



## **Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention Program Saves Money--\$38 Benefit for Every \$1 Invested**

June 28, 2012, WHITE PLAINS, NY – Investing in prevention is an economic no-brainer, according to new study. A report released by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) determined that communities will reap dramatic savings by using drug abuse and violence programs proven to be effective. One such program, the top-rated Botvin *LifeSkills Training* (LST) program, was found to produce a \$38 benefit for every dollar invested. The report presented the results of an extensive economic analysis of a number of different programs, carefully weighing the costs and benefits of the programs assessed. LST had the highest return on investment for the school-based prevention programs studied.

In April 2012, Washington State Institute for Public Policy updated their report entitled “Return on Investment: Evidence-Based Options to Improve Statewide Outcomes.” The report, similar to an investment advisor’s “buy-sell” list, contains current recommendations on policy options that can give taxpayers a good return on their investment (“buys”), as well as those that apparently cannot (“sells”). Investing in LST represents a 38-to-1 return to communities in terms of reduced corrections costs, welfare and social services burden, drug and mental health treatment; and increased employment and tax revenue.

"It has been clear for many years that effective prevention programs offer the potential for producing a powerful public health benefit by helping teens avoid the damaging effects of tobacco, alcohol, illicit drug abuse, and violence. Now, this new report proves that it has the added benefit of making good economic sense," said Dr. Gilbert J. Botvin, professor of public health and psychiatry at Cornell University's Weill Medical College and developer of the LST program. "A relatively small upfront investment can yield tremendous health and economic benefits in terms of both the immediate- and long-term positive effects our program has on the students who participate in it."

In the mid-1990s, the Washington State Legislature first began to direct the WSIPP to identify “evidence-based” programs and policies that have been shown to improve particular outcomes. WSIPP summarized their results in a list of what works and what does not, ranked by benefit-cost statistics and a measure of investment risk. Washington is already investing in several of these options including LST. Additionally, they also found other prevention approaches that did not produce favorable results.

### **About Botvin LifeSkills Training**

Botvin *LifeSkills Training* (LST) is an evidence-based substance abuse and violence prevention program used in schools and communities throughout the US and in 32 countries around the world. Over 30 years of peer-reviewed research found that LST cuts tobacco, alcohol, and drug use by as much as 80 percent. For more information call 800-293-4969 or visit [www.lifeskillstraining.com](http://www.lifeskillstraining.com).

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