

Lions Quest

SUPER: Substance Use Prevention Evidence-Based Resource, UCLA ISAP

Developer website: <http://www.lions-quest.org/>

Practice record last updated September 9, 2026

Cost	Prevention Category	Practice Focus	Practice Focus
Over \$500	Universal Direct, Selective, Indicated	SU	MH

Practice Summary

Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence is a K-12 life skills program fostering social/emotional competence, citizenship, and character development. It uses interactive methods like group work and service learning to strengthen youth's connections to their families, schools, and communities. In grades K-2, it focuses on emotional awareness; in grades 3-5, it focuses on self-management and interpersonal skills; in middle school, it focuses on exploring values and beliefs shaping identity; in high school, it focuses on character and positive behavior's impact.

Practice Details

Substance Use Prevention Category	• Universal Direct • Selective • Indicated
Practice Level	• Individual • Relationship
Substance Use Prevention Strategy	• Education
Practice Components	Individual • Civic Responsibility • Communication Skills Training • Cognitive Behavioral Strategies • Education • Goal Setting • Insight Building • Problem Solving • Self-Efficacy or Self-Esteem Enhancement • Skills Training Relationship • Peer Norm Development Community/Society • None
Population Age	• Age 6-12 • Age 13-17 • Age 18-20
Populations of Focus	• General Population • Hispanic or Latino
Settings	• School (K-12) • Community-based program • Broader community or society
Parent/Caregiver Involvement	• Recommended or optional

Recommended Staffing	• Community members • Health or social work counselor, therapist or professional (licensed) • Health or social work counselor, therapist or professional (unlicensed) • Mentors • Teachers or educators
Prevention Focus	Substance Use Prevention Focus • Substance Use - General Mental Health Wellness and Promotion Focus • Mental Health - General
Training and Technical Assistance	Training for Lions Quest is recommended, particularly for schoolwide and larger implementation, but it is not required. Training is available both virtually and in-person, and training-of-trainer options are also available. Lions Quest also offers implementation checklists, an online resource library, ongoing support, and grants to defray or cover the costs of implementation.
Program Costs	Over \$500. Please visit the developer's website listed above for updated information about implementation costs.
Adaptations	Lions Quest offers adapted versions of its curricula that can be used in the juvenile justice system and alternative schools, and it also provides 15-minute mini-lessons that are short, adaptable, and designed to be easy to implement across different age groups, settings, and youth needs. The curriculum has also been adapted and implemented in Canada, Mexico, Central America, South America, Europe, India, South Asia, the Middle East, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, and the Pacific Islands.

Risk and Protective Factors

Youth Substance Use Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Early and persistent antisocial behavior • Early initiation of substance use • Favorable attitudes towards substance use • Internalizing behaviors (e.g. anxiety, depression, social withdrawal) • Rebelliousness • Negative emotional state • Poor coping skills and behaviors	• Positive social orientation (e.g. engaging in healthy activities, accepting rules and community values, positive social engagement) • Positive temperament • Emotional self-regulation • High self-esteem • Strong coping skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, ability to stand up for beliefs and values)
Family and Relationships	• None	• None
School, Peer, and Community	• Accessibility or availability of substances • Academic failure • Norms favorable towards substance use	• Community norms, beliefs, and standards against substance use • Opportunities for the development of skills and interests • Schools and student bodies with strong academic commitment • Opportunities for prosocial engagement in the school and community • Positive social norms

Youth Mental Health Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Low self-esteem • Poor social skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving skills) • Negative emotional state • Poor coping skills and behaviors	• Achievement motivation • Optimism • Positive self-regard • Strong orientation for the future • Subjective sense of self-sufficiency • Emotional self-regulation • High self-esteem • Strong coping skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, ability to stand up for beliefs and values)
Family and Relationships	• None	• None
School, Peer, and Community	• Academic failure • Norms favorable towards substance use	• Opportunities for prosocial engagement in the school and community • Positive social norms

Shared Substance Use and Mental Health Risk and Protective Factors

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	• Negative emotional state • Poor coping skills and behaviors	• Emotional self-regulation • High self-esteem • Strong coping skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, ability to stand up for beliefs and values)
Family and Relationships	• None	• None
School, Peer, and Community	• Academic failure • Norms favorable towards substance use	• Opportunities for prosocial engagement in the school and community • Positive social norms

Empirical Evidence of Impact

Prevention Focus	Outcome	Population Age	Evidence Strength and Study Populations of Focus
Alcohol	Changes in Knowledge, Attitudes, or Beliefs	11-14	Moderate (General Population) [References 1]
Alcohol	Reduced Use or Delayed Initiation	11-14	Promising (General Population) [References 1]
Cannabis	Changes in Knowledge, Attitudes, or Beliefs	11-14	Moderate (General Population) [References 1]
Cannabis	Reduced Use or Delayed Initiation	11-14	Moderate (General Population) [References 1]
Cocaine	Reduced Use or Delayed Initiation	11-14	Promising (General Population) [References 1]
Tobacco	Changes in Knowledge, Attitudes, or Beliefs	11-14	Promising (General Population) [References 1]
Tobacco	Reduced Use or Delayed Initiation	11-14	Practice-Based (General Population) [References 1]
Mental Health (General)	Behavior, Attitudes, and Functioning	11-14	Promising (General Population) [References 2-3]
Mental Health (General)	Improved Relationships and Community Connectedness	11-14	Promising (General Population) [References 3]

References

- [1] Eisen, M., Zellman, G. L., & Murray, D. M. (2003). Evaluating the Lions-Quest "Skills for Adolescence" drug education program: Second- year behavior outcomes. *Addictive Behaviors*, 28(5), 883-897. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0306-4603\(01\)00292-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0306-4603(01)00292-1)
- [2] Jones, S., Kahn, J., Nelson, B., & Temko, S. (2019). Year 2 Report: A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence in Two Middle Schools. <https://www.lions-quest.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/report-sfa-2019-jan.pdf>
- [3] Kidron, Y., Garibaldi, M., & Osher, D. (2016). Lion's Quest Skills for Adolescence: Implementation and Outcome Study in Wood County, West Virginia – Final Report. <https://www.lions-quest.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/SFC-2016jan.pdf>

What California Providers Are Saying

We have not yet spoken to any California providers who have experience implementing Lions Quest. If you have implemented it, we would love to hear from you. Please [contact us](#).