

Edition 10 – 1

Summer 2009

# Research Précis

## Best Practices: Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities

Creating a better tomorrow...

### Title: Fast Track Prevention Trial for Conduct Problems

#### Overview:

The *Fast Track Prevention Trial for Conduct Problems* is a comprehensive, long-term prevention program that aims to prevent chronic and severe conduct problems for high-risk children by fostering bonds between the school, home, and individual.

*Target:* The program spans from preschool through grade 6, but is most intense during the key periods of entry to school (first grade) and transition from grade school to middle school.

*Extent/Duration of Program:* The program is intended to span a ten-year period.

#### Program Costs:

- Check Fast Track Web site for most current pricing and availability of training arrangements.

#### For further information, or to order:

Conduct Problems Prevention Research  
Group

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Prevention Research Center  
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E-mail: [prevention@psu.edu](mailto:prevention@psu.edu)

Web site: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org>

*Principles/Approaches/Components:* The *Fast Track Program* is based on the premise that antisocial behavior stems from the interaction of multiple influences in the school, home, and community, and that behavior problems can be reduced by addressing these various influences in concert with the individual. The program's main goals are to increase communication along with children's social, cognitive, and problem-solving skills, improve peer relationships, and ultimately decrease disruptive behavior. The program components include parent training; home visitations to reinforce parenting and problem-solving skills; social skills training to enhance children's problem-solving skills, peer relations, anger control, and friendship maintenance; academic tutoring to improve children's reading skills; and a classroom teacher-led curriculum (PATHS), a program designed to be used in grades 1-5 to help children develop emotional awareness skills, self-control and problem-solving skills, foster a positive peer climate, and promote parent participation.

*Evidence-based Effectiveness:* In studies from 1991-93 involving three cohorts of students that have completed first grade, results indicated that students who participated in Fast Track have better teacher and parent ratings on behavior with peers and adults and better overall ratings by observers on aggressive and/or disruptive classroom behavior. Mothers of children who have participated in Fast Track have been found to exhibit more involvement in their children's activities, and parents in general to be less likely to endorse physical punishment. Children that had been in Fast Track classrooms also were less likely to consider their peers as aggressive

and generally indicated less dislike of their classmates.

**Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) connections:**

A.ii - Activities that promote a sense of individual responsibility.

A.iv - Activities that teach students to recognize social and peer pressure to use drugs illegally and the skills for resisting illegal drug use.

E.viii - Conflict resolution programs, including peer mediation programs that educate and train peer mediators and a designated faculty supervisor, and youth anti-crime and anti-drug councils and activities.

E.xi - Programs that encourage students to seek advice from, and to confide in, a trusted adult regarding concerns about violence and illegal drug use.

**National Standards connections:**

*Kindergarten through Grade 6*

Health Education Standard 4 – Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Health Education Standard 7 – Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

*National Health Education Standards, Second Edition: Achieving Excellence. American Cancer Society, 2007.*

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard A: Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard C: Students will understand safety and survival skills.

*ASCA National Standards for Students. American School Counselor Association, 2004.*

**Recognition and additional reports:**

The following organizations/institutions have recognized *Fast Track*. The organizations are in alphabetical order and the status of the recognition is in parentheses.

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (Promising Program)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Model Program)

**GENERAL NOTES:** The intent of the above synthesis and correlations is to assist teachers and school administrators dedicated to using best practices to reduce violence and substance abuse among students. To our knowledge, the information was current upon publication. However, details pertaining to status of program recognition, research and findings, costs, and contact information are subject to change.

Correlations to the Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) federally approved activities and to national education standards have been limited in depth (“standard” level only) and breadth (number of standards and subjects) due to the encompassing nature of many programs that typically qualify as model or exemplary. The correlations listed should not be viewed as exhaustive.

Designed Instruction’s effective SDFS program research series was funded by the United States Department of Education. For information on other effective programs for promoting safe and drug-free schools and communities, visit [www.designedinstruction.com/learningleads/effective-sdfs-programs.html](http://www.designedinstruction.com/learningleads/effective-sdfs-programs.html)

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