

Health Rocks Impact Statement

Submitted by Karen Johnston, Extension Educator III

Issue:

According to the Government Study “Monitoring the Future” funded by the National Institute of Health tobacco use continues to fall among grades 8, 10 and 12 but there is an increase of “other tobacco products – electronic cigarettes and cigars that are sold in an array of sweet, kid-friendly flavors – (and) may be undermining these gains and luring kids into nicotine addiction” as stated by Tobacco Free Kids.org in response to this study.

From 2011 to 2014, past 30-day use of e-cigarettes increased 9-fold for high school students (1.5% to 13.4%) and more than 6-fold for middle school students (0.6% to 3.9%). In June of 2014, Delaware passed a law that the sale of e-cigarettes to minors is illegal. Since the data on e-cigarettes is still new and seemingly from federal studies, it is important to continue the educational outreach to middle school and high school youth on the dangers of not just tobacco, but all tobacco related products.

Also in the studies and news are the statistics on the growing use of opiates (prescription drugs), and heroin in Delaware as reported by the News Journal and nationally as reported by the Center for Disease Control.

Kids Count Delaware 2013 report when compared to the Kids Count 2014 reports show use of Marijuana among 8th graders decreasing from 11% to 9%, Alcohol decreasing from 16% to 13% and for 11 grade the Marijuana use also decreases from 27%-23% and Alcohol use for 11th grade from 37% to 31%. Health Rocks has been reaching so many youth and these statistic may point to our success. Another real possibility is that 8th-11th graders are increasingly using opiates and then heroin, and this data has not previously been collected for the Kids Count report. The CDC does note the alarming increase of prescription drugs and has been focusing their educational efforts as such.

National Institute on Drug Abuse states:

“Prescription drug abuse among teens is a significant problem affecting communities nationwide. Results from NIDA’s 2014 Monitoring the Future survey of teen drug use showed a number of worrying issues: Nonmedical use of prescription drugs remains high, while teens’ perception of the risk of such abuse is low. 13.9% of high school seniors used a prescription drug for nonmedical reasons or one that was not prescribed for them in the past year. After alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana, prescription and over-the-counter medications account for most of the top drugs abused by 12th graders in the past year, with Adderall and Vicodin being the most commonly abused prescription drugs.”

Response:

In 2015, Delaware 4-H reached 5,962 youth at 109 locations statewide with over 10 hours of Tobacco, Drug, and Alcohol Prevention Life Skills through the Health Rocks Curriculum. (23 of the sites were new sites including a new school district...Colonial). Delaware 4-H facilitates 10 lessons of Health Rocks, has participants complete homework, posters, and community projects while teachers facilitate additional hours both prior and after our delivery of the curriculum. (The Delaware Department of Education requires students in grades 5-12 to complete 15 hours of Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol prevention based on Health Education Standards each year so teachers are increasingly excited to partner with us).

This year Delaware Health Rocks staff updated curriculum to include information about the dangers of e-cigarettes which students had perceived to be lower risks. We also expanded the content on Marijuana which students were perceiving as a lower risks prior to our teaching.

Our program this year hosted two events for National Drug Facts Week. The events were hosted in order to spread awareness about substance abuse and about the harmful effects it is having on Delaware's residents. 18 schools selected students to read the morning drug facts announcements provided by Delaware 4-H, and Concord High School hosted the Health Rocks sponsored Community Substance Awareness Night. This enabled us to discuss drugs that are prominent problems within each county and to share current news reports about drugs within their area. Schools answered an open ended survey. Most schools responded that they liked the announcements and would do it again if they were shorter. An example of the comments received was: "Definitely benefitted students by creating discussion." As a result of this need and the positive response from schools for more information on prescription and other drugs and the impact on youth, we will continue the National Drug Facts week in January of 2016.

Result:

A questionnaire with retrospective measures, developed and analyzed by a team from the University of Nebraska, and assessed participants' self-reported increase in knowledge, skills and potential for positive behaviors after participating in the program. The retrospective survey (post-then-pre method), measured program impact by asking participants to report on their level of knowledge, skills and assets after the program and then to report, as best they can recall, the same indices prior to their participation in Health Rocks! The survey was comprised of 13 items, each with a 4-point response scale; as well as demographic items.

In Delaware, a total of 5,962 youth completed 10 hours or more training in Health Rocks! Of that total, 49% were boys and 51% were girls.

Youth participants were from all racial and ethnic groups. The majority of the participants self-reported as being Caucasian American (37.9%) and African American (37.1%), followed by Multi-racial (7.4%), Asian American (2.9%), and Native American (0.4%). Of all the youth participants, 14.4% self-reported as being Hispanic/Latino.

Youth participants varied in grade levels (from 3rd grade to 10th grade). The majority were in middle school (43.7%) and elementary school (42.4%), and only 5.5% were in high school.

The majority of youth participants (80.4%) reported their residence as suburban (population between 10,000 and 50,000), and the rest as urban (11.8%) (population above 50,000) and rural (7.8%) (population below 10,000) areas.

Below is a recap of the report. The full report is also included in the Plan of Work Narrative.

Percentage Change for All 13 Indicators

- Delaware participants reported consistent increase in knowledge about smoking, drinking and other drug use after training. Health Rocks! training help youth learn skills in dealing with peer pressure and stress, in making good decisions, and improve their self-values.

Table 1.4: Percentage Change After Training.

Items	%After	%Before	%Chang↑
<i>People who use drugs sometimes see or hear things that are not really there.</i>	93.9	84.9	9
<i>If a friend wanted to try drugs, I can talk them out of it.</i>	93.6	80.9	12.7
<i>When I feel stressed I am able to talk about it with people I trust.</i>	88.9	75.5	13.4
<i>Using drugs can ruin my relationships with my family and friends.</i>	95.9	88.1	7.8
<i>Once you start smoking, it is hard to stop.</i>	86.3	72.2	14.1
<i>I am able to say “no” if others offered me cigarettes.</i>	82.2	74.0	8.2
<i>I would help other kids like me to stay away from alcohol or other drugs.</i>	93.9	90.1	3.8
<i>People who smoke can die from lung cancer.</i>	94.2	90.6	3.6
<i>I don’t have to drink or smoke even if some other young people do it.</i>	95.3	91.5	3.8
<i>It is important for me to stay focused on learning at school.</i>	94.1	90.5	3.6
<i>I need to think about how my choices will affect my future.</i>	94.1	88.6	5.5
<i>I feel good about myself.</i>	90.1	85.4	4.7
<i>I have goals for myself.</i>	91.0	85.5	5.5

**Pre-Post Comparison Average Scores (Means) on Sub-Scales
Of Knowledge, Skills and Other Assets**

- Youth participants reported consistent increase on all items throughout the training.

Table 2.1: Repeated Measures t-tests and Means & Standard Deviations for Each Item After & Before Training

ITEMS	After Training		Before Training		t	N
	M	SD	M	SD		
<i>Once you start smoking, it is hard to stop.</i>	3.63	.68	3.32	.83	10.86***	878
<i>Using drugs can ruin my relationships with my family and friends.</i>	3.60	.65	3.22	.87	12.96***	873
<i>People who use drugs sometimes see or hear things that are not really there.</i>	3.39	.74	3.01	.90	12.26***	865
<i>People who smoke can die from lung cancer.</i>	3.74	.56	3.50	.77	9.51***	867
<i>If a friend wanted to try drugs, I can talk them out of it.</i>	3.31	.79	2.96	.90	11.23***	868
<i>When I feel stressed I am able to talk about it with people I trust.</i>	3.27	.89	3.03	.97	8.61***	854
<i>I am able to say “no” if others offered me cigarettes.</i>	3.72	.65	3.58	.75	6.11***	874
<i>I do not have to drink or smoke even if some other young people do it.</i>	3.72	.63	3.57	.75	6.71***	868
<i>It is important for me to stay focused on learning at school.</i>	3.73	.61	3.57	.73	7.41***	872
<i>I need to think about how my choices will affect my future.</i>	3.68	.64	3.47	.77	9.18***	864
<i>I have goals for myself.</i>	3.68	.64	3.52	.77	7.32***	861
<i>I feel good about myself.</i>	3.53	.76	3.39	.84	6.50***	864
<i>I would help other kids like me to stay away from alcohol or other drugs.</i>	3.53	.74	3.30	.85	9.00***	867

SUBSCALES						
Knowledge	3.60	.45	3.27	.60	16.66***	843
Skills	3.51	.51	3.30	.58	19.09***	831
Assets	3.64	.49	3.46	.57	-36.75***	825

Note: 1) Repeated measures t-test was used; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

2) SD – Standard Deviation (average differences from the mean)

3) Response range was 1- 4 with 4= strongly agree and 1 = strongly disagree, higher numbers reflect higher scores.

Delaware 4-H is pleased with the results of the survey and comparisons with previous years demonstrate we continue to make significant impact in the lives of thousands of youth.