



Families that Care—Guiding Good Choices®

Program Description

Formerly named *Preparing for the Drug-Free Years, Families that Care—Guiding Good Choices*® (GGC) is a multimedia substance abuse prevention program that gives parents of children in grades 4–8 (ages 9–14) the knowledge and skills needed to guide their children through early adolescence. Formerly named *Preparing for the Drug-Free Years*, GGC is designed to help parents reduce the likelihood that their children will develop problems with drugs and alcohol in adolescence. The program intends to help parents:

- provide preteens and teens with appropriate opportunities for involvement in the family,
- recognize competencies and skills
- teach children how to keep friends and popularity while using drug-refusal skills
- set and communicate healthy beliefs and clear standards for children's behavior

Target Audience

Parents with children in grades 4–8 (ages 9–14)

Special Audiences/Program Adaptations

GGC has been implemented in diverse urban and rural communities across the United States with parents and children from various ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. It has been tested with Hispanic, African-American, Samoan, Native American, and Caucasian families.

Program Components

GGC consists of five two-hour sessions usually held over five consecutive weeks. The curriculum can also be presented in ten one-hour sessions. During these sessions, parents learn to establish a family policy on drug use. They learn to teach their children resistance skills, to recognize the importance of creating opportunities for adolescents to have meaningful roles in the family, and to practice techniques for self-control in order to reduce family conflicts.

Two volunteer workshop leaders facilitate sessions. Ideally, one leader is a parent. The sessions are interactive and skill-based, with opportunities for parents to practice new skills and receive feedback from workshop leaders and other parents. Video-based vignettes demonstrate parenting skills through the portrayal of a variety of family situations. Participants also receive a Family Guide containing family activities, discussion topics, skill-building exercises, and information on positive parenting.

GGC has been offered to parents in schools, work sites, churches, community centers, homes, hospitals, and prisons. Parents who attend all five sessions are awarded a certificate of completion at the program's end.

Program Costs

A Core Program kit (containing materials for use by workshop leaders: two copies each of the Workshop Leader's Guide, the Workshop Video and the Family Guide, and CD containing PowerPoint presentations) is \$729, plus \$12.79 per Family Guide for each participating family (quantity discounts available for 10 or more Family Guides).

A Workshop Leader's Package includes the materials from the Core Program kit, plus a supply of 25 Family Guides, for the discounted package price of \$969.

Training & Technical Assistance

The workshop leaders who conduct GGC should be skilled in providing parenting workshops, understand the principles of adult learning, and be knowledgeable about risk and protective factors as they relate to prevention. It is recommended that this two-person team consist of a parent and someone with group facilitation experience.

While the program kit provides all of the tools needed by workshop leaders to deliver GGC workshops, it is recommended that leaders attend the Guiding Good Choices® leader's training, an intensive three-day session that prepares participants to become highly effective GGC workshop leaders. Training participants will be guided through each of the five workshops and will learn to motivate parents, teach good parenting skills, lead effective discussions, answer hard questions, and organize successful workshops.

Training and Technical Assistance Costs

Contact Channing Bete Company for information and pricing for GGC workshop leader training and technical assistance.

Evaluation Results

Program results suggest that the intervention has a statistically significant effect on promoting proactive communication from parent to child. In controlled studies, the GGC program has been shown to:

- reduce alcohol and marijuana use by up to 40.6%
- reduce progression to more serious drug abuse by 54%
- increase the likelihood that nonusers will remain drug-free by 26%

Recommended Evaluation Components

Evaluation tools are contained within the GGC program package. The GGC Workshop Leader's Guide contains reproducible pre- and post-tests for participants to fill out before and after each of the five sessions, along with instructions for their use. In addition, reproducible Workshop Leader Rating Sheets allow participants to rate the effectiveness of workshop leaders after each session.

Agency/Institution Recognition

- Communities That Care- Developmental Research and Programs Effective Program
- Strengthening America's Families Model Program
- Title V (OJJDP): Exemplary Program

Contact Information

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