

Rhode Island Student Assistance Services (RISAS)



is a statewide school and community based alcohol, tobacco and other drug use prevention/early intervention program operating since 1987. RISAS is funded by the Department of Behavioral Health Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) and Rhode Island school districts. Our core service, Project SUCCESS (Schools Using Coordinated Community Efforts

to Strengthen Students), was given the highest rating by the 2018 Pew MacArthur Results First Clearinghouse Database of evidence based programs and practices.

<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/data-visualizations/2015/results-first-clearinghouse-database>

We began as a pilot program in 4 Rhode Island high schools, and as of February 1, 2019, RISAS will be implementing Project SUCCESS in 23 middle schools and 31 high schools, representing 29 school districts. One of 38 states implementing Project SUCCESS, RISAS has worked with program developer, Ellen Morehouse, for the past 33 years to implement the program with fidelity in Rhode Island.

Project SUCCESS is located in schools where adolescents have easy access to highly trained counselors and where alcohol and other drug use-related risk factors, such as drinking at an early age, poor academic performance, tardiness, absenteeism and other behavior problems are more likely to be detected than at home. We embed master's degree level counselors in the school to provide a wide range of prevention and early intervention services. Parents, school administrators, teachers and others in the community find Project SUCCESS a highly effective model for addressing alcohol, drug and other problems which negatively impact academic success and attendance and a key component of social emotional learning (SEL).

The goals Project SUCCESS are to: *enhance the resiliency of adolescents whose parents are substance abusers; delay adolescents' initial use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; and decrease adolescents' use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.*

A valuable characteristic of Project SUCCESS is its ability to identify and help youth, especially those at high risk, before the onset of alcohol and other drug problems. This early detection and intervention has proven effective in delaying the initiation and use of alcohol and other drugs, and reducing the resultant school/life problems.

RISAS

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