

## A Culturally Adapted Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program for Aboriginal Children and Youth

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### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

- To review, adapt, and deliver the first year of a 3-year, school-based substance abuse prevention program for Aboriginal children and youth.

### WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program has identified substance abuse as a significant area of concern within Aboriginal communities across Canada, yet effective, school-based substance abuse prevention programs are not available to the majority of First Nation schools.
- Prevention programs that are available often fail to capture and integrate the cultural beliefs and values of the community where the program is delivered.

### WHAT ARE THE MAIN FINDINGS?

- Positive changes in student participants' drug and alcohol refusal skills, self-beliefs, and knowledge of the negative effects of drug and alcohol use.
- Ownership of and investment in the program by the community.
- Documentation of the relevance, importance, and benefits of employing a culturally adapted substance abuse prevention program with Aboriginal students attending a First Nations school through the inclusion of teaching approaches and activities that fit the learning contexts, worldviews, and relationships of the community.
- Participation of Elders to ensure that learning activities reflect traditional ways of knowing.

### WHO SHOULD CARE MOST?

- Health and Education stakeholders of the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation.
- First Nations Communities in Canada that operate band-controlled schools.
- First Nations and Inuit Health, Health Canada.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Working collaboratively, Aboriginal communities can and should develop school-based, culturally adapted tools for the prevention of substance abuse.
- Aboriginal community members can and should deliver culturally appropriate programs.
- Build on existing research to adapt, deliver, and evaluate the full 3-year, culturally adapted elementary and middle school programs to students at Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation School.

