



## PREVENTION IN PRACTICE

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Elements of Effective Prevention in Programming of Student Leadership Services, Inc.*

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Paper included in SLS Advisor Handbook

Student Leadership Services (SLS) synthesizes prevention, education and youth development principles in interactive and peer-led strategies that develop competent, skilled and caring young people. SLS programming and training provide opportunities for bonding, skill development and meaningful participation. The primary goal of SLS is to develop healthy youth – youth who are physically, emotionally, socially, psychologically, and intellectually at their best. A secondary goal/strategy is to delay, deter and eliminate the onset of use of alcohol and other drugs among youth.

The key to SLS efficacy is the design and implementation of peer-led models with developmentally appropriate experiences, supports and opportunities that foster realization of the personal leadership skills of youth. SLS programs target and change characteristics that account for drug use and other self-harming behaviors. Peer leadership models are the SLS niche. Every aspect of SLS programming and activities demonstrate inclusiveness and youth leadership with adult support.

The youth-led programs of the SLS network are structured as school-based organizations. They are:

Students Leading Students High School Chapters  
Student Advisory Board (SAB) of the High School Statewide Network  
Students Taking A New Direction (STAND) Middle School Chapters  
STAND To Be Active Curriculum modules for middle school taught by high school peers  
Peer Resistance Skills Training (PRS) High School Peers train Elementary students  
Peer Refusal Skills Training for high school peers to teach middle school  
Leadership Skill Training for individual students, chapters, advisors and parents  
SLS Alumni Volunteers

This paper cites specific research data and the specific methodology in SLS programming predicated on the data. This paper explores how SLS creates peer groups with caring and support, positive expectations and opportunities for participation. SLS translates current prevention research and science into effective programs and services that promote the healthy development of youth. This paper describes the process through which SLS peer-led programs prevent adolescent substance abuse. SLS incorporates effective prevention elements in the design of programs. SLS implements methods of interactive group process that produce the results we are looking for: developing competent youth and preventing unhealthy behaviors. SLS and its programs make research come to life.

This paper is a synthesis of reports from National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), research findings (Benson; Botvin; Hawkins and Catalano; Werner), meta-analysis reports (Benard; Hansen; NIDA; Tobler), analyses of nationally recognized prevention experts (Alderman; Astroth; Hansen; Kumpfer; Moe) and human development theorists (Bronfenbrenner; Erikson; Maslow; Piaget).