What Happened to D.A.R.E.?

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History of D.A.R.E.

- Created in 1983 by the Los Angeles Police Department & the Los Angeles Unified School District
- In 1986, U.S. Congress passed the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act to promote drug abuse education and prevention programs across the country
- By 1994, D.A.R.E. was the most widely used school-based drug prevention program, showing up in all 50 states and in over 50% of local school districts nationwide
- At its peak, D.A.R.E. was present in 70 – 90% of the nation’s school districts and reaching over 25 million students per year.
- In the late 1990’s, the US Department of Education, a major D.A.R.E. funder, decided that if school districts were to received federal drug prevention grants, they should be required to use evidence-based programs.
D.A.R.E. in Pennsylvania

• As of 1999, approximately 751 Pennsylvania schools offered the core D.A.R.E. curriculum.

• Between 1999 and 2008, funding for D.A.R.E. decreased steadily from $4 million to less than $1 million.

• On December 9, 2008, Governor Rendell announced cuts to many programs, including D.A.R.E.
History of Research-Based Prevention in Pennsylvania

• 1994: Key state leaders introduce Communities that Care (CTC)
  • Spearheaded by Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency (PCCD) and Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission

• 1994-2002: Initiation of CTC funding by PCCD
  • 16 cycles of CTC model introduced in ~120 communities

• 1996: PCCD Co-funding of research for Blueprints programs

• 1998: Process Study of CTC conducted by Prevention Research Center
  • Resulted in creation of statewide TA infrastructure to support CTC
  • Formalized connection between CTC and EBP Initiative

• 1998: Initiation of Evidence-based Program Initiative by PCCD
  • 10 cycles of EBPs funded over 13 years, resulting in ~200 EBPs

• 2001: Narrowed list of supported EBPs, aka “PA Blueprints”

• 2008: Created Resource Center for Evidence-Based Prevention and Intervention Programs and Practices
  • Multi-agency Steering Committee Representing Justice, Welfare, Education, and Health
D.A.R.E. Research – 1994 Study


- **Objectives/Methods:**
  - Given its widespread use and investment in money, time and resources, it was important to know if D.A.R.E was an effective drug use prevention program.
  - Used meta-analytic techniques to review 8 rigorous D.A.R.E evaluations.

- **Findings:**
  - D.A.R.E. had no statistically significant impact on students’ initiation of alcohol use, cigarette smoking, or heavy drinking.
  - Compared with programs classified as “interactive”, D.A.R.E.’s effect sizes for alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use were substantially less.
  - D.A.R.E. had no immediate or long-term effects on students’ attitudes toward drugs or their social skills.
  - D.A.R.E. did have a positive effect on self-esteem, but it was short-lived and did not last over the study period.


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D.A.R.E. Research – 1996 Study

- The Effectiveness of D.A.R.E. (1996 Study – Clayton, Cattarell, and Johnstone)
  - Objectives/Methods:
    - Five year longitudinal evaluation of D.A.R.E.
    - 23 elementary schools randomly assigned to receive D.A.R.E.; 8 comparison schools
    - Comparison schools received Drug Education as part of Health Education
  - Findings:
    - For cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana, there was no discernable difference between students receiving D.A.R.E. versus the comparison group.
    - In early follow up, D.A.R.E. students maintained negative attitudes toward drug use and moderately strong refusal skills; however, after the full five years of the study, these effects wore off and there was no discernable difference between D.A.R.E. students and comparison students.
    - These results are consistent with those obtained from prior short-term evaluations which reported limited and insignificant short-term effects which decay over time.
D.A.R.E. Research – 1999 PCCD Sponsored Study

• PA Study surveyed approximately 2,500 ninth grade students
• The schools to be surveyed were from one of two groups: D.A.R.E. and non-D.A.R.E. schools
• In selecting sample schools, researchers controlled for enrollment, economic status, etc. to ensure the two groups were as comparable as possible with the exception of the utilization of D.A.R.E.
• Four groups:
  • No Drug Prevention Programs
  • D.A.R.E. Only
  • D.A.R.E. & another Prevention Program
  • Another Prevention Program & No D.A.R.E.

The Justice Analyst., Vol 13, No. 1, March 1999
D.A.R.E. Research – 1999 PCCD Sponsored Study

- Students who had D.A.R.E. were more likely to have tried marijuana than students who did not have D.A.R.E.

- Concluded that students who participated in D.A.R.E. and/or some other school drug prevention program showed more favorable outcomes than students who did not participate in any prevention program.

- PA Study Outcomes (most desirable to least desirable):
  1. Another Prevention Program
  2. Another Prevention Program + D.A.R.E.
  3. D.A.R.E. only
  4. No Prevention Programs
D.A.R.E. Research – 2003 Study

- Project D.A.R.E. Outcome Effectiveness Revisited (2003 Study – West and O’Neal)
  - **Objectives:**
    - To provide an updated meta-analysis on the effectiveness of D.A.R.E. in preventing alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use
    - 11 of the 40 articles appearing in the literature from 1991 to 2002 met inclusion for this study
  - **Findings:**
    - Study supports previous findings indicating that D.A.R.E. is ineffective
    - Given the tremendous expenditures in time and money involved with D.A.R.E., it was recommended that continued efforts should focus on other techniques and programs that might produce more substantial and positive outcomes.

D.A.R.E. Research – 2009 Study

• 2009 Study – Zili Sloboda and Colleagues

• Study focused on the “Take Charge of Your Life” curriculum utilized by D.A.R.E. program (implemented in 7th & 9th grade)

  • Findings:
    • Negative program effect for use of alcohol and cigarettes and no effect for marijuana use
      • By 11th grade, significantly more students who participated in Take Charge of Your Life reported alcohol or cigarette use in the prior 30 days than did a control group of students who did not participate.
    • The negative impact of the program on baseline nonusers of alcohol and tobacco indicate that TCYL should not be delivered as a universal prevention intervention.

Are police officers to blame for poor outcomes? Can they play a role in prevention initiatives?
Is There a Role for Police in School-based Drug Prevention?

• Brian K. Bumbarger & Amanda Miller; February 2007

  • **Methods/Objectives:** PCCD funded study examining whether a proven-effective school drug prevention program (LST), could be effectively delivered by police officers or officer/teacher teams.

  • **Findings:**
    • Police Officer’s demonstrated a higher level of general prevention science knowledge than teachers
    • Police Officers and teachers had very similar levels of implementation fidelity for program content (teachers and police officers together had the highest levels of fidelity)
    • Police Officer’s did report lower levels of support from coworkers and felt it wouldn’t be viewed positively by their coworkers.
Do adolescents perceive police officers as credible instructors of substance abuse prevention programs?

• 2007 Study — Hammond, Sloboda, Tonkin, Stephens, Teasdale, Grey, and Williams
  • Details:
    • Data used for this study were drawn from the Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention Study, which explores the effectiveness of an adolescent substance abuse program (Take Charge of Your Life) delivered by D.A.R.E officers to students in 7th and 9th grade.
  • Findings:
    • Students in this study who had police instructors reported significantly more positive attitudes toward program instructors than students who had non-police instructors.
Police Officers serving as Instructors of EBP Programs – Bottom Line:

• Officers have a strong understanding of prevention science
• They show levels of implementation quality comparable to teachers
  • Teachers and Officers co-teaching show the highest levels of fidelity
• Officers tend to enjoy more positive evaluation among students than did non-police instructors
• Officers want to feel supported in their role (networking) – D.A.R.E. (kiR) provides this support
LifeSkills Training

- LifeSkills Training
  - Strong evidence of effectiveness – holds the distinction of being the top research-based substance abuse prevention program in the country
  - Long lasting effects in drug use reduction up to 12 years later (2012 study)
  - $50 benefit for every $1 invested in terms of reduced correction costs, welfare and social services burden, drug and mental health treatment; and increased employment and tax revenue (2013 study)


LifeSkills Training in Pennsylvania

• PCCD funded implementations
  • 19 sites across PA since 1999
  • EPISCenter providing Technical Assistance since 2008
    • Implementation Quality, Resourced Development, Data Collection, Networking, Etc.

• Blueprints Project
  • 51 schools Across Pennsylvania
  • Implementation Quality TA provided by Blueprints (CSPV) (University of Colorado)
  • Assistance with Outcomes Data provided by EPISCenter
D.A.R.E.– 2008 and beyond

• Following the study of the “Take Charge of Your Life Curriculum”, D.A.R.E. acknowledged that they were more of a mechanism for dissemination and delivery rather than a program developer
  • Effective vehicle for dissemination...
  • ...BUT, the program has been ineffective.

• Utilized NREPP to identify an evidence-based program to meet their needs

• Collaborated with keepin’ it REAL (kiR) - 2009
D.A.R.E. – *keepin’ it REAL* (kiR)

- If you’re currently using D.A.R.E. or interested in using D.A.R.E., the D.A.R.E. (kiR) version is the only version that is supported by evidence.
- D.A.R.E. (kiR) may be of interest to you if you feel strongly about police officer involvement.
- D.A.R.E. (kiR) emphasizes student messages and could be beneficial in impacting community norms.