventh grade students during the 2012-2013 school year. The evaluation identified several statistically-significant positive outcomes related to participation in the WNBI program.

NCADD CEO & Executive Director Steve Liga will be presenting research findings at the 27th Annual NPN Prevention Research Conference scheduled for September 15 – 18 in Hartford, CT.

Students developed more realistic perceptions of the number of peers engaging in substance use and bullying behavior, compared to self reports of actual behavior. Findings also indicated a statistically-significant reduction in the influence of peers on participants' substance use and bullying behavior. The third promising finding was an increased ability to identify a pro-use message in a popular song.

Finally, the most promising finding was that participants were more likely to react proactively to media messages promoting substance use and/or bullying after completing the program. Posttest responses showed that they were significantly less likely to not do anything, more likely to turn off

the radio and more likely to refuse to buy a song if it contained a favorable substance use message. This suggests that students gained valuable skills that would help them to refuse media messages about substance use and bullying outcomes.

For more information about WNBI please contact Steve Liga,
Executive Director at NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. at steve@ncadd-middlesex.org

NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.
152 Tices Lane, East Brunswick, NJ 08816
732-254-3344
(Fax) 732-254-4224
www.ncadd-middlesex.org
Email: mail@ncadd-middlesex.org