

Title: Development and Implementation of a Youth Substance Abuse Train the Trainer Program

Purpose: In 2019, two students from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Pharmacy along with two faculty members collaborated with the Boy Scouts Greater St. Louis Area Council creating and approving an online, interactive substance abuse awareness patch*. This program targets 5th and 6th grade scouts; addressing addiction, drugs of abuse, risk factors, and impacts substance abuse has on the body. In an effort to broaden outreach, a virtual train the trainer program was developed and implemented for current Boy Scouts leaders to learn about substance use and abuse while preparing to launch this program with their own troop(s). *<https://siuecoepe.org/>

Methods: The goal of the train the trainer program was to spread awareness and gain interest in implementing the substance abuse awareness program while improving content knowledge and confidence in delivering the materials by the trainers. This training was developed and implemented by a fourth year pharmacy student earning a specialization in education with experience creating and teaching several healthcare related programs. Coordination with the BSA occurred in order to promote and host seven train the trainer sessions. These sessions were 2 hours in length and consisted of an in depth overview of the online patch program and its materials, further instruction of how to lead group sessions, and vaping education. They were asked to be part of a study that obtained IRB approval to assess their knowledge and confidence on the topic of substance abuse by answering a pre-survey. All participants created an anonymous survey identification code to track their progress. After attending the training session, participants then completed a similar post-survey to evaluate the impact of the training on their knowledge and confidence levels.

Results: To date, 10 subjects participated in this pilot study thus far, one of which was under the age of 18 whose survey responses will not be included in the data analysis. Participants whose responses were included are mostly female and vary in age ranges of 35-44 and 55-89. The results are indicating a change in median responses from agree to strongly agree on 3 out of 4 substance abuse knowledge based survey questions, and changed from either neutral or agree to strongly agree or remained as strongly agree on the confidence level assessment questions. The main limitation to this study is the small pool of participants. The study investigators anticipate this number to grow as the news of this piloted train the trainer program spreads. There were three participants lost to follow up, as they did not complete the post-survey portion of the training.

Conclusion: Train the trainer sessions were beneficial in providing substance abuse education and instilling confidence in future program leaders. In the future, SIUE School of Pharmacy hopes to expand this program to continue broadening our outreach through correspondence with Girls Scouts and local schoolteachers of both 5th and 6th grade students.