



Vero Beach, FL Benefits from Life Skills

The Substance Awareness Center of Indian River County is committed to providing middle school and high school students and their families the skills they need to be healthy, safe and successful through the *LifeSkills Training* Program—free from the dangers of smoking, alcohol, marijuana and bullying which leads to violence, reckless, dangerous, life-threatening, life-changing behavior.

They are reaching more than 4,000 students every year with great success. According to the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS), the percentages of middle school youth who reported using tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana dropped significantly. Findings from the LifeSkills Independent Evaluation Report found that the *LifeSkills Training* Program was quite effective in changing knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about the use of tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana/other illicit drugs. The evaluation found youth reported changes in their attitudes about bullying as well.

The Indian River County LifeSkills Team promotes great health, family, education and accountability. They believe it is of paramount importance that children possess a positive self-image, have the skills needed to make good decisions, learn to communicate properly, learn to resist peer pressure and other influences, understand the joys, benefits and significance of an education, as well as the importance of being involved in extracurricular activities.

The *LifeSkills Training* Program is shaping children to become well-adjusted, healthy members of society while being accountable to oneself, to their family and to their community. The Substance Awareness Center, the Indian River county School District, parents, children and community officials and members have embraced The *LifeSkills Training* Program. LifeSkills has become an integral part of the curriculum in Indian River County. "Together we are making a remarkable difference in many lives, most important in children's lives, in our community," said Christina DeFalco, LifeSkills Coordinator. "We are committed to wellness of the family and of the child! LifeSkills is not just a class--- it is a way of life!"

"LifeSkills means the world to me. When I get older I want to help kids make good decisions just like LifeSkills is teaching us to do." 7th grade student

"LifeSkills means a lot to me. I used to be shy but now I am outgoing. I used to not be the best in math and now I have an A+. Also, I do the deep breathing. I can firmly say "NO". I know how to communicate well. I also know how to start a conversation. I have a positive attitude always. Now I get along with my brother and sister. All because of LifeSkills." 8th grade student.