ASU SOCIAL WORK DRUG PREVENTION CURRICULUM FOR KIDS NAMED AS A NATIONAL MODEL

TEMPE (June 30, 2004) — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has named the keepin’ it REAL drug prevention program at Arizona State University’s School of Social Work, a Model Program. This national designation places the research program, which is a partnership between ASU and Penn State University, as one of only 41 model programs of its kind in the nation.

Model Programs are reviewed by the National Registry of Effective Programs according to rigorous standards of research and have agreed to provide materials, training and technical assistance for nationwide implementation. A complete list of SAMHSA’s Model Programs is available at www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov

The keepin’ it REAL (Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave) program is a 10-lesson school curriculum that evolved from the comprehensive Drug Resistance Strategies Project, funded over the last 10 years at ASU and PSU by the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse. The program is based on previous work that demonstrates that teaching communication and life skills can combat negative peer and other influences. It is a school-based intervention program for youth 10 through 17 years of age and is unique because it uses strategies and skills that are embedded in everyday scenarios of Mexican American, African American, and White youth of the Southwest which are transferable to many situations in life. Videos based on youth real life stories that are produced by high school students are an integral part of the intervention.

ASU Principal Investigator Dr. Flavio Marsiglia and PSU Principal Investigator Dr. Michael Hecht found that this culturally grounded resiliency model of intervention is an
effective means to prevent drug use and in some cases to help students stop or reduce their use.

Marsiglia said, “We are very excited about this recognition. The Model Program status is increasing our visibility nationally and internationally with more children benefiting from an intervention proven to be effective. This is a great example of the research to practice approach.”

Designed to intervene with students before they actively begin to participate in risky behaviors such as experimentation with alcohol and other drugs or to assist students to reduce existing substance use, the curriculum teaches specific resistance skills applicable across a variety of risky situations.

To date, this program has been replicated to more than 14,000 students in schools and community organizations internationally, including Arizona, Texas and Nuevo Leon, Mexico. The research team at ASU is developing a pilot version of the program to implement for American Indian students. The states of Maryland, Illinois and Indiana are exploring the program for use in schools.

Proven Results*

- 32% to 44% reduction in marijuana, tobacco, and alcohol use
- 30% to 38% increase in knowledge about and negative attitude towards drug use
- 29% to 34% decrease in intent to accept substances

*Compared to control group at 2-year follow-up. All results are statistically significant.

The ASU School of Social Work, in the ASU College of Public Programs, is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. It provides professional social work education, research on relevant social work education and practice, and services needed by Southwest people and communities. The Drug Resistance Strategies Program is part of the Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Consortium (SIRC) funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse/National Institutes of Health.

Relevant web sites:
http://keepinitreal.asu.edu/
http://sirc.asu.edu/
http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/template Cf.cfm?page=model_list#SZ
http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/worddocs/FactSheets/keepinitREAL.doc