

# WHICH SCHOOL-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE INTERVENTION IS EFFECTIVE FOR NIGERIAN SCHOOLS? A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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**Objectives:** This review aims to identify effective interventions for Nigerian schools.

**Methods:** The protocol was registered in PROSPERO (CRD42022356663) prior to the review. The review is reported according to Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-analysis (PRISMA) and Synthesis Without Meta-analysis (SWiM) guidelines. We searched ten (10) databases to retrieve relevant studies. We retained studies that were interventions to prevent or reduce substance abuse among secondary school students in Nigeria. Two reviewers independently screened the studies for eligibility, extracted data, and performed quality appraisal.

**Results:** From 3,907 records screened, two studies with 3,385 participants met the inclusion criteria. Participants were secondary school students within the age range of 10 - 19 years. One study had a low risk of bias, used a be-spoke intervention 'Unplugged' school-based substance use intervention program. It decreased the frequency of alcohol drinking regularly (every other day) by 34.0% ( $P=0.051$ ) and the prevalence of drinking within the past month by 28.0% ( $P=0.038$ ). There was a 38.0% ( $P=0.094$ ) decline in the prevalence of daily alcohol usage. The second study had a high risk of bias used a peer-led smoking intervention. The results showed that the average knowledge about the harmful effects of smoking increased by 31.2% ( $P=0.000$ ), 5.9% ( $P=0.143$ ) increase in the proportion of respondents that felt public smoking should be banned, and reduced prevalence of last-month cigarette smoking by 0.6% ( $P=1.000$ ).

**Conclusion:** The lack of studies on school-based substance abuse interventions in Nigeria hinders conclusive conclusions. Two studies suggest they may prevent alcohol and cigarette use among Nigerian children. Further research is needed to identify effective strategies.

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