

What Works Clearinghouse



Too Good for Drugs and Violence

Program description

Too Good for Drugs and Violence is designed to promote high school students' prosocial skills, positive character traits, and violence- and drug-free norms. The curriculum consists of 14 core lessons and an additional 12 lessons that can be infused into other subject areas (such as English, science, and social studies). Students engage in role-play and cooperative

learning activities and are encouraged to apply the skills to different contexts. The program includes optional family and community involvement components that may or may not be implemented as part of the program evaluated. Two related programs are addressed in the intervention reports on *Too Good for Violence* (K–8) and *Too Good for Drugs™* (K–8).

Research

Two studies of *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. These studies, which included nearly 700 students attending six high

schools in Florida, examined results on students' knowledge, attitudes, and values.¹

Effectiveness

Too Good for Drugs and Violence was found to have positive effects on students' knowledge, attitudes, and values.

	<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Knowledge, attitudes, and values</i>	<i>Academic achievement</i>
Rating of effectiveness	Not reported	Positive effects	Not reported
Improvement index²	Not reported	Average: +16 percentile points Range: +5 to +21 percentile points	Not reported

1. The evidence presented in this report is based on available research. Findings and conclusions may change as new research becomes available.
 2. These numbers show the average and range of improvement indices for all findings across the study.

Additional program information **Developer and contact**

Mendez Foundation, 601 S. Magnolia Avenue, Tampa, FL 33606.
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Scope of use

Too Good for Drugs and Violence was introduced in 2000. According to the developer, the program was first developed in Hillsborough County (Tampa), Florida. *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* and its companion programs (*Too Good for Drugs*[™] and *Too Good for Violence*) have been implemented in high schools in more than 2,500 districts in more than 48 states in rural, urban, and suburban communities with African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic and Latino, and Caucasian student populations and across diverse socioeconomic groups. *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* may have changed since the studies were conducted. The WWC recommends asking the developer for information about the most current version of this curriculum and taking into account that student demographics and school context may affect outcomes.

Teaching

The *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* program was included in the character education review because the program addresses several character traits that are infused into most of the lessons. The program consists of 14 core curriculum lessons at 60 minutes each and 12 additional infusion lessons to be incorporated into subject areas across grade levels. All lessons are scripted and intended to be taught by trained teachers or *Too Good* instructors. The program emphasizes prosocial skills, respect for others, and personal and social responsibility. Lessons include a combination of information about normative peer use and the consequences of drugs and violence and life skills development such as goal setting, decisionmaking, developing healthy relationships, stress management, coping, communication, peer

resistance, and interpersonal skills. Cooperative learning activities, role-playing, and skill building methods reinforce positive behaviors and skills and encourage students to apply skills in other contexts.

The developer provides such teacher resources as grade-level kits that include scripted curriculum, student workbooks, measurable objectives, evaluation tools, lesson extenders, and tips for teaching the program. Additional curriculum materials include a parent component consisting of newsletters and interactive family materials such as the “Home Workout” and “Home Pages” and information on holding parent information sessions. The program also includes 50 educator workbooks and a staff development curriculum that features 10 lessons that are 30–45 minutes long. According to the developer, the program is school-based and also includes community and parent components.

Cost

The cost of a classroom kit for the *Too Good for Drugs and Violence—High School* program, including core curriculum lessons, infusion lessons and lesson notebooks, staff development curriculum, scripted lesson format, and student and educator workbooks, is \$750.

Teachers are encouraged to attend training workshops and schools are encouraged to send teachers to train the trainer workshops, which may be on-site or within their region. The cost per day of a regional curriculum training workshop is \$300 a person for the curriculum training and \$400 a person for the train the trainer sessions. The cost of the regional training is reduced to \$850 total, if a participant attends three days of training. The cost per day of an on-site training workshop, which can train groups of 15 to 20 participants, is \$1,500 plus travel for the curriculum training and \$225 a person for the train the trainer sessions. The developer states that smaller school districts may collaborate with nearby districts to share the cost of on-site training.

Research Two studies reviewed by the WWC investigated the effects of *Too Good for Drugs and Violence*. One study (Bacon, 2001a) was a randomized controlled trial that met WWC evidence standards. The second study (Bacon 2001b) used a quasi-experimental design and met WWC evidence standards with reservations.

The Bacon (2001a) study included more than 300 students in grades 9–12 attending five high schools in one school district in Florida. This study compared outcomes for students participating in a *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* curriculum with the outcomes for students in classes that did not use a character

education curriculum. In addition, this study focused on *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* as implemented in classrooms rather than as a schoolwide intervention.

The Bacon (2001b) study included more than 200 students in grades 9–12 attending one large high school in Florida. This study compared outcomes for students participating in a *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* curriculum with the outcomes for students in classes that did not use a character education curriculum. In addition, this study focused on *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* as implemented in classrooms rather than as a schoolwide intervention.

Effectiveness Findings

The WWC review of character education addresses student outcomes in three domains: behavior; knowledge, attitudes, and values; and academic achievement.

Knowledge, attitudes, and values. All outcomes reported by Bacon (2001a) were assessed immediately following the delivery of the program. The study reported statistically significant differences favoring the intervention group on positive attitudes toward nonviolence, perceptions of emotional competency skills, perceptions of social and peer resistance skills, and perceptions of assertiveness and self-efficacy. Two of these outcomes, perceptions of social and peer resistance skills and perceptions of emotional competency skills, were found to be statistically significant (as calculated by the WWC). The average effect size across all outcomes in this study in the knowledge, attitudes, and values domain was large enough to be considered substantively important using WWC criteria, although it was not statistically significant.³

All outcomes reported by Bacon (2001b) were assessed immediately following the delivery of the program. The study

reported statistically significant differences favoring the intervention group on attitudes towards violence, perceptions of emotional competency skills, perceptions of social and peer resistance skills, and perceptions of goals and decisionmaking skills. The WWC confirmed statistical significance for the same outcomes. The average effect across all outcomes in this study in the knowledge, attitudes, and values domain was statistically significant.

Rating of effectiveness

The WWC rates interventions as positive, potentially positive, mixed, no discernible effects, potentially negative, or negative. The rating of effectiveness takes into account four factors: the quality of the research design, the statistical significance of the findings (as calculated by the WWC); the size of the differences between participants in the intervention condition and the comparison condition, and the consistency of the findings across studies (see the [WWC Intervention Rating Scheme](#)).

3. The level of statistical significance was calculated by the WWC and corrects for clustering within classrooms or schools and for multiple comparisons. For an explanation see the [WWC Tutorial on Mismatch](#). See the [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#) for the formulas the WWC used to calculate statistical significance. In the case of the *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* report, corrections were needed both for clustering and for multiple comparisons.

The WWC found *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* to have positive effects on knowledge, attitudes, and values

Improvement index

For each outcome domain, the WWC computed an improvement index based on the effect size (see the [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#)). The improvement index represents the difference between the percentile rank of the average student in the intervention condition versus the percentile rank of the average student in the comparison condition. Unlike the rating of effectiveness, the improvement index is entirely based on the size of the effect, regardless of the statistical significance of the effect, the study design, or the analysis. The improvement index can take on values between -50 and +50, with positive numbers denoting favorable results. The average improvement index for knowledge, attitudes, and values is +16 percentile

points, with a range of +5 to +21 percentile points across findings.

Summary

The WWC reviewed two studies on *Too Good for Drugs and Violence*. One study (Bacon, 2001a) met WWC standards, and the second study (Bacon, 2001b) met WWC standards with reservations. When the WWC aggregated the results across all outcomes in the knowledge, attitudes, and values domain in each of the studies, the average effect size on one study (Bacon, 2001a) was substantively important (at least +/- 0.25), and the average effect size in the other study (Bacon, 2001b) was statistically significant. So the WWC rated the program as having positive effects on knowledge, attitudes, and values. Character

References

education, an evolving field, is beginning to establish a research base. The evidence presented in this report is limited and may change as new research emerges.

Met WWC evidence standards

Bacon, T. P. (2001a). Evaluation of the *Too Good for Drugs and Violence*–High School prevention program. A report produced for the Florida Department of Education, Department of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Tallahassee, FL. Available from: Mendez Foundation, 601 S. Magnolia Avenue, Tampa, FL 33606.

Met WWC evidence standards with reservations

Bacon, T. P. (2001b). Impact on high school students' behaviors and protective factors: A pilot study of the *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* prevention program. *Florida Educational Research Council, Inc. Research Bulletin*, 32(3 and 4), 1–40.

Additional sources:

Bacon, T. P. (2001). Impact on high school students' behaviors and protective factors: A pilot study of the *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* prevention program. Available from the Mendez Foundation website: www.mendezfoundation.org/TGFDVHS%20research.htm.

For more information about specific studies and WWC calculations, please see the [WWC *Too Good for Drugs and Violence* Technical Appendices](#).