

How do students complete the Alternatives to Drugs Program successfully?

Once the student has successfully completed the program, the student's home school is notified. In addition, the student's name is provided to the home school's Regular School Team for ongoing monitoring to ensure continued success.

To complete the Alternatives to Drugs Program successfully, all of the following must occur:

1. The student must:
 - be punctual
 - attend all class meetings
 - complete all required assignments
 - participate appropriately in class and
2. The student's parents or guardians must attend the parent class sessions.

Where and when does the program meet?

The student segment of the Alternatives to Drugs Program is conducted during seven evening classes that meet twice a week for four weeks. Parents attend four classes that meet once a week for four weeks. A family orientation is conducted before the program begins; a follow-up conference is conducted at the end of the program.

The Alternatives to Drugs Program is conducted at two school sites in Anne Arundel County.

For additional information contact the
Alternatives to Drugs Program
410-222-5389



ANNE ARUNDEL
COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Mark T. Bedell
Superintendent

Anne Arundel County Public Schools
2644 Riva Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

www.aacps.org

Anne Arundel County Public Schools prohibits discrimination in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or disability. For more information, contact: Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Division of Human Resources, 2644 Riva Road Annapolis, MD 21401, 410-222-5286 TDD 410-222-5000, www.aacps.org.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools

Alternatives to Drugs Program

What is the Alternatives to Drugs Program?

The *Alternatives to Drugs Program* is a mandatory consequence for students who violate the Board of Education Regulation regarding possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages, controlled dangerous substances, or other intoxicants on school property or at school-sponsored events.

Alternatives to Drugs Program

What is the purpose of the Alternatives to Drugs Program?

The program is designed to help students and their parents confront together the challenges of adolescent drug and alcohol use. The Alternatives to Drugs Program has three components:

- private family orientation and, when necessary, follow-up conferences with program counselors
- seven two-hour student class meetings
- four two-hour parent class meetings.

An important goal of the program is to help students begin to create positive changes for themselves. The Alternatives to Drugs Program is also an opportunity for families to gain information, skills, and resources in order to work together to create new possibilities in their lives.

| Schedule | Student | Parents |
|--|---------|---------|
| Orientation Conference | ✓ | ✓ |
| 7 evening classes (2x a week for 4 weeks) | ✓ | |
| 4 evening classes (1x a week for 4 weeks) | | ✓ |
| Follow-up Conference | ✓ | ✓ |

What happens in the Alternatives to Drugs Program?

Before beginning the Alternatives to Drugs Program, each family meets with a program counselor to discuss the program, the requirements for completion, and any concerns the parent or student might have.

Usually, the program counselor will be the instructor for the parent class meetings.

The Student Program

The student program provides several opportunities for students to learn and practice new information and skills. Once the program begins, students learn:

- law and legal consequences of drug/alcohol use
- facts and myths about alcohol and other popular drugs
- the tasks of adolescence
- the progression of adolescent substance abuse
- direct and indirect consequences of drug/alcohol use
- personal resilience:
 - identifying skills, interests and aptitudes
 - planning for the future
 - goal-setting
 - identifying meaningful, positive activities in one's life
 - creating positive friendships
 - planning and practicing resistance strategies in real-life situations
- resources for getting additional help, if needed

Throughout the program, students think about their behaviors, take an honest look at choices they make, and develop skills that will lead them to meaningful, drug-free lives. At least one aspect of resiliency skill development is practiced during each class meeting.

The Parent Program

Parents meet in four two-hour class sessions. During the program, parents learn about adolescence, factors in teen drug and alcohol use today, and ways they can help their children remain drug-free. Topics in the parent sessions include:

- law and legal consequences of drug/alcohol use
- resiliency in families
- understanding why teenagers use drugs
- factors in families that encourage drug use and non-use
- progression of adolescent substance abuse
- understanding adolescence today
- improving communication
- increasing resiliency within the family
- resources and tips for parents

Students and parents complete homework assignments together and are encouraged to make use of "drive time" for conversations. During the final parent class meeting, students and parents meet to discuss factors in their families that promote healthy, drug-free lives and areas that require more attention. Family success plans are created during this time.

At the end of the program, the family also meets with the program counselor to discuss program highlights, planning for the immediate future, and any concerns that may exist.