



Project ALERT is an evidence-based substance use prevention program for middle school students. The National Institutes of Health want to test whether Project ALERT could be even more effective if educators receive training and ongoing coaching from an evidence-based implementation support program called Getting To Outcomes (GTO).

The temptations of alcohol, vaping, marijuana, and even opioids make the need for effective prevention programs greater than ever. Please join in this important research—for the sake of both students and science.

How will it work?

Schools are randomly assigned to 1 of 3 groups.



Project ALERT only



Project ALERT plus GTO



Status quo

Teachers get paid, online Project ALERT training

Teachers get paid, online Project ALERT training *AND paid training and coaching in GTO*

In the 2 Project ALERT groups:

- Online teacher training in fall, 2021
- 7th graders take Project ALERT classes in January in years 1-3, and 8th graders take 3 booster lessons in years 2-3
- Researchers observe 3 ALERT classes in 7th grade in years 1-3

In all 3 groups:

- Surveys of some staff, and students in 2 classes
- Project ALERT can be implemented in all schools in year 3

Benefits to Study Schools

School and teacher stipends available

Evidence-based curriculum

Teachers asked to use Project ALERT and GTO will be paid for their training time

Promotes social-emotional learning

Reduces problem classroom behaviors

Builds school capacity to scale and sustain Project ALERT

Aligns with health frameworks and standards

Meets drug education requirements

Responds to parent concerns

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Additional details about the Project ALERT+GTO study

Q What is this study and why is it important?

- This study tests the updated Project ALERT and whether it is even more effective if educators receive implementation support training and coaching. The findings may impact school drug prevention program implementation nationwide.
- Research shows that adolescence is when using is most likely to begin.
- Schools have limited time and money. They need an affordable and proven program to prevent substance use and the behavioral and academic problems that are correlated with abuse.
- Research also shows that organizations get better results from new programs when they have implementation support.

Q What is Project ALERT?

www.projectalert.com

- Developed and recently updated by RAND, Project ALERT is an evidence-based prevention program for middle school students that targets vaping, smoking, marijuana, alcohol, and a new lesson on opioids.
- It is a skills-based curriculum. Not only does it help youth understand how drugs affect the body, it cultivates non-use attitudes and beliefs, and teaches youth to identify drug use pressures and builds their confidence in resisting those pressures.
- Project ALERT includes 11 lessons for 7th grade students and 3 lessons for 8th grade students.
- Teacher training, materials, and support are provided online and the curriculum can be delivered by any certified teacher.
- Project ALERT is popular with teachers and students and is estimated to reach 21,000 middle school students each year.

Q What is Getting To Outcomes (GTO)?

www.rand.org/gto

- GTO is an evidence-based implementation support program that provides training and ongoing coaching to organizations so that they implement programs more effectively and get their desired outcomes.

Q What is required of participating schools?

- Schools will be randomly assigned into one of three groups:
 - Implementing Project ALERT on their own
 - Implementing Project ALERT with GTO support
 - Status quo, or no implementation, until year 3
- Starting in fall 2021, schools doing Project ALERT on their own or with GTO support will each be asked to:
 - Participate in paid training for teachers in the fall and teach Project ALERT, starting in January, to all 7th graders in study years 1, 2, and 3, and to all 8th graders in study years 2 and 3
 - Allow research staff to observe three 7th grade Project ALERT lessons in 2 classes in study years 1, 2, and 3
 - Allow staff to be surveyed and/or interviewed about Project ALERT and GTO
- Two teachers in each Project ALERT+GTO school will be asked to participate in paid GTO training and implementation coaching.
- In all schools, two classes will be invited to complete confidential student surveys about substance use: twice in class in 7th grade, and once, on their own, each of the following two years.

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