

The Minnesota Prevention Alliance Foundation (MPAF) and Supporting Cannabis Use Prevention Practices in Schools

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Setting the Stage



- **Laura and Ken**
- **Please ask questions and share your thoughts**
- **Objectives of talk: Provide an overview of.....**
 1. **The MN statute on cannabis prevention education requirement for 2026-2027**
 2. **MPAF's project to develop a resource for middle and high schools, supported by a contract with the MN Department of Education**
 3. **Plans by MPAF to assist schools with implementation**



“What perceptions by youth about cannabis use have you observed?”



Minnesota Prevention Alliance Foundation



Research Advisory Council



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Education on Cannabis Use and Substance Use

MN Statutes

- **Overarching requirement: District efforts to develop, implement, or improve instruction or curriculum as a result of the provisions of this section must be consistent with sections [120B.10](#) and [120B.11](#).**
- **Cannabis education statute requirements (Sec. 7, [120B.215](#)): Features of the statute fall into two categories**
 - **content (curriculum)**
 - **implementation**

Content Requirements

Consist of

- 1. suitable content for middle and high school students (age and developmentally appropriate)**
- 2. administration guidance/manual**
- 3. content grounded in science and is medically accurate**

Educate about

- 4. physical effects of cannabis use**
- 5. mental effects of cannabis use**
- 6. effects of cannabis use on developing brains up to age 25**
- 7. unsafe or unhealthy behaviors associated with cannabis use**

Content Requirements (cont.)

Educate about

- 8. signs of cannabis and other substance use disorders**
- 9. healthy coping strategies**
- 10. general substance use harms and adverse effects**
- 11. dangers of fentanyl**
- 12. detect and respond to opioid overdose**

Provide

- 13. references to and referral information regarding local treatment**
- 14. references to local prevention resources**

Implementation Requirements

- 1. culturally inclusive**
- 2. respectful of community values**
- 3. supportive that students discuss cannabis harms with parents**
- 4. allowance that parents can review program and opt out**
- 5. option for a youth council that may include education for students to learn peer-to-peer training**
- 6. training of staff to deliver the prevention program**



List of Cannabis Model Programs for School District or Charter School Consideration

Minnesota Department of Education

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Analysis

1. Identification

- A wide-ranging search of English-language, school-based, relatively current (2020+), cannabis prevention programs was conducted. These sources were included in the search:
 1. PTTC's *Guide to Online Registries for Programs and Practices*
 2. SAMHSA's *Focus on Prevention* publication
 3. NAS' *Blueprint for a National Prevention Infrastructure*
 4. Washington State Institute for Public Policy
 5. UCLA's Substance Use Prevention Evidence-Based Resource
 6. References provided in other programs
 7. Google Scholar
- **15 cannabis programs were identified**

15 Programs That Made First Cut (alphabetical)

- 1. Archdiocese of New York Drug Prevention Program**
- 2. Cannabis and Public Health**
- 3. Cannabis Policy Resource Center**
- 4. Cannabis: The Facts You Need to Know**
- 5. Center for Community Research**
- 6. K.N.O.W. 4 Yourself**
- 7. Marijuana Prevention Plus Wellness**
- 8. Microlearning Toolkit, Cannabis Prevention Toolkit**
- 9. Prevention Action Alliance**
- 10. Preventing Marijuana Use Among Youth**
- 11. Preventing Marijuana Use Among Youth and Young Adults**
- 12. Project Here**
- 13. Smart Talk: Cannabis Prevention & Awareness Curriculum**
- 14. Stand with Me, Be Drug Free**
- 15. The Tea on THC**

Analysis

2. Review of the 15

- A cross-walk of each of the 15 programs and the 14 statute content features was conducted
 - Y = content present
 - N = content not present
 - ** = no original content; other program(s) suggested
- Consensus ratings were reached among the research consultants

Content Rating Grid

[illegible]

Analysis

3. Nomination

- Three programs had the “best” ratings (same 9/14 features present), and were further ranked based on content thoroughness

1. *Smart Talk: Cannabis Prevention & Awareness Curriculum* (Stanford School of Medicine)
2. *Cannabis: The Facts You Need to Know* (NIDA)
3. *Marijuana Prevention Plus Wellness* (Prevention Plus Wellness)

Analysis

3. Nomination (cont.)

- **But each of the signature programs were absent of these five content features:**
 - **general substance use harms**
 - **dangers of fentanyl**
 - **overdose prevention, recognition and response**
 - **local prevention resources**
 - **local referral/treatment information**

Cannabis Prevention Programs and Statute Content Requirements

Model Programs	Middle/ HS	Manual	Science- based	Physical effects	Mental effects	Developing brain effects	Unsafe behaviors	Signs of addiction	Coping strategies	General substance harms	Dangers fentanyl	Overdose Prevention	Referral/Tx information	Local Resources
1.Smart Talk	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N
2.Cannabis: The Facts	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N*	N	N	N	N
3.Marijuana PPW	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N*	N	N	N	N
Non-Model Programs														
4.Archdiocese of NY	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	N	N	N	N	N
5.Cannabis Policy Resource Center	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	N	N	N	N	N
6.Stand with Me	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
7.Prevention Action Alliance	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
8.Project Here	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	N	N	N	N	N
9.Preventing Marijuana Use (SAMHSA)	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	N	N	N	N	N
10.Microlearning Toolkit	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
11.K.N.O.W.	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
12.Center for Community Research	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
13.Cannabis & Public Health	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
14.Preventing Marijuana Use (DEA)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
15.The Tea on THC	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N

#1: Smart Talk: Cannabis Prevention & Awareness Curriculum



- Created by the Stanford REACH Lab and collaborators.
- Each of five lessons provide activities, online quiz games, presentation materials and worksheets. Also includes follow-up materials that promote discussion with parents, caregivers and peers. Developer has separate resources for tobacco and fentanyl.
- Each grade level toolkit addresses these content areas:
 - Cannabis-free brain
 - Effects of cannabis on the body
 - How cannabis affects the whole community
 - How industry is misleading youth and skills to decode marketing tactics
 - Improving coping skills
- Grade levels: elementary, middle and high school
- Time Duration: 5 class periods
- Language: English & Spanish
- Manual and materials provided
- Cost: Free

#2: Cannabis: The Facts You Need to Know

- Produced by officials at the National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Main components:
 - Student activity sheets (Help Spread the Facts About Cannabis)
 - Student article (Cannabis: The Facts You Need to Know)
 - Student online interactive exercise (Cannabis and the Brain)
 - Health and life skills
 - How to interpret science information and data
- Separate materials for middle and high school
- Time Duration: 1 class period
- Language: English
- Manual provided
- Cost: Free

#3: Marijuana: Prevention Plus Wellness



- Marijuana PPW is a single-session cannabis use prevention program designed to educate on cannabis harms, and increase health-enhancing behaviors including physical activity and sports, healthy eating, getting adequate sleep, and practicing stress control.
- The program is an adaptation of the evidence-based SPORT Prevention Plus Wellness program, a general substance use prevention curriculum.
- The curriculum on marijuana-related harms and effects is often linked to the negative impact on school and sports performance.
- A unique feature is that Marijuana PPW provides guidance on how to screen and apply a brief intervention to youth already using cannabis.
- Separate materials for elementary, middle and high school
- Time Duration: 1 class period
- Language: English
- Manual and activity worksheets provided
- Cost: \$599 (as of June 30, 2025)

Implementation Issue

Status Quo

1. Currently Implementing a General Substance Use Prevention Program



Supplemental Content Needed

cannabis-specific harms
dangers of fentanyl; overdose info
references to local treatment
references to local resources

2. Currently Implementing a Model Cannabis Prevention Program



general substance use harms, adverse effects
dangers of fentanyl; overdose info
references to local treatment
references to local resources

3. Decide to Choose a Model Cannabis Prevention Program



general substance use harms, adverse effects
dangers of fentanyl; overdose info
references to local treatment
references to local resources

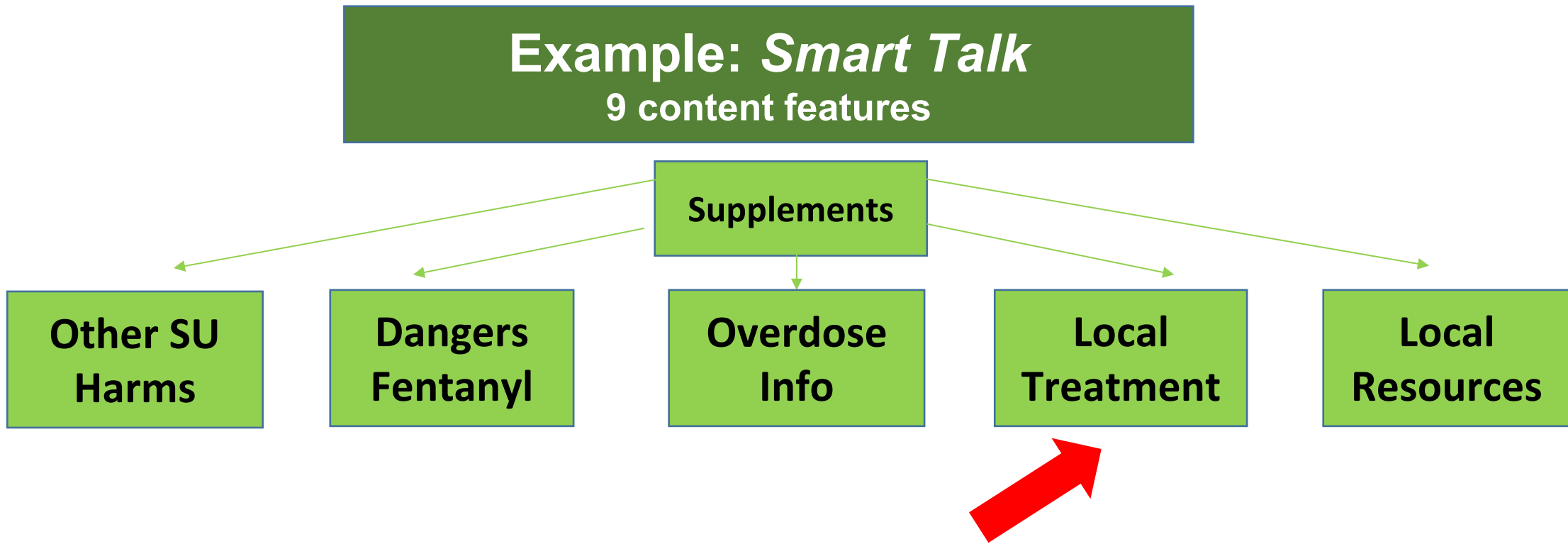
4. Decide to Choose a General Substance Use Prevention Program



cannabis-specific harms
dangers of fentanyl; overdose info
references to local treatment
references to local resources

Implementation Issue

- Supplemental content will be needed to address content gaps and ensure each school district's chosen model program contains and fulfills all the requirements as identified in the statute.



Local Treatment Supplement: What This Resource Might Look Like?

- **When a student shows indications of a cannabis or other substance use issue, a school can play an important role in guiding the student and parent/guardian to get help.**
- **First step options:**
 - **Refer the student to a prevention or intervention program provided by the school, if one exists.**
 - **Offer the parents/guardians a list of possible referral options with the aim for the adolescent to receive professional assessment to determine the need for behavioral health services. Here is a recommended list.**
 - **contact the family's health care provider**
 - **contact the community mental health center**
 - **search for services at <https://FastTrackerMN.org>**
 - **contact First Call for Help Minnesota (Dial 211 or toll free 800-543-7709)**
 - **provide a list of specific local services**

Local Treatment Supplement: What This Resource Might Look Like?

- **Other Considerations**

- **Remind parents that if...**

- **a behavioral emergency were to occur, call 988 or text 988lifeline.org .**

- **there are signs of an adverse reaction to medicine, including over-ingesting a THC product, call Poison Control, 800-222-1222.**

- **A list of recommended local behavioral services can be a helpful resource for parents. Take advantage of expertise in the school to compile this list.**

Local Treatment Supplement: What This Resource Might Look Like?

- **Other Considerations (cont.)**
 - **Any service on a referral list should be characterized by best practices. Below are necessary features of an adolescent behavioral health service.**
 - **Workforce is trained in adolescent assessment and treatment.**
 - **The screening and assessment process includes use of standardized measures and input from the parent/guardian.**
 - **A continuum of treatment services are offered (e.g., brief counseling, non-intensive outpatient, intensive outpatient/residential).**
 - **The treatment setting does not mix adolescents and adults.**

Plans of MPAF to Assist Schools

- **Seek input from school staff & administrators**
- **Develop supplemental materials**
- **Develop and conduct information and training events**
- **Work with school districts upon request**

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Resources

1. MDE Report of MPAF's work

- Google “MDE Health Standards” and scroll down to “Education on Cannabis Use and Substance Use: List of Model Programs”



List of Cannabis Model Programs for School District or Charter School Consideration

Minnesota Department of Education

- Intro video also included Fall of 2026



List of Cannabis Model Programs for Minnesota School District or Charter School Consideration



Resources

2. Smart Approaches to Marijuana Minnesota's education program

- Google “Sammn” and scroll down to “Parent Prevention Resource” on homepage



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THANK YOU!



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