



## Project Northland

### Program Description

Project Northland is a multilevel school, parent, and communitywide program designed to delay the age at which youth begin drinking, reduce use among those already drinking, reduce alcohol-related problems, and limit the use of other drugs. The program employs grade-specific tasks, exercises, and activities in a variety of formats, including comic books and posters. Because Project Northland includes community components, it can be implemented in schools as well as by community agencies. Project Northland was developed at the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health, and curricula and training are now provided by Hazelden Publishing.

### Target Audience

The target audience for Project Northland is students in grades 6 through 8. There is also a high school component of the program, *Class Action*, that targets students in grades 9 through 12.

### Special Populations/Available Adaptations

Project Northland was originally tested with primarily white students and students at seven American Indian reservations. The program has been successfully replicated in rural, suburban, and urban settings with African American, Asian American, and Hispanic/Latino populations. The sixth-grade program, *Slick Tracy*, has been adapted for use with urban populations, and has been translated into Chinese, Polish, Russian, and Spanish. Project Northland has also been adapted and translated into Croatian.

### Program Components

Project Northland's grades 6–8 curricula include the following components:

- *Slick Tracy Grade 6*: This program uses a comic-strip theme to engage youth and their families in discussions about alcohol-related issues. The program is designed as a once-a-week, one-month program. The curriculum package includes a teacher's guide, sets of comic books, and a poster.
- *Amazing Alternatives! Grade 7*: Materials focus on the immediate social consequences of alcohol use as well as the long-term health consequences. The program includes eight weekly classroom sessions.
- *PowerLines Grade 8*: *PowerLines* is an eight-session program that gets students to think about how community groups and organizations can influence prevention efforts.

In addition to the components of the grades 6–8 curricula, Project Northland also includes a community program, *Supercharged!*, and a high school program, *Class Action*. *Supercharged!* focuses on implementing alcohol prevention activities with parents and in the community. *Class Action* looks at the real-world social and legal consequences of underage alcohol use. *Class Action* includes 8 to 10 weekly sessions in which students are divided into legal teams to prepare and present hypothetical civil cases in which someone has been harmed as a result of underage drinking.

### Training and Technical Assistance

Hazelden highly recommends training to maintain the fidelity of the implementation and outcomes of the program, as designed by the developer. Training is scheduled regionally on an

as-needed basis, or can be scheduled and customized to fit the needs of your school. Trainings are one day for each individual grade level, two days for grades 6–8, and two-and-a-half days for grades 6–8 plus the *Supercharged!* community program. Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, community leaders, and prevention specialists are encouraged to participate. Telephone consultations with a Hazelden Sales Manager are available as needed, at no cost. Training and technical assistance is provided by Hazelden Publishing.

### **Program & Training Costs**

Project Northland curricula may be purchased as a collection or individually by grade level. The curricula for grades 6–8 cost \$595; these curricula plus the *Supercharged!* component cost \$795. If grade level curricula are purchased individually, they cost \$259 each. *Class Action*, the alcohol prevention curriculum for grades 9–12, costs \$495. These materials can be purchased from Hazelden's Web site at [http://www.hazelden.org/OA\\_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?a=b&item=2109](http://www.hazelden.org/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?a=b&item=2109). The on-site training costs are as follows: \$2,000 for a one-day training, \$3,500 for a two-day training, and \$5,250 for a two-and-a-half-day training. These costs do not include travel reimbursement for the trainer. The cost of attending a regional training is \$150 per day, per person. Attendees are responsible for their own travel expenses.

### **Evaluation Results**

Project Northland was originally evaluated with 2,400 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from 24 school districts in northeastern Minnesota. The school districts were randomly assigned to either intervention or control conditions before the program was implemented. Students and parents in the study were surveyed annually over the three years of the intervention. The results of this evaluation were as follows:

- At the end of eighth grade, monthly drinking was 20% lower among students in the intervention group compared with students in the control group.
- At the end of eighth grade, weekly drinking was 30% lower among students in the intervention group compared with students in the control group.
- Students in the intervention group were 27% less likely to use alcohol and cigarettes at the end of eighth grade.
- At the end of eighth grade, students in the intervention group who were never-drinkers at the beginning of sixth grade drank significantly less, smoked fewer cigarettes, and used marijuana less than students in the control group.
- Project Northland was effective in changing peer influence to use alcohol, normative expectations about how many young people drink, parent-child communication about the consequences of alcohol use, and the importance of reasons for not using alcohol.

### **Evaluation Components**

A pre- and posttest are included in the training materials and are explained in detail in the trainings. Hazelden does not provide analysis of the data from these tests.

### **Agency/Institution Recognition**

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Model Program
- U.S. Department of Education: Exemplary Program
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: Exemplary Program
- Drug Strategies, Making the Grade: Rated "A"
- Blueprints for Violence Prevention: Promising Program

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