



# CSPV POSITION SUMMARY

PS-001

1998

## D.A.R.E. Program

Both the evaluations<sup>1</sup> of D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) on individual sites, and the meta-analyses involving multiple sites report little or no evidence of deterrent effects. Overall, the research indicates that children who participate in the traditional D.A.R.E. curriculum (which is implemented in the fifth or sixth grades) are just as likely to use drugs as are children who do not participate in the program. This same set of studies indicates there are some beneficial attitudinal outcomes of the D.A.R.E. program, which includes replacing negative stereotypes of police with positive attitudes toward police, as well as collective and unified support of and involvement in the program by parents, teachers and police. But, in general, participation in D.A.R.E. does not reduce the risk of future drug use.

In response to the evaluation research, the national offices of D.A.R.E. have initiated potentially important modifications in the program. Implementing the curriculum in the 5th grade has been extended into or, in some cases, replaced with implementation in the 7th grade followed by booster or follow-up sessions in the 8th, 9th, and 10th grades. This modification of the program has yet to be evaluated but may well yield deterrent effects.

The D.A.R.E. example demonstrates the value of evaluation research. Instead of continuing to invest substantial national and local resources in a program with no deterrent effect, D.A.R.E. has responded to the evaluation information by modifying their program. New evaluations are needed to determine if this new version of D.A.R.E. is an effective drug prevention program.

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<sup>1</sup> The available evaluation research on the D.A.R.E. program includes both true experimental designs with random assignment and quasi-experimental design with good control groups. Our position is based upon these studies which offer the most credible evidence on program effects.

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