

Edition 06 – 2

Summer 2008

# Research Précis

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

Creating a better tomorrow...

### Title: **Second Step**

#### Overview:

*Second Step* is a preschool through adolescence violence prevention program designed to change attitudes and behaviors that contribute to violence.

*Targeted Ages/Grade Levels:* Pre-K to Grade 8

*Extent/Duration of Program:* The program consists of kits focused at pre-K, elementary, and three at middle/junior high level, with about 15-20 lessons per grade (one-two per week) through grade 6 and eight lessons each for grades 7 and 8, ranging in length from about 20 minutes at the earlier grades to about 50 minutes at later grades.

#### Program Costs:

- The Pre-K through grade 5 kit is \$975; the levels 1-3 middle school kit is \$535. Individual components or combinations of products may also be purchased. The Family Guide is \$359.
- A variety of regional trainings are provided, as well as on-site training for up to 40 participants with details specific to needs.

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

Committee for Children  
568 First Avenue South, Suite 600  
Seattle, WA 98104-2804

Phone: 800-634-4449, ext. 6223  
Fax (general): 206-438-6765  
Fax (order): 206-343-1445

E-mail: [info@cfchildren.org](mailto:info@cfchildren.org)

Web site:  
<http://www.cfchildren.org/cfc/ssf/ssf/ssindex/>

*Principles/Approaches/Components:* *Second Step* is based on the premise that acquisition of key social competencies will decrease children's risk for engaging in destructive behavior and will expand their repertoire of pro-social skills. The program components focus on those pro-social skills, including empathy (i.e., understanding their own emotions and those of others), impulse control (i.e., setting positive goals and measuring and evaluating consequences of decisions), and anger management (i.e., managing emotional reactions and learning how and when to engage decision-making strategies). The program features activities involving group discussion, modeling, coaching and practice to increase students' social competence and abilities to assess risks, make decisions, self-regulate, and set positive goals. The Second Step Family Guide is available as a supplement through grade 5, and features a six-session program to help parents become acquainted with the objectives of the program and to reinforce their children's communication skills along with the other program components.

*Evidence-based Effectiveness:* Of numerous studies conducted during a period from 1995 to 2005, findings from at least two indicated that students who have participated in the program received more positive scores in observer ratings of negative behaviors in the classroom, lunchroom, and playground, and in the numbers of reports received by teachers citing anti-

social behavior. The results were universal—addressing those children considered at risk and those not—and comparably effective across socioeconomic and ethnic boundaries. Some reviewers have also noted a high degree of retention of the previously mentioned observational effects after a time lapse of six months.

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

A.i - Activities that address the consequences of violence and the illegal use of drugs.

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

B - Activities that involve families, community sectors, and a variety of drug and violence prevention providers in setting clear expectations against violence and illegal use of drugs and appropriate consequences for violence and illegal use of drugs.

E.xiii - Violence prevention and education programs that address victimization associated with prejudice and intolerance, and that include activities designed to help students develop a sense of individual responsibility and respect for the rights of others, and to resolve conflicts without violence.

**National Standards connections:**

*Grades K through 8*

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 5 – Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

Health Education Standard 6 – Students will Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

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 B: Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.

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

**Recognition and additional reports:**

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

Promising Practices Network (Promising Program)

SAMHSA (Model Program)

U.S. Department of Education (Exemplary Program)

**GENERAL NOTES:** The information in this research précis was originally synthesized by Designed Instruction, LLC as an SDFSC Best Practices Brief for the Kansas State Department of Education. The intent of the revised, nationally correlated version is to serve a wider range of teachers and school administrators dedicated to helping reduce violence and substance abuse. The information was current as of September 2006. Details pertaining to status of program recognition, further research and findings, program costs, and contact addresses and numbers 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.

**DISCLAIMER OF ENDORSEMENT:** Designed Instruction, LLC does not officially endorse resources and information available through this document or otherwise provided in Web pages devoted to Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities other than those links that lead to resources wholly developed by Designed Instruction and solely distributed on the Designed Instruction Web site.