

Project Northland

Project Northland is a multilevel intervention involving students, peers, parents, and community in programs designed to delay the age at which adolescents begin drinking, reduce alcohol use among those already drinking, and limit the number of alcohol-related problems among young drinkers. Administered to adolescents in grades 6-8 on a weekly basis, the program has a specific theme within each grade level that is incorporated into the parent, peer, and community components. The 6th-grade home-based program targets communication about adolescent alcohol use utilizing student-parent homework assignments, in-class group discussions, and a communitywide task force. The 7th-grade peer- and teacher-led curriculum focuses on resistance skills and normative expectations regarding teen alcohol use, and is implemented through discussions, games, problem-solving tasks, and role-plays. During the first half of the 8th-grade Powerlines peer-led program, students learn about community dynamics related to alcohol use prevention through small group and classroom interactive activities. During the second half, they work on community-based projects and hold a mock town meeting to make community policy recommendations to prevent teen alcohol use.

Descriptive Information

Areas of Interest	Substance use disorder prevention
Outcomes	Review Date: March 2007 1: Tendency to use alcohol 2: Past-week alcohol use 3: Past-month alcohol use 4: Peer influence to use alcohol 5: Reasons not to use alcohol 6: Parent-child communication about alcohol
Outcome Categories	Alcohol Family/relationships
Ages	6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)
Genders	Male Female
Races/Ethnicities	American Indian or Alaska Native White Race/ethnicity unspecified
Settings	School
Geographic Locations	Urban Suburban Rural and/or frontier Tribal
Implementation History	More than 4,000 agencies or individuals in the United States, Austria, Canada, Colombia, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Russia, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom have purchased Project Northland to date. This figure suggests at least several thousand implementation sites serving a much larger number of students, schools, and communities.
NIH Funding/CER Studies	Partially/fully funded by National Institutes of Health: Yes Evaluated in comparative effectiveness research studies: No
Adaptations	The 6th-grade program, Slick Tracy, has been adapted for use with a diverse population and has been translated into Chinese, Polish, Russian, and Spanish. Implementation sites for Slick Tracy have included the

translated into Chinese, Polish, Russian, and Spanish. Implementation sites for Slick Tracy have included the Chicago Public School district and Moscow, Russia. Project Northland also has been adapted and translated into Croatian for implementation in 12 schools in Croatia.

Adverse Effects No adverse effects, concerns, or unintended consequences were identified by the developer.

IOM Prevention Categories Universal


Quality of Research

Review Date: March 2007

Documents Reviewed

The documents below were reviewed for Quality of Research. The research point of contact can provide information regarding the studies reviewed and the availability of additional materials, including those from more recent studies that may have been conducted.


Study 1

[Perry, C. L., Williams, C. L., Veblen-Mortenson, S., Toomey, T. L., Komro, K. A., Anstine, P. S., et al. \(1996\). Project Northland: Outcomes of a communitywide alcohol use prevention program during early adolescence. *American Journal of Public Health*, 86\(7\), 956-965.](#) 

Study 2

[Komro, K. A., Perry, C. L., Williams, C. L., Stigler, M. H., Farbaksh, K., & Veblen-Mortenson, S. \(2001\). How did Project Northland reduce alcohol use among young adolescents? Analysis of mediating variables. *Health Education Research*, 16\(1\), 59-70.](#) 

Supplementary Materials

[Komro, K. A., Perry, C. L., Murray, D. M., Veblen-Mortenson, S., Williams, C. L. & Anstine, P. S. \(1996\). Peer-planned social activities for preventing alcohol use among young adolescents. *Journal of School Health*, 66\(9\), 328-334.](#) 

Komro, K. A., Perry, C. L., Veblen-Mortenson, S., Williams, C. L., & Roel, J. P. (1999). Peer leadership in school and community alcohol use prevention activities. *Journal of Health Education*, 30(4), 202-208.

[Perry, C. L., Williams, C. L., Forster, J. L., Wolfson, M., Wagenaar, A. C., Finnegan, J. R., et al. \(1993\). Background, conceptualization, and design of a community-wide research program on adolescent alcohol use: Project Northland. *Health Education Research*, 8\(1\), 125-136.](#) 

Williams, C. L., Perry, C. L., Dudovitz, B., Veblen-Mortenson, S., Anstine, P. S., Komro, K. A., et al. (1995). A home-based prevention program for sixth-grade alcohol use: Results from Project Northland. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 16(2), 125-147.

Williams, C. L., Toomey, T. L., McGovern, P., Wagenaar, A. C., & Perry, C. L. (1995). Development, reliability, and validity of self-report alcohol-use measures with young adolescents. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Substance Abuse*, 4(3), 17-40.

Outcomes

Outcome 1: Tendency to use alcohol

Description of Measures

The Tendency To Use Alcohol Scale combined items on actual alcohol use from the Monitoring the Future survey with items concerning intention to use alcohol. Questions included "How likely is it that you'll drink an alcoholic beverage?" at four future time points (ever, if someone offered it you in the next 12 months, in the next 30 days, in the next 7 days) and "On how many occasions have you had alcoholic beverages to drink?" at four past time points (in your lifetime, during the last 12 months, during the last 30 days, and during the last 7 days). Students responded using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (0 occasions) to 7 (40 or more occasions).

Key Findings

By the end of the intervention, students who participated in Project Northland were less likely to drink alcohol than other students, as measured by lower mean scores on the Tendency To Use Alcohol Scale (16.0% vs. 17.5%, $p < .05$). In addition, students who did not use alcohol before participating in Project Northland were less likely to use alcohol after the intervention than similar youth who did not participate (13.8% vs. 15.3%, $p < .01$).

Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 1
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	3.4 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome 2: Past-week alcohol use

Description of Measures	Alcohol use over the past week was assessed with an item from the Monitoring the Future survey: "On how many occasions have you had alcoholic beverages to drink during the last 7 days?" Students responded using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (0 occasions) to 7 (40 or more occasions).
Key Findings	By the end of the intervention, fewer students who participated in Project Northland reported any alcohol use during the past week than comparable students (10.5% vs. 14.8%, $p < .05$). This finding was especially strong among students who never used alcohol before participating in Project Northland (5.9% vs. 9.8%, $p < .01$).
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 1
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	3.4 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome 3: Past-month alcohol use

Description of Measures	Alcohol use over the past month was measured using an item from the Monitoring the Future survey: "On how many occasions have you had alcoholic beverages to drink during the last 30 days?" Students responded using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (0 occasions) to 7 (40 or more occasions).
Key Findings	By the end of the intervention, fewer students who participated in Project Northland reported any alcohol use during the past month than comparable students (23.6% vs. 29.2%, $p < .05$). This finding was equally strong among students who never used alcohol before participating in Project Northland (15.3% vs. 21.2%, $p < .05$).
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 1
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	3.4 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome 4: Peer influence to use alcohol

Description of Measures	Peer influence was assessed by two questions asking students to estimate how many of their friends use alcohol and how often their friends have offered them alcohol. Students responded using a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (none or never) to 5 (almost all of them or many times).
Key Findings	Among young adolescents, peer influence was shown to have a statistically significant effect on the tendency to use alcohol ($p < .05$). This finding suggests that some of Project Northland's effectiveness on individual alcohol use decisions was due to its impact on peer influences.
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 2
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	2.9 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome 5: Reasons not to use alcohol

Description of Measures	The functional meaning of alcohol use (reasons not to use alcohol) was assessed by asking
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students to rate the importance of reasons for not drinking (such as "There are many other ways to have fun besides drinking alcohol," "it would hurt my reputation," "I'm afraid I may become an alcoholic," etc.) are to them. Students responded using a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (not too important to me) to 5 (very important to me).

Key Findings	Among young adolescents, the perceived "functional meaning" of alcohol use was shown to have a statistically significant effect on the tendency to use alcohol. This finding suggests that Project Northland increased "functional meanings" that supported nonuse.
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 2
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	2.9 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome 6: Parent-child communication about alcohol

Description of Measures	Students responded "true" or "false" to four items assessing the communication between themselves and their parents concerning alcohol. Items included, for example: "My parents talk with me about problems drinking alcohol can cause young people," and "I think my parents will allow me to drink by the time I am a high school senior."
Key Findings	Among young adolescents, two parent-child communication items were shown to have statistically significant effects on the tendency to use alcohol. These items were "My parents talk with me about problems drinking alcohol can cause young people" ($p < .05$) and "My parents have told me what would happen if I were caught drinking alcohol" ($p < .05$). This finding suggests that Project Northland increased these types of parent-child communication around alcohol use.
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 2
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	2.9 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Study Populations

The following populations were identified in the studies reviewed for Quality of Research.

Study	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Study 1	6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)	Data not reported/available	94% White 5.5% American Indian or Alaska Native 0.5% Race/ethnicity unspecified
Study 2	6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)	51% Male 49% Female	95.6% White 3.7% American Indian or Alaska Native 0.7% Race/ethnicity unspecified

Quality of Research Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

External reviewers independently evaluate the Quality of Research for an intervention's reported results using six criteria:

1. Reliability of measures
2. Validity of measures
3. Intervention fidelity
4. Missing data and attrition
5. Potential confounding variables
6. Appropriateness of analysis

For more information about these criteria and the meaning of the ratings, see [Quality of Research](#).

Outcome	Reliability of Measures	Validity of Measures	Fidelity	Missing Data/Attrition	Confounding Variables	Data Analysis	Overall Rating
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Outcome	Measures	Measures	Fidelity	Data/Attrition	Variables	Analysis	Rating
1: Tendency to use alcohol	3.5	3.8	2.8	3.5	3.0	3.8	3.4
2: Past-week alcohol use	3.5	3.8	2.8	3.5	3.0	3.8	3.4
3: Past-month alcohol use	3.5	3.8	2.8	3.5	3.0	3.8	3.4
4: Peer influence to use alcohol	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.5	3.5	2.9
5: Reasons not to use alcohol	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.5	3.5	2.9
6: Parent-child communication about alcohol	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.5	3.5	2.9

Study Strengths

The study used a randomized control trial with a relatively long-term follow-up period to examine the effect of a comprehensive alcohol prevention program. The intervention is based on a sound theoretical foundation and was consistently implemented by trained staff and with the use of training manuals. The Tendency To Use Alcohol Scale has good psychometric properties (high internal consistency and test-retest reliability) with acceptable criterion-related validity. Participation rates were relatively high, especially for a population-based study. There were no differences between refusals and dropouts in the intervention when compared with the control conditions. In addition, appropriate and sophisticated analytic methods controlled for the effect of missing data and allowed the investigators to control for baseline differences along key variables between the intervention and control groups.

Study Weaknesses

Although high rates of participation were demonstrated in the first year of the study, numbers declined somewhat and the attrition rate was 19% by the third year. It was difficult to separate which components or factors of the intervention were most important and effective in assessing the effectiveness of alcohol prevention program on young adolescents (either singly or in combination).

Readiness for Dissemination

Review Date: March 2007

Materials Reviewed

The materials below were reviewed for Readiness for Dissemination. The implementation point of contact can provide information regarding implementation of the intervention and the availability of additional, updated, or new materials.

Hazelden Foundation. (2000). The Amazing Activity Planner. Center City, MN: Author.

Hazelden Foundation. (2004). The Slick Tracy Home Team Program: Week 1 (English and Spanish). Center City, MN: Author.

Hazelden Foundation. (2004). The Slick Tracy Home Team Program: Week 2 (English and Spanish). Center City, MN: Author.

Hazelden Foundation. (2004). The Slick Tracy Home Team Program: Week 3 (English and Spanish). Center City, MN: Author.

Hazelden Foundation. (2004). The Slick Tracy Home Team Program: Week 4 (English and Spanish). Center City, MN: Author.

Hazelden Foundation. (n.d.). Amazing Alternatives! A seventh-grade alcohol use prevention curriculum: Teacher's Manual.

Hazelden Foundation. (n.d.). PowerLines: An eighth-grade alcohol use prevention curriculum: Teacher's Manual.

Hazelden Foundation. (n.d.). Slick Tracy: A sixth-grade alcohol use prevention curriculum: Home Team Program Teacher's Manual.

Hazelden Foundation. (n.d.). Slick Tracy: A sixth-grade alcohol use prevention curriculum: Urban Edition Teacher's Manual.

Hazelden Foundation. (n.d.). Supercharged: Strategies that worked in Project Northland communities. An action manual for parents and community.

NREPP Project Northland and Class Action Program Application: Readiness for Dissemination binder

Powerlines posters

Project Northland/Class Action Surveys and Process Data Forms [CD-ROM]

Readiness for Dissemination Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

External reviewers independently evaluate the intervention's Readiness for Dissemination using three criteria:

1. Availability of implementation materials
2. Availability of training and support resources
3. Availability of quality assurance procedures

For more information about these criteria and the meaning of the ratings, see [Readiness for Dissemination](#).

Implementation Materials	Training and Support Resources	Quality Assurance Procedures	Overall Rating
4.0	3.8	3.0	3.6

Dissemination Strengths

Program materials are well designed, culturally and age-appropriate, highly interactive, and engaging. Highly interactive and comprehensive training is available to implementers. Fidelity checklists, evaluation forms for teacher performance, and outcome surveys are provided to support quality assurance.

Dissemination Weaknesses

It is unclear whether any technical support is available during the implementation process. It is unclear how data from outcome evaluations is to be used by implementers. Protocol forms are designed for individual classroom administration rather than overall organizational quality assurance purposes.

Costs

The cost information below was provided by the developer. Although this cost information may have been updated by the developer since the time of review, it may not reflect the current costs or availability of items (including newly developed or discontinued items). The implementation point of contact can provide current information and discuss implementation requirements.

Item Description	Cost	Required by Developer
Grade 6-8 curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$625.00 Classroom Curriculum Package (includes all grade levels and Program Guide) • \$229.00 Slick Tracy – 6th Grade • \$229.00 Amazing Alternatives – 7th Grade • \$229.00 PowerLines – 8th Grade • \$195.00 Program Guide 	Yes
2 day, onsite basic implementation training	\$6,500 per site plus travel expenses	No
Scope and sequence document, research information, and fidelity checklist	Included with curricula	No

Additional Information

Discounts are available depending on the volume of orders. Purchasers who place orders through Hazelden's Online Bookstore receive free shipping.

Replications

Selected citations are presented below. An asterisk indicates that the document was reviewed for Quality of Research.

Chase, R., McLain, L., & Hendricks, S. (2003). Project Northland in Lakeville and Farmington: 2000-2003 revised summative evaluation. St. Paul, MN: Wilder Research Center.

Community Research and Services Team, Department of Psychology, University of Rhode Island. (2005). Statewide evaluation: Replicating science-based substance abuse prevention programs. Available online at http://www.mhrh.ri.gov/SA/pdf/Statewide_Prevention_Evaluation_Report.pdf

McLain, L., & Romero, S. M. (2006). Project Northland in Randolph and South St. Paul: 2003-2006 summative evaluation. St. Paul, MN: Wilder Research Center.

Roth, C. (2006). Summary report of Project Northland student data. Student cohort, grades 6 to 8, 2003-2006. Madison, WI: Starfish

Consulting.

Contact Information

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Consider these [Questions to Ask](#) (PDF, 54KB) as you explore the possible use of this intervention.

Web Site(s):

- <http://www.hazelden.org/web/go/projectnorthland>

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