



BJA Bureau of Justice Assistance Fact Sheet

Nancy E. Gist, Director

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.®)

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.®) is a validated, copyrighted, comprehensive drug and violence prevention education program for children in kindergarten through 12th grade. D.A.R.E.® represents a collaborative effort between school and law enforcement personnel. The program is nationally coordinated by D.A.R.E.® America, with input received from State and local agencies and communities.

The D.A.R.E.® curriculum is designed to equip elementary, middle, and high school students with the appropriate skills to resist substance abuse, violence, and gangs. More than 22,000 community-oriented law enforcement officers from 7,000 communities throughout the country have taught the core curriculum to more than 25 million elementary school students. In 1995 alone, it is expected that 5.5 million children representing 250,000 classrooms will receive the core curriculum. An additional 20 million students will be influenced by the D.A.R.E.® components of kindergarten through fourth grade visitation lessons, junior and senior high curriculums, the special education curriculum, the parent program, and the D.A.R.E.®+ P.L.U.S. (Play and Learn Under Supervision) afterschool activity program.

D.A.R.E.® is taught by law enforcement officers in 19 countries and is being implemented in Department of Defense Dependent Schools worldwide.

Program Objectives

The primary goals of D.A.R.E.® are to prevent substance abuse among schoolchildren and help them develop effective gang and violence resistance techniques. The

core curriculum targets young children to prepare them to avoid substance abuse and violence as they enter adolescence. D.A.R.E.® lessons focus on the following objectives for all children:

- Acquiring the knowledge and skills to recognize and resist peer pressure to experiment with tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.
- Enhancing self-esteem.
- Learning assertiveness techniques.
- Learning about positive alternatives to substance use.
- Learning anger management and conflict resolution skills.
- Developing risk assessment and decisionmaking skills.
- Reducing violence.
- Building interpersonal and communications skills.
- Resisting gang involvement.

D.A.R.E.® achieves these objectives by training carefully selected law enforcement officers to teach a structured, sequential curriculum in the schools. An important byproduct of D.A.R.E.® is the impact made by these uniformed officers, who work onsite in the classroom, as positive role models for the students. In addition, in every component except the parent program, a certified teacher is required to be present at all times as an active participant in the D.A.R.E.® program.

D.A.R.E.® Curriculum

The D.A.R.E.® curriculum is continuously enhanced and expanded to more effectively meet the needs of children. Following are the current D.A.R.E.® components.

Core Curriculum. Delivered by a D.A.R.E.® officer to fifth and sixth grade students, the core curriculum includes one lesson each week for 17 consecutive weeks. A number of teaching techniques are used, including question-and-answer sessions, group discussions, role-playing, and workbook exercises.

Kindergarten Through Fourth Grade Visitation Lessons. As time permits, officers teaching the core curriculum can visit students in each of the lower grades to introduce younger students to the D.A.R.E.® concept. The 15- to 20-minute lessons cover such topics as obeying laws, personal safety, and the helpful and harmful uses of medicines and drugs.

Junior High Curriculum. The D.A.R.E.® junior high curriculum emphasizes information and skills that enable students to resist peer pressure and negative influences in making personal choices. The 10 lessons concentrate on helping students manage their feelings of anger and aggression and on showing them how to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence or to the use of alcohol or drugs.

Senior High Curriculum. The D.A.R.E.® senior high curriculum focuses on the everyday situations that high school students encounter. For the first five lessons, a D.A.R.E.® officer and a high school teacher use the technique of team teaching. They emphasize information and skills that enable students to act in their own best interests when facing high-risk, low-gain choices and to handle feelings of anger properly without causing harm to themselves or others. Five followup lessons, presented by the teacher, serve to reinforce the initial lessons.

Special Education Curriculum. The D.A.R.E.® Midwestern Regional Training Center, administered by the Illinois State Police, has adapted the D.A.R.E.® curriculum for special populations. D.A.R.E.® officers receive specialized training that prepares them to teach the 17-week core curriculum in special classrooms to children with learning disabilities and behavioral disorders.

Parent Component. The D.A.R.E.® parent component was developed to address the growing need for comprehensive family support and involvement in school programs. It is intended for any adult interested in ensuring health, safety, and development of life skills for

children. The program provides information on communication and self-esteem building, risk factors associated with young children, basic facts on drug usage and the stages of adolescent chemical dependency, protective factors and sources of pressure, violence and conflict resolution, and agency networking in the community. The sessions offer participants the opportunity to become more involved in D.A.R.E.® and give them access to community resources. The program consists of six 2-hour sessions, usually held in the evening, that are conducted by a certified D.A.R.E.® officer.

D.A.R.E.®+ P.L.U.S. Component. This component was initiated in 1993 on a pilot basis at Marina del Rio School in Los Angeles, California. It was created as an extension of the successful D.A.R.E.® program and is designed to help sixth, seventh, and eighth graders stay involved in school and away from gangs, drugs, and violence. D.A.R.E.®+ P.L.U.S. provides students with a wide range of educational, vocational, and recreational afterschool activities in a safe and well-supervised campus setting.

Critical Program Elements

The following 12 elements are considered essential for the creation of a successful D.A.R.E.® program.

Joint planning. Involvement and collaboration of law enforcement and education agencies should begin early in the planning process.

Written agreement. Law enforcement and education agencies should establish a contract that spells out mutual commitment, respective police and school roles, and partnership responsibility.

Officer selection. The officer selection process should involve screening and police-school panel interviews of officer candidates.

Officer training. Intensive seminars should be jointly conducted at accredited training centers by specially trained law enforcement and education personnel.

Curriculum. The tested and validated D.A.R.E.® curriculum should be faithfully replicated.

Classroom instruction. Classroom instruction should follow the format described earlier in this fact sheet and should be taught by trained law enforcement officers, with assistance from certified teachers.

Officer appraisal. Procedures that monitor and assess an officer's classroom performance should be established.

Informal officer–student interaction. The program should include time for the officer to interact informally with the students on the playground, in the cafeteria, and at student assemblies.

Teacher orientation. At the beginning of the school year, an orientation should be conducted in which the D.A.R.E.® officer familiarizes teachers with the D.A.R.E.® curriculum and explains officer and teacher roles.

Inservice training. Continued officer training should be provided to ensure effectiveness, accuracy, and currency in teaching strategies.

Parent education. Each semester, a parent education evening should be held in which the D.A.R.E.® officer explains the program and gives parents the opportunity to review the curriculum. In addition, a parent component, as outlined earlier in this fact sheet, should be developed.

Community presentations. Police, educators, and others committed to the success of the D.A.R.E.® effort should meet with groups from all segments of the community to promote understanding and support.

Regional Training Centers

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice, provides Federal discretionary funding to the five D.A.R.E.® Regional Training Centers (RTC's) to support technical assistance, training, and accreditation of State training facilities. Working in conjunction with D.A.R.E.® America, the nonprofit organization that legally owns and is responsible for overseeing the D.A.R.E.® program and for maintaining up-to-date curriculum, the RTC's provide:

- D.A.R.E.® officer training seminars for new D.A.R.E.® officers who will teach the core curriculum.
 - D.A.R.E.® inservice training for experienced D.A.R.E.® officers.
 - Mentor officer training for experienced D.A.R.E.® officers who will train new D.A.R.E.® officers.
 - D.A.R.E.® parent program training for instructors who work with and train parents.
- D.A.R.E.® junior high/middle school program training.
 - D.A.R.E.® senior high program training.
 - Program development.
 - Accreditation of law enforcement agencies as D.A.R.E.® Training Centers.
 - Assessments of State D.A.R.E.® Training Centers.
 - Monitoring and technical assistance for law enforcement agencies that are developing the D.A.R.E.® program in their communities across the country.

Law enforcement agencies interested in obtaining D.A.R.E.® training or answers to questions about local D.A.R.E.® programs may contact the appropriate D.A.R.E.® RTC, as follows:

D.A.R.E.® Eastern Regional Training Center

Virginia State Police
7700 Midlothian Turnpike
Richmond, VA 23235
804-674-2238

The D.A.R.E.® Eastern RTC serves Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

D.A.R.E.® Southeastern Regional Training Center

North Carolina Bureau of Investigation
3320 Old Garner Road
Raleigh, NC 27610
919-662-4500

The D.A.R.E.® Southeastern RTC serves Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

D.A.R.E.® Midwestern Regional Training Center

Illinois State Police Academy D.A.R.E.® Bureau
3700 East Lakeshore Drive
Springfield, IL 62707
217-786-7026

The D.A.R.E.® Midwestern RTC serves Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Virgin Islands, and Wisconsin.

D.A.R.E.® Southwest Regional Training Center

Arizona Department of Public Safety
Suite 290
3110 North 19th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85015
602-223-2544

The D.A.R.E.® Southwestern RTC serves Alaska, Arizona, American Samoa, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Utah.

D.A.R.E.® Western Regional Training Center

City of Los Angeles Police Department
3353 San Fernando Road
Los Angeles, CA 90065
213-485-4856

The D.A.R.E.® Western RTC serves California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming.

Program Assessment

D.A.R.E.® is the largest and most widely implemented drug and violence prevention program in the world. It has become recognized as a key element of community-based policing efforts.

In July 1993, a Gallup Poll Survey of more than 2,000 D.A.R.E.® graduates was conducted. The results

showed that more than 90 percent of the graduates felt that D.A.R.E.® assisted them in avoiding drugs and alcohol. The program also was credited with increasing self-esteem and ability to deal with peer pressure. Graduates reported that they had used one or two of the avoidance techniques taught to them by their D.A.R.E.® officers.

More recently, a research study sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and conducted by the Research Triangle Institute indicated that D.A.R.E.® is “currently our Nation’s predominant school-based prevention program, and both its prevalence and popularity continue to expand.” The appeal of D.A.R.E.® cuts across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines, and student receptivity to D.A.R.E.® was rated higher than for other prevention programs. D.A.R.E.® is strongly supported by school staff, students, parents, and the community. Ratings of other substance abuse prevention programs were also high, but approval of D.A.R.E.® was substantially stronger.

On the basis of continual assessments and feedback from the field, the D.A.R.E.® program has been expanded to a full continuum of curricula offering training to children in kindergarten through 12th grade, so that the lessons learned in earlier grades are reinforced as students encounter peer pressure to become involved in drugs, alcohol, and high-risk behavior. The D.A.R.E.® curriculum also has been revised to be more interactive through promoting active participation by students.

Program Growth

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number of incoming fifth graders (D.A.R.E.® core curriculum)	3,800,000	4,000,000	4,200,000	4,300,000	4,500,000	5,500,000	8,000,000
Number of community-oriented law enforcement officers trained to teach D.A.R.E.® curriculum	6,000	7,800	10,000	12,000	15,000	20,000	23,000 (projected)
Percentage of school districts electing to implement D.A.R.E.® curriculum	20	24	30	45	52	62	65-70 (projected)
BJA discretionary funding levels	\$625,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,050,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,750,000

Funding

States can apply for Federal funds through the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant Program. The States make subawards to State and local agencies for drug and crime prevention and control programs and for criminal justice system improvements. The funds may be used for any of 26 authorized purpose areas, one of which is “demand reduction education programs in which law enforcement officers participate,” such as D.A.R.E.® Any community interested in obtaining funding for a D.A.R.E.® program should contact its State office responsible for administration of the Formula Grant Program. The addresses and telephone numbers of the State offices are available from the Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse or the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center, as provided at right.

For Further Information

For additional information about the D.A.R.E.® program, contact:

D.A.R.E.® America

Suite 401
9800 La Cienga Boulevard
Inglewood, CA 90301
310-215-0575

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse

P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-688-4252

U.S. Department of Justice Response Center

800-421-6770

For additional information about D.A.R.E.® program assessment, contact:

Bureau of Justice Assistance

Evaluation Unit
202-307-5974

National Institute of Justice

Evaluation Division
202-307-2942

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Assistance

Washington, D.C. 20531

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