



Community Works: Smart Youth Make Safer Communities **Implementation Guidelines**

The Teens, Crime, and the Community initiative of the National Crime Prevention Council uses the two-volume *Community Works* curriculum to educate youth about crime and victimization prevention, engage them in a variety of critical thinking and problem-solving activities, and give them the opportunity to voice beliefs and feelings in response to real-life situations. *Community Works* gives young people the opportunity to interact with peers and adults in their communities and to participate in service-learning projects.

Successful or promising violence prevention programs incorporate peer programs, mentoring, enrichment activities, behavior modification strategies, and the opportunity to practice and model new skills. Research confirms that comprehensive programs like *Community Works* are more likely to result in positive changes in attitude and behavior in the youth participating in those programs.

Community Works sessions are designed to teach youth how to examine violence and law-related issues in the context of their schools and communities and how to apply what they learn to real-life circumstances. *Community Works* is a skill-building program. The 11 sessions in Volume One lay the foundation for the program and should be taught in consecutive order. The sessions in Volume One build on each other, first introducing factual information, then giving young people the opportunity to practice critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills. Students learn about the different types of crime, the costs and consequences of crime, conflict management strategies, how crime affects communities, and what community prevention programs and services are available to them. The sessions in Volume Two focus on serious youth-related topical issues such as bullying, dating violence, gangs, substance abuse, underage drinking, and police-youth relations.

In a comprehensive *Community Works* program, community resource people (adult volunteers) enhance *Community Works* sessions by providing special knowledge or expertise on a particular topic and *Community Works* students complete at least one service-learning project.

The TCC initiative, from which *Community Works* was developed, has undergone several scientifically based evaluations. One evaluation found that TCC participants were more likely than nonparticipants to understand the types of crime and their risk of victimization, to identify ways to prevent victimization and keep loved ones safe, to believe in ethical rules and the need for laws, to demonstrate a sense of citizenship and community bonding, to reduce their own delinquency and association with delinquent peers, and to participate actively in classroom and community action projects (SPEC and Associates, 1998).

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Community Works Program

Implementation Guidelines



Requirements for Successful Implementation

- Minimum of 15–25 contact hours (using the sessions listed below)
- Use of community resource people
- Completion of one service-learning project by students

Sessions for Successful Implementation

Community Works is a skill-building program and the sessions in Volume One should be taught in consecutive order. These 11 sessions lay the foundation for the program. These sessions are designed to increase crime prevention awareness and empathy and to improve decision-making, critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, and citizenship skills in students.

Session 1: Creating a Community Vision

Session 2: What Is Crime?

Session 3: Victims of Crime

Session 4: Safe and Secure Communities

Session 5: Where Are We Safe and Unsafe?

Session 6: Our Community's Resources

Session 7: Your Conflict Choices

Session 8: Conflict, Communicating, and Working Together

Sessions 9–11: Planning, Designing, and Doing a Project

Two additional topical sessions (Volume Two)

Tips for Successful Implementation

- Read the introduction section and the sessions in Volume One.
- Familiarize yourself with the general layout of the sessions. (There are typically five to six steps per session.) Note where you might need a community resource person.
- Expect to use two 45-minute periods to complete one *Community Works* session. For example, in Session 2 (“What Is Crime?”) start with Step B: “What Do You Think?” (ten minutes), then continue with the activity in Step C (35 minutes). During the next class, review the information from the last class (five minutes) and continue with the activity in Step D (40 minutes), then Wrap-up.
- Use the pre- and posttest, test bank, and handouts as a guide for material to cover and to assess your students’ crime prevention knowledge and attitudes.
- Reference the *Community Works* Enhancements online (www.ncpc.org/tcc) for new tips, service-learning project ideas, statistics, resources, and handouts to use in your *Community Works* class.