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## Putting Addiction-Prevention Program Into Action

School relies on role-playing, class discussion to help students make good decisions

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At South Park Elementary School in Deerfield, Ill., [teaching kids to resist drugs](#), alcohol and cigarettes involves a lot of role-playing and class discussion.

The school, like others in District 109, uses Botvin *LifeSkills Training*, a program designed to help kids resist peer pressure and make good decisions.

In a recent lesson on assertiveness, fifth-grade teacher Faith Keidan says she first defined the difference between passive, aggressive and assertive responses, and then asked students to role-play them. The scenario: responding to a sibling who borrowed a videogame without asking.

Then she explained why being assertive is a good thing: because it helps people know what to say to get out of bad situations.

In another lesson on resisting cigarettes and marijuana, the kids discussed the economic history of tobacco and how it gained acceptance by being a big part of the economy. She also asked students to suggest five laws that would decrease tobacco use.

Joanna Klopfer, assistant director for student services in the district, says it tested the Botvin program in its fifth-grade classes before extending it to fourth and sixth grades, with plans for seventh and eighth grade down the road.

