

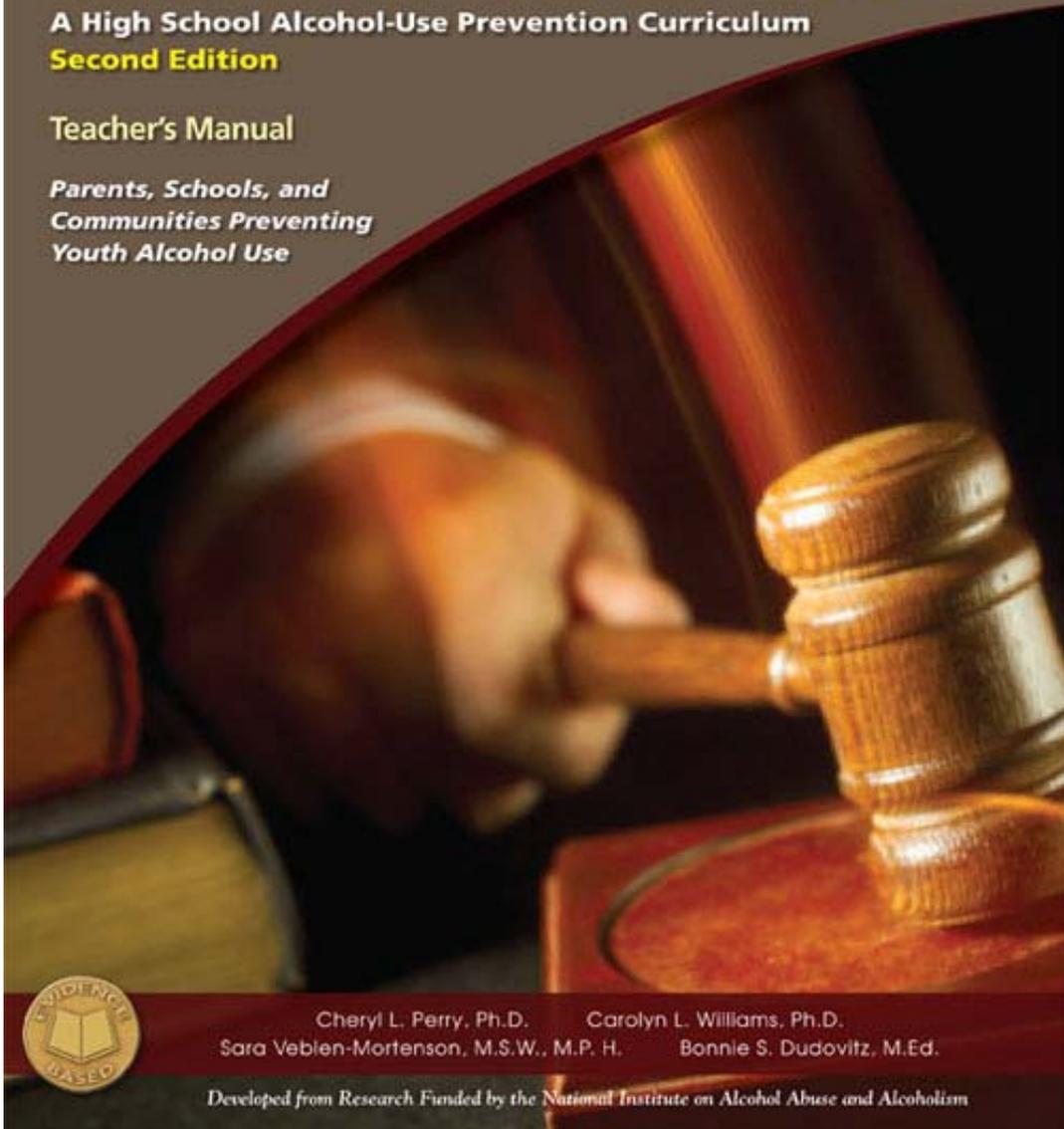
■ PROJECT NORTHLAND ■

Class Action

A High School Alcohol-Use Prevention Curriculum
Second Edition

Teacher's Manual

*Parents, Schools, and
Communities Preventing
Youth Alcohol Use*



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Scope and Sequence



For more information or to order, visit www.hazelden.org/projectnorthland or call 1-800-328-9000.

What Is Project Northland?

Project Northland is a nationally recognized alcohol-use prevention program. The four Project Northland curricula include *Slick Tracy*, *Amazing Alternatives*, *Power Lines*, and *Class Action*. They are supported by a *Program Guide* for administrators and program coordinators. Project Northland was developed at the University of Minnesota from research funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

Project Northland interventions target all students, putting them in the category of *universal prevention efforts* (also known as primary prevention). The needs of most students for information and skills are met at this level. Universal prevention efforts differ from *selective prevention efforts*, or the specialized programs designed for students who have been identified as at risk—for example, students with a history of behavior problems or those with a family history of alcoholism—and *indicated prevention efforts*, or special programs for students with identified substance abuse problems.

What Makes Project Northland an Outstanding Prevention Program?

The Project Northland curricula invite participation and experiential learning at home, in the classroom, and in the local community. A vital aspect of Project Northland is this multifaceted approach. Prevention research shows that addressing alcohol use at multiple levels strengthens outcomes. Incorporating best practices for effective prevention, the curriculum engages students as individuals and addresses influences in the family, with peers, at school, and in the local community and broader society. Project Northland addresses these domains more comprehensively than any other prevention program.

Is Project Northland Research-Based?

Project Northland grew out of the most rigorous alcohol-use prevention trial ever funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and was developed in a region that led the nation in alcohol-related traffic fatalities. More than eighteen years of research at the University of Minnesota's Division of Epidemiology and Community Health is the foundation of the Project Northland curriculum series.

What Is Class Action?

Class Action is Project Northland's high school component. *Class Action* is an eight- to ten-session curriculum (assuming that at least two cases are used) that looks at the real-world social and legal consequences of teen alcohol use and works toward meeting one of Project Northland's strategies for high school students: increasing awareness of the social

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consequences of alcohol consumption. The curriculum illustrates that it is not just the teen who can be harmed by underage drinking.

The objectives of *Class Action* are the following:

1. Students will become aware of the legal issues surrounding underage alcohol use.
2. Students will recognize underage alcohol use as a communitywide problem.
3. Students will discuss and debate the legal intricacies of alcohol-related issues.
4. Students will learn about the social, emotional, economic, and legal consequences of underage alcohol use.
5. Students' norms concerning underage alcohol use will shift in a positive direction.

This curriculum exposes students to legal issues and the potential consequences to society when alcohol is made available to minors and consumed by minors. The class is divided into "legal teams" (one team for each case you use) assigned to represent plaintiffs in hypothetical civil cases where alcohol use leads to personal injury, property damage, or death. The cases include:

- Drinking and Driving on Trial
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome on Trial
- Drinking and Violence on Trial
- Date Rape on Trial
- Drinking and Vandalism on Trial
- School Alcohol Policies on Trial
- Drinking and Hazing on Trial
- Binge-Drinking on Trial

In *Class Action*, students are assigned to act as plaintiff's attorneys representing individuals who have been harmed in some way by underage drinking. Information from defense attorneys and witnesses is provided in handouts and audio recordings.

This structure is used to enhance students' understanding of the prevention message—underage drinking has broad social consequences. *Class Action* requires teens to become advocates for those harmed by underage drinking. This strategy is designed to emphasize that teens' individual decisions can have legal consequences.

Class Action broadens students' perspectives beyond personal opinions and beliefs as a way of challenging student norms that underage drinking is an expected and harmless activity. By preparing cases brought by those harmed by underage drinking, students have to consider how state laws and legal precedents can be used in civil lawsuits. Through this engaging format, important information is taught about the role of alcohol in traffic crashes, fetal alcohol syndrome, sexual assault, vandalism, injuries, and death.

Why Is Alcohol the Drug Targeted by *Class Action*?

Alcohol is the focus of the entire Project Northland program because it is the drug of choice for American teenagers. Use often begins during early adolescence. Alcohol inflicts the most harm at this age, and early use leads to serious consequences in adulthood.

Alcohol is the most commonly used drug among American youth,¹ and for many, initiation of use occurs prior to age thirteen.² Results from the 2007 nationwide Youth Risk Behavior Survey suggest that nearly one-quarter of youth begin drinking alcohol before age thirteen.³ In high school (ninth through twelfth grade), almost 73 percent of youth report having used alcohol in their lifetime, and 42 percent used in the past month. Of even greater concern is that nearly one in four high school students reports binge-drinking—having had five or more drinks in a row within a couple of hours—in the previous thirty days.

Such early onset of use has been associated with a number of health and social problems, including alcohol abuse and dependence, alcohol-related violence and injuries, drinking and driving, truancy, traffic crashes, risky sexual behavior, and other drug use throughout adolescence and into adulthood.⁴

As research accumulates on the development and maturation of the brain during adolescence, increasing concern is raised about the potential for harm with the introduction of a potent neurotoxin like alcohol into the adolescent's changing body. There is no information available to recommend a "safe" level of alcohol intake for adolescents. Furthermore, adolescents are cognitively immature in neurological processes related to decision making and response inhibition—processes that can provide internal controls on alcohol intake. For these reasons, experts recommend comprehensive prevention programs like Project Northland that include interventions offering opportunities for the individual to learn and rehearse behavioral skills, as well as programs that allow the family, school, and community to provide environments conducive to no-use norms.⁵ Such programs best match the immature neurological development of adolescents.

Footnotes:

1. L. D. Johnston, P. M. O'Malley, J. G. Bachman, and J. E. Schulenberg, "Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use, 1975–2007: Volume I, Secondary School Students," NIH Publication no. 08-6418A (Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2008).
2. R. Kosterman, J. D. Hawkins, J. Guo, R. F. Catalano, and R. D. Abbott, "The Dynamics of Alcohol and Marijuana Initiation: Patterns and Predictors of First Use in Adolescence," *American Journal of Public Health* 90, no. 3 (2000): 360–66; National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "YRBSS Youth Online: Comprehensive Results," <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs> (retrieved September 12, 2008).
3. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "YRBSS Youth Online."
4. B. F. Grant and D. A. Dawson, "Age of Onset of Drug Use and Its Association with DSM-IV Drug Abuse and Dependence: Results from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Survey," *Journal of Substance Abuse* 10, no. 2 (1998): 163–73; B. F. Grant, F. S. Stinson, and T. Harford, "Age at Onset of Alcohol Use and

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DSM-IV Alcohol Abuse and Dependence: A 12-Year Follow-Up," *Journal of Substance Abuse* 13 (2001): 493–504; E. Gruber, R. J. DiClemente, M. Anderson, and M. Lodico, "Early Drinking Onset and Its Association with Alcohol Use and Problem Behavior in Late Adolescence," *Preventive Medicine* 25, no. 3 (1996): 293–300; R. Hingson, T. Heeren, S. Levenson, A. Jamanka, and R. Voas, "Age of Drinking Onset, Driving after Drinking, and Involvement in Alcohol Related Motor-Vehicle Crashes," *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 34, no. 1 (2002): 85–92; R. Hingson, T. Heeren, R. Zakocs, M. Winter, and H. Wechsler, "Age of First Intoxication, Heavy Drinking, Driving after Drinking, and Risk of Unintentional Injury among U.S. College Students," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 64, no. 1 (2003): 23–31; R. Hingson, T. Heeren, and R. Zakocs, "Age of Drinking Onset and Involvement in Physical Fights after Drinking," *Pediatrics* 108, no. 4 (2001): 872–77; R. Hingson, T. Heeren, M. R. Winter, and H. Wechsler, "Early Age of First Drunkenness as a Factor in College Students' Unplanned and Unprotected Sex Attributable to Drinking," *Pediatrics* 111, no. 1 (2003): 34–41; R. W. Hingson, T. Heeren, and M. R. Winter, "Age at Drinking Onset and Alcohol Dependence—Age at Onset, Duration, and Severity," *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* 160, no. 7 (2006): 739–46.

5. Lopez et al., "Adolescent Neurological Development"; Zeigler et al., "Neurocognitive Effects."

Class Action Scope and Sequence

SESSION	LEARNER OBJECTIVES
	<i>Through participation in Class Action, students will:</i>
Session 1 Introducing Class Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • differentiate between civil and criminal courts • know the definition of <i>negligence</i> • analyze an example of negligence • identify key players in a courtroom • know their small-group assignments
Session 2 Launching the Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know the facts of their case • expand and apply their understanding of negligence • understand their responsibilities as plaintiff's attorneys • begin planning their legal arguments
Session 3 Preparing the Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know how to present themselves in a court of law • confidently characterize the issues of their case • establish what needs to be proven to win their negligence case • research and gather pertinent case facts and evidence • begin to synthesize research into systematic arguments
Session 4 Continuing Case Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate ideas into argument points • sequence arguments to support the negligence claim • think creatively about presenting their case
Session 5 Completing Case Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be prepared to present their case • anticipate counterarguments
Session 6 Case Presentation, Rebuttal, and Deliberation <i>(repeat this session as needed to cover all cases)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have presented their arguments to the jury • recognize negligent outcomes of irresponsible behavior
Session 7 Post-trial Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrate their research and the trial experience into real-world understanding • be able to articulate the dangers of alcohol use

Meeting National Academic Standards with *Class Action*

Class Action will help students meet the following academic standards.⁶

Health Education

Students will

- know how to make positive health decisions related to injury, sexuality, and alcohol
- know how the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs often plays a role in dangerous behavior and can have adverse consequences on the community

English/Language Arts

Writing

Students will

- use a variety of prewriting strategies
- use a variety of strategies to draft and revise written work
- evaluate their own and others' writing
- use strategies to address writing to different audiences
- write persuasive compositions that address problems/solutions or causes/effects

Reading

Students will

- use context to understand figurative, idiomatic, and technical meanings of terms
- use reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts
- use a variety of criteria to evaluate the clarity and accuracy of information

Listening and Speaking

Students will

- use criteria to evaluate their own and others' effectiveness in group discussions and formal presentations
- ask questions as a way to broaden and enrich classroom discussions
- use a variety of strategies to enhance listening comprehension
- adjust message wording and delivery to particular audiences and for particular purposes
- make formal presentations to the class
- respond to questions and feedback about their own presentations

Civics

Students will

- know formal institutions that have the authority to make and implement binding decisions
- understand the sources, purposes, and functions of law, and the importance of the rule of law for the protection of individual rights and the common good

Life Skills

Thinking and Reasoning

Students will

- understand and apply the basic principles of presenting an argument
- understand and apply the basic principles of logic and reasoning

Working with Others

Students will

- contribute to the overall effort of a group
- display effective interpersonal communication skills
- demonstrate leadership skills

Self-Regulation

Students will

- set and manage goals

Footnote:

6. J. S. Kendall, *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education*, online ed. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>.