

[An Integrated national approach to school drug education](#)

The Australian Government is committed to supporting schools to deliver effective drug education to their students and to this end has developed an integrated national approach to school drug education in Australia.

This comprehensive approach informs school policy and practice, assists schools as they move toward good practice in school drug education and provides resources to reach students and the broader school community.

How does this happen? The revised 'Principles for School Drug Education' (the Principles) and the 'National Framework for Protocols for Managing the Possession, Use and/or Distribution of Illicit and Other Unsanctioned Drugs in Schools' (the National Framework) provide an overarching framework that informs policy and practice in school drug education. The Principles set out the key elements for delivery of effective drug education in schools, have a strong evidence base and function as a ready reference for the key principles that underpin effective school drug education. (The revised Principles are expected to be available toward the end of 2003.) The National Framework focuses on prevention and sets out principles for early intervention – aimed at ensuring there are appropriate procedures in place both for managing drug related incidents and for identifying and supporting those students most at risk of substance use.

Exploring innovation and good practice in drug education policy is addressed through the 'Innovation and Good Practice in Drug Education' monographs. This series of eight monographs explores the range of practices, views and approaches in school drug education and can enhance a school's own approach to drug education. Each of the eight monographs addresses a key theme, such as creating connectedness and creating an engaging curriculum.

To give life to this integrated approach, the Australian Government has developed the REDI resources. These practical, realistic and fun resources promote a whole school approach to drug education.



The Australian Government, through the Department of Education, Science and Training, has produced a suite of multi-media resources that support effective drug education and management in Australian schools. The resources, called REDI - Resilience Education and Drug Information - include materials for upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school students as well as professional development materials for teachers and the broader school community. The multimedia resources include videos, CD-ROMs, teacher and facilitator guides and a national website.

The REDI resources are the first school drug education resources that focus on preventing and reducing harm by building resilience and connectedness in school students. REDI will help students develop the skills, attitudes and knowledge they need to become more resilient young people. Recent research shows that resilient young people are less likely to engage in a range of high-risk behaviours, including problematic substance use.

The REDI resources sit within the Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum and are practical, realistic and fun for students to use.

REDI resources

Resources for students

- *The Big Move* – interactive CD ROM and video products for upper primary school students which explore issues about change and peer pressure, particularly around negotiating relationships with friends and family.
- *My TV* – interactive CD ROM and video products for lower secondary school students. It explores issues of drug use, in particular alcohol, tobacco and cannabis through the use of drama. It addresses skills such as decision-making, self-talk and being assertive. Students will be able to engage in problem predicting and solving and in help seeking behaviour.
- *On the Edge* – interactive CD ROM and video products for upper secondary students who will be leaving school and entering the world of work or further study. It explores issues of drug use, in particular around alcohol, ecstasy and cannabis for young people who will be leaving school and entering the world of work or further study. *On the Edge* explores balancing study, work and social life, dealing with stress, increasing independence and looking to the future.

Products and services for teachers and schools

REDI for school communities: a resilience approach to drug education – a video for the wider school community reviewing current research and examples of a resilience based approach to drug education.

REDI for the classroom: teaching strategies for a resilience approach to drug education – a video for primary and secondary teachers exploring the implications of a resilience based approach to drug education for classroom practice.

REDI for practice: a support resource for a resilience approach to drug education – a CD ROM designed to support teachers exploring and enriching their understanding of drug education, particularly in the areas of resilience and using interactive and inclusive strategies in the classroom.

www.redi.gov.au – a comprehensive website of information about resources, policies and materials for drug education and incident management for all school staff.

Teachers can access technical support in using the resources by phoning 1800 252 756.

Resilience building

Resilience is the ability to cope with and bounce back from life's challenging and difficult experiences.

Australian and international research is showing that:

- young people who have strong relationships - with their friends, family, school and within their community - are more resilient than other young people
- while there is little evidence to suggest that resilience based prevention programs will reduce the rate of *experimentation* with alcohol and other drugs, the research does indicate that the more resilient young people are the less likely they are to get into serious trouble with a range of high-risk behaviours including drug use
- risk factors frequently co-occur, meaning for example, that young people who experience mental health issues are also more likely to have substance abuse problems

Resilience and learning

There is a clear connection between learning, resilience and outcomes for young people:

- learning and performing well at school are protective factors against drug related harm (they do not guarantee that substance use problems won't occur, but the risk is lower)
- the same strategies and skills that foster resilience also promote learning – caring relationships and environment, problem solving skills and positive expectations

The role of schools

Teachers and schools have a critical role to play in promoting the health and well-being of young people and in protecting them from the serious harm that drugs can cause.

Schools and teachers can help students to become more resilient by:

- promoting a sense of belonging
- providing positive role models and offering supportive relationships
- having positive and high expectations of students
- creating opportunities for young people to participate actively and meaningfully in school and community life
- supporting students to develop resilience skills, attitudes and knowledge
- taking a whole of school approach.

The whole of school approach

The whole of school approach recognises that everyone in the school community (including teachers, students, parents, principals, counsellors, police as well as youth and health workers) has an important role to play in preventing drug use.

The whole of school approach brings representatives from the entire school community together to work on improving the school's outcomes on drug issues.

For further information please email drugeducationprogramme@dest.gov.au.

Synopsis of student resources:



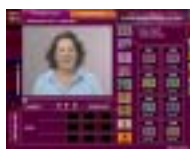
The Big Move

for upper primary students (10 to 12 years)

The ***The Big Move*** tells the story of Ruben, Carla and their father, Leo, who are moving to a new town.

The **video** takes place before the move. It raises issues about change and peer pressure, particularly around negotiating relationships with friends and family. In this context issues around alcohol and tobacco are raised.

The **CD-ROM** continues the story of the family after the move, as Ruben and Carla negotiate new people and situations in New Town. The **CD-ROM** also explores health issues related to alcohol, tobacco and caffeine.



My TV

for lower secondary students (12 to 14 years)

The ***My TV* video** is a drama about a group of Year 10 students exploring issues of drug use, in particular alcohol, tobacco and cannabis through the use of drama. The drama is intercut with 'vox pops' - interviews with young people.

In the ***My TV* CD-ROM**, students 'join' the ***My TV*** production team and put together an episode of ***My TV***. They select or come up with a problem, evaluate the issues, choose appropriate video clips of opinions from interviews with experts and young people, browse relevant internet sites and construct their own advice in response to the selected problem.



On the Edge

for upper secondary students (15 to 18 years)

The ***On the Edge*** resources explore issues for young people who will be leaving school and entering the world of work or further study. These issues include balancing study, work and social life, dealing with stress, increasing independence and looking to the future.

The **video** features a series of interviews with young people (year 12 - early 20's) as they reflect on how they have learned to deal with challenges and problems. The **CD-ROM** features interviews and provides information via links to websites and other activities.

Synopsis of professional development resources

REDI for the school communities: a resilience approach to drug education

The **video** and **facilitator guide** are the first in the set of professional development resources. They have been developed to assist schools gain an understanding of current research and practice in the area of resilience and consider the possible implications for school drug education strategies, health promotion and wellbeing within their own school context. *REDI for school communities* is intended to:

- Be delivered as a whole school workshop;
- Support understanding and consideration of a resilience approach to the school's drug education strategies and programs; and
- Provide a context of understanding within the school about how to use each of the REDI resources to support drug education strategies and programs.

REDI for the classroom: teaching strategies for a resilience approach to drug education

The **video** and **facilitator guide** aim to provide teachers with opportunities to enhance their use of strategies for active and inclusive student centred learning. Through a set of workshop activities and trigger videos, teachers who provide drug education related activities can consider their own strategies and techniques for fostering learning, belonging and participation within their classrooms. *REDI for the classroom* is intended to:

- Be delivered as a workshop across the school or region for teachers involved in drug education related activities; and
- Support the use of interactive and inclusive strategies in the classroom to promote learning, resilience and wellbeing within drug education related activities.

REDI for practice: a support resource for a resilience approach to drug education

The **CD-ROM** provides self-directed professional development opportunities for teachers. It contains video clips, documents and website links so that teachers can focus their learning to meet their own needs and interests in those areas related to resilience and drug education strategies. *REDI for practice* is designed to:

- Support those who may not have participated in school-based staff development workshops – the CD-ROM provides ready access to key information, resources and strategies within the REDI approach;
- Support further self-development and enrichment of concepts and principles from the other REDI professional development resources/workshops; and
- Support those who are facilitating *REDI for school communities* and/or *REDI for the classroom* by providing background material on resilience and drug education to help inform their workshop delivery.



National website

www.redi.gov.au – contains information on drug education and incident management for all school staff. The website features:

- a resource list of key school drug education policies and resources available nationally
- a drug dictionary
- a Reading Room containing current research, useful statistics, examples of good practice in school drug education and key school drug education documents