

**SPOTLIGHT: Van Nuys, CA NCADD Affiliate's Youth Prevention Program**

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The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence of the San Fernando Valley, Inc. (NCADD-SFV) has implemented a new program of prevention services focused towards youth, young adults in addressing access and availability.

**Community Assessment: The Problem**

In January 2012, NCADD-San Fernando Valley, in collaboration with Los Angeles County Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, conducted an intensive, six month community assessment, including surveys taken directly from community members themselves. The focus of the assessment was alcohol and drug use among youth ages 12-17 and young adults 18-25. The purpose of the assessments was to develop an understanding of the climate and cause of youth substance use in their respective communities, then use these data to structure effective community specific prevention initiatives. To address the issues reflected in the research, NCADD-SFV, funded through Los Angeles County, is providing local schools with prevention services as well as addressing environmental issues.

**Evidence-Based Programming: The Solution**

NCADD utilizes nationally recognized evidence based programs, designed for and proven to be successful in school settings. Each program component is tailored to meet the specific needs discovered in each community using the most effective means possible while also facilitating additional support from school faculty and parents. Our programs are recognized by the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) as proven strategies in combating risky substance use among youth.

**Youth Drug and Alcohol Prevention**

The program components include "prevention," stopping youth before they start; "intervention," stopping those who have started, and "diversion," stopping those who have started one substance from using another. The prevention program utilizes research-based practices that build on the findings of other successful prevention programs by using interventions that are effective in reducing risk factors and enhancing protective factors. The intervention strategies used are: information dissemination, normative and prevention education, problem identification and referral,

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community-based process and environmental approaches. Youth are taught resistance and social competency skills, such as communication, decision making, stress and anger management, problem solving and resisting peer pressure. Counselors work primarily with adolescents individually and in small groups.

**School Faculty and Staff Support**

The counselors also conduct large group prevention/education discussions and programs; train and consult on prevention issues with school staff and coordinate the substance abuse services and policies of the school. These activities are carried out through faculty presentations, school alcohol, tobacco and other drug development support and individual faculty consultations.

**Parental Support**

Parental support is provided through a variety of programs including mini workshops for parents in cooperation with the local PTA on such topics as teens, parents, alcohol, drugs, health and the law. Counselors are available to do presentations during back-to-school night. Other programs include "take-home lessons" with activities that parents can complete with their children and parent consultation on how to deal with situations they face with their teens. Referral and follow-up with students and families needing community services are also offered.

In addition to the work done with schools, NCADD-SFV also provides comprehensive community services such as Responsible Beverage Service Trainings to local merchants to help reduce sales to minors and intoxicated persons, training vendors on how to observe more diligent practices in checking IDs, maintaining proper signage, providing responsible promotions and closely monitoring the immediate areas around their stores."

For more information, log onto [www.ncadd-sfv.org](http://www.ncadd-sfv.org)

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