HOT TOPICS

Proven Program to Prevent Adolescent Drug Use: Project ALERT

Project ALERT, the most widely used research-based drug prevention program in the nation’s schools, has been designated “exemplary” by the U.S. Department of Education. This RAND-developed program, one of only nine to receive top-rated status, was recommended for its quality and effectiveness by a panel of national experts assembled by DOE’s Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities office.

RELATED READINGS:
Helping Adolescents Resist Drugs, P. Ellickson, K. McGuigan, RB-4518.1 www.rand.org/publications/RB/RB4518.1

Teen Violence: A Public Health Issue

Researchers from RAND are exploring the implications of viewing youth violence through the magnifying glass of public health. Phyllis Ellickson, a behavioral scientist, tracked 4,500 adolescents in California and Oregon from seventh grade through high school. She identified likely risk factors and early warning signs of youth violence. Some of these were strongly correlated with violence among all youth. Others were uniquely correlated with violence among only boys or only girls.

Mark Schuster, a pediatrician and RAND researcher, led a study estimating the prevalence nationwide of another possible trigger of youth violence: unlocked firearms in homes with children. Schuster believes that the public health and medical communities can reduce the easy access that many children have to firearms. RAND researchers have detected a puzzling resistance by many clinicians to follow existing clinical guidelines to counsel their patients on firearm safety. This resistance occurs at the same time that researchers are discovering new opportunities for clinicians to prevent youth violence.

For a complete copy of the article go online: www.rand.org/publications/randreview/issues/rr.12.00/tranquil.html

RELATED READINGS:
Youth Violence: A Public-Health Problem with Disturbing Correlates. RB-4517 www.rand.org/publications/RB/RB4517/
Guns in the Family: Firearm Storage Patterns in U.S. Homes with Children. RB-4535 www.rand.org/publications/RB/RB4535

UPCOMING RAND REPORTS

After-School Care Best Practices

RAND conducted a review of literature about best management practices for after-school programs and developed a protocol for programs to use in measuring their adherence to these practices. This report reviews the after-school literature, identifies 18 best practices, and as a case study, measures adherence of the California Stone Soup Child Care Programs to these practices. The final report is due out in September.

Assessing the Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Intervention Programs

Overview and Application to the Starting Early Starting Smart Program:

This report discusses the conceptual and methodological issues associated with the analysis of costs and benefits of early intervention programs in general, and makes recommendations regarding the application of these tools for subsequent demonstration studies of a particular intervention program: Starting Early Starting Smart (SESS). SESS is a public/private initiative led by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Casey Family Programs. The final report is due out in late August.

RAND PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Sex on TV and Its Influence on Adolescent Sexual Behavior

This longitudinal project investigates the relationship between TV media consumption and adolescent sexual attitudes and behavior. RAND will collect data using a national sample of 2,000 teens ages 12–17. Additionally, RAND will make use of data from a separately funded content analysis of television programming.

RAND TESTIMONY

RAND is available to testify at congressional hearings and to offer pre-hearing briefings on a variety of areas related to Child Policy such as:

Youth Violence
Adolescents and Substance Use
Child Health
Early Childhood Interventions

For monthly email updates on all new RAND child policy publications and research projects, sign up for the Child Policy Project mailing list at www.rand.org/child.