

- Never welcome any agency, group or speaker into your building without first previewing their services first-hand. Everyone's perception of a 'good message' is different. Use the checklist inside to vet it!
- Your student body is divided into different levels of risk leading to different message needs. This is why assemblies can be harmful. Any assembly that creates visible discomfort (crying/shock/inattention) should not continue.
- No school is in a position to waste the precious resources of money or time. If you ever have questions about a proposed service, Compass Mark will be happy to help you evaluate your school needs and assess the program's adherence to prevention principles.

Please call (717) 299-2831 for additional guidance and information about acquiring the best prevention services for your students. Our Prevention Specialists are eager to help you increase your impact through building individual student resilience.

BEST PRACTICES FOR CHOOSING SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION



Building resilience to prevent addiction.

Compass Mark is a non-profit organization with over fifty years of experience providing drug, alcohol and gambling prevention services in Pennsylvania. We are committed to utilizing the latest research from our field to deliver only the most effective, evidence-based programs for our schools and community. The vision of Compass Mark is to meet every individual and organization where they are, and equip and guide them along the path to healthy, fulfilling lives free from addiction.



compassmark.org

Lancaster County Joining Forces aims to support and coordinate efforts to reduce deaths from opioids and heroin. In doing so, we strengthen the great work already happening in communities throughout the County, while allowing us to identify gaps in services and treatments so that we can save lives together. The goal is to focus on evidence-based practices outlined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce exposure to opioids, prevent misuse, and treat opioid use disorder.



LancasterJoiningForces.org

PREVENTION CHECKLIST

Most prevention efforts mean well, but not all of them do well. Even with the best intentions, some prevention programs can be harmful and encourage risky behavior. When considering prevention services for your students, this checklist will help you evaluate the safety and efficacy of a program:



The message being shared does NOT use graphic warnings, detailed images, or stories of scary events, death, or tragic consequences experienced by survivors or loved ones. These messages trigger an emotional response that can result in denial, avoidance, and even increased use.



The call to action is clearly about what you CAN do instead of what you should NOT do. There should always be an opportunity to practice the empowering skill or behavior.



The experience you are considering for your students is NOT a one-time event, but instead includes gradual follow-up and reinforcement over time. There is no silver bullet or one-hit wonder that will deliver safe results for all students. Prevention efforts should incorporate age-appropriate, skill-based education that is specific to each student's level of risk.



Any warnings given to students should be void of intensity or desperation. Students receiving intense warnings may believe that the problem is out of control, or that the issue is a norm among their peers. Due to this perception, these types of warnings can actually increase the likelihood that students participate in the problem.



All of the information included in the message is true and reliable, and will NOT change or erode over time.

Checking every box will help assure that the program you are considering for your students is research-based and effective. Don't except less than you deserve, and don't make exceptions! All five components are critical; one missed mark can cause the message to backfire.



A listing of programs is available at
LancasterJoiningForces.org