

New approach for reducing drug abuse

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Critics of the "war on drugs" point to the limited success of current strategies for reducing drug abuse and argue that a new approach is needed. Such an approach may now be on the horizon within the covers of a new book by *New York Times* best-selling author David Sheff. *Clean: Overcoming Addiction and Ending America's Greatest Tragedy* was published in April 2013 and is quickly gaining attention. The book confronts the traditional views on addiction and highlights scientific approaches that work.

One approach featured in *Clean*, the Botvin *LifeSkills Training* (LST) program, has been extensively tested and found effective in more than 30 scientific studies. After three decades of rigorous research, LST is now recognized by educators and behavioral scientists as a powerful tool for preventing addiction. As word of its effectiveness spreads, LST is gradually becoming the program of choice for schools throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia.

For parents who want to prevent drug addiction, Sheff offers the latest research in psychology, neuroscience, and medicine and points to LST as the key to prevention. He proposes a rethinking of addiction that relies on scientifically based approaches that work.

"I spent years searching for effective programs that would lower drug use and prevent addiction," said Sheff.

"Numerous scientific studies prove that *LifeSkills Training* has shown remarkable results. Rather than focusing on the drugs themselves, LST lowers drug use by helping kids become healthier and more resilient."

"David Sheff's book comes at an opportune time in our nation's history in fighting addiction and other health risks," commented Dr. Gilbert J. Botvin, professor emeritus at Cornell University's Weill Medical College, developer of the *LifeSkills Training* program, and an internationally recognized authority on prevention. "More and more studies are demonstrating the effectiveness and benefits of novel approaches to prevention that are based on sound science. The complexity of addiction has become increasingly clear over the years; that complexity requires solutions that transcend the rather simplistic approaches that have been, and unfortunately are still being, used throughout the world. I am not only pleased that David has featured LST in *Clean* but, more importantly, that he has written such a compelling book challenging the orthodoxy regarding the nature of addiction and how to combat it."

David Sheff knows first-hand about the problem of addiction. Sheff's previous book, *Beautiful Boy*, is a memoir detailing the heartbreak of his own son's drug addiction.

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