

Education and Social and Emotional Skill Development Prevents Substance Use says UN's Office on Drugs and Crime

'Super Skills' promotes social and emotional skill development to prevent substance use prevention, says United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

VIENNA, AUSTRIA, January 24, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Celebrating this International Day of Education, on January 24th, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) emphasizes that education is crucial in achieving successful substance use prevention. It is also key in fulfilling international commitments such as human rights, peace, and development, combating poverty and inequalities, including in fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations and the international community.



Education and social and emotional skill development prevents substance abuse.

Schools and teachers play a critical role in substance use prevention, laying a foundation for a healthy lifestyle and providing children and youth with the information and skills needed to succeed in life. Regrettably, many children and youth have been denied their rights to education during the pandemic and the national lockdowns that followed closing down schools across the globe. The difference in access to education also sadly remains a matter of gender and socio-economic status.

According to UNESCO, "258 million children and youth still do not attend school; 617 million children and adolescents cannot read and do basic math; less than 40% of girls in sub-Saharan Africa complete lower secondary school, and some four million children and youth refugees are out of school."

<https://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/en/files/3214742.pdf>

To celebrate this year's International Day of Education, UNODC and its drug use prevention

branch released a new video and educational materials under its 'Listen First' project, 'Super Skills – [The Science of Skills](#).'

'Super Skills: The Science of Skills' emphasizes social and emotional skill development in substance use prevention and targets primary age children and those working with them, especially educators, health and prevention professionals, and policymakers.



UNODC partners with Member States and organizations worldwide to promote evidence-based drug use prevention in education with educators, health and prevention workers, and policymakers.

“

Education brings hope and motivation to communities at a time when it is needed the most. Learning social and emotional skills is extremely important for children and youth to succeed in life.”

*Ms. Giovanna Campello, Chief
UNODC Prevention, Treatment
& Rehabilitation*

One partner is the Ministry of Education in the Dominican Republic: “We have coordinated the dissemination of the ‘Listen First’ campaign through programs, workshops, and educational radio, produced for families,” says Ms. Divina García from the Ministry of Education and Head of Family Orientation and Support Unit, in the Dominican Republic.

“Social and emotional learning and developing life skills helps youth incorporate healthy social behaviors. Therefore, we have reinforced our teachers with new pedagogical and interactive methods to work with students and provided technical capacities, mentors, and

ambassadors. We have also focused on risk and prevention factors in our work with families,” she notes. “Providing normative beliefs and life skills that form or reinforce prosocial attitudes and behaviors can make children and adolescents capable of identifying and managing high-risk situations. The objective is to increase resilience in young people at risk, using sports as a link to reduce antisocial behaviors and develop life skills, to promote a healthy and safe lifestyle that impacts education, reduce school dropouts, and strengthen bonding between schools and the community.” She concludes: “We’re looking forward to continuing to use 'Listen First' and to implement the materials in our current prevention programs.”

According to science, strengthening social and emotional skill development is the most efficient drug prevention measure amongst primary-age children. In addition, an investment in social and emotional skill development increases overall mental and physical health, school performance,

and later work satisfaction and success among adults. In light of this, UNODC has promoted its 'Listen First' initiative since 2016. 'Listen First' promotes science-based substance use prevention that focuses on listening to children and youth.

The latest video, [The Book Challenge](#) produced by Ethan Films, is an adventure about overcoming your fears.

Endorsed by international partners, such as the US-based National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP), and Movendi International, the 'Listen First' materials are free to use and available for educators, parents, teachers, policymakers, health workers, prevention workers, and the wider public.

The program has been adopted in countries including Finland, Serbia, Slovenia, Poland, the United Arab Emirates, Latin America, with more to follow in 2022.

The videos are supplemented by educational materials focusing on social and emotional skill development. 'Listen First' materials are available in English, Spanish, French, and other languages on the website: www.unodc.org/listenfirst

The rigorous science behind this program is summarized in the [UNODC/WHO International Standards on Drug Use Prevention](#).

UNODC welcomes Member States and organizations who are interested to use or even translate 'Listen First' to get in touch!

For more information, contact

Jenny Roston Lundstrom

UNODC

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Other](#)



This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/560817259>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2022 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.