

Introduction

- Despite recent decreases in drug use among secondary students (ESTUDES, 2016), Spain continues to have some of the highest prevalence rates of legal and illegal drug use in Europe (European Drug Report, 2016) along with narrowing gender differences in use. Drug use among adolescents in southern Spain is associated with social exclusion, unemployment, and crime.
- This presentation reports on a pilot study to implement and assess the USA-based *Mantente REAL (keepin' it REAL)* program in the Spanish context.
- The *Mantente REAL* curriculum teaches adolescents a repertoire of strategies used commonly and effectively by youth (Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave-REAL) to make healthy decisions in difficult and risky situations, such as receiving offers of drugs and alcohol.

Objectives

- Describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the students.
- Analyze differences by gender in alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana use.
- Assess the students' prior use of a repertoire of REAL strategies.

Method

- The sample included four public secondary schools in Seville (Spain) from similar low-to-middle socio-economic status neighborhoods, with two schools assigned randomly to receive *Mantente REAL* and remaining schools serving as a control group.
- Student participants (N=274) were in their third grade of secondary studies (mean age=14.7, gender balanced).
- Self-administered surveys in all schools measured alcohol and drug use behaviors and attitudes.

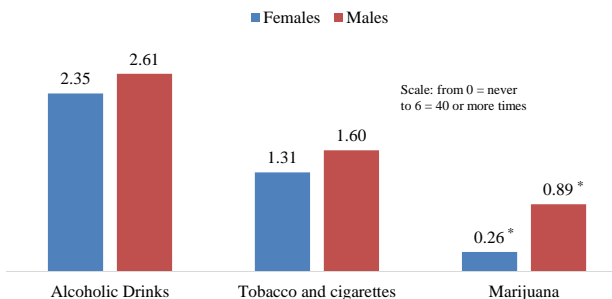
Sociodemographic characteristics

	Females	Males
N	135	138
Age [Mean (SD)]	14,7 (0,8)	14,8 (0,7)
Parents' highest education level (1=none, 5=secondary school, 7=bachelor's degree)	4,27 (2,47)	4,54 (2,54)
Household size	4,21 (1,05)	4,15 (1,17)
Lives at home with both parents (Y=1, N=0)	85 %	75 %
SES / family financial strain scale - Enough money for needs & wants (0=never, 3=always)	1,22 (0,39)	1,30 (0,45)
Average school grades (1=D to 4=A)	1,54 (0,86)	1,58 (0,83)
Educational aspirations (0=will not complete secondary school, 6=doctoral degree)	3,73 (1,22)*	3,12 (1,11)*
School connectedness (sense of belonging) (0= not at all, 4=very much)	2,76 (0,84)	2,88 (0,89)

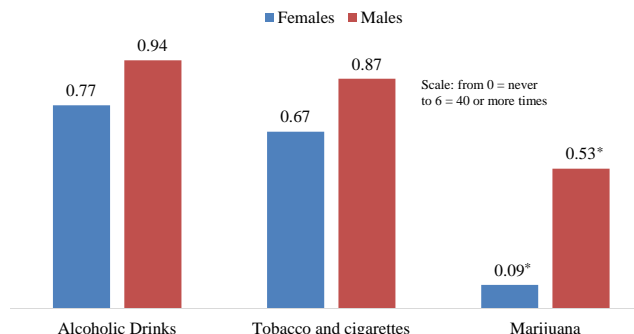
*Significant gender differences at $p < .05$ (Students t-test)

Results

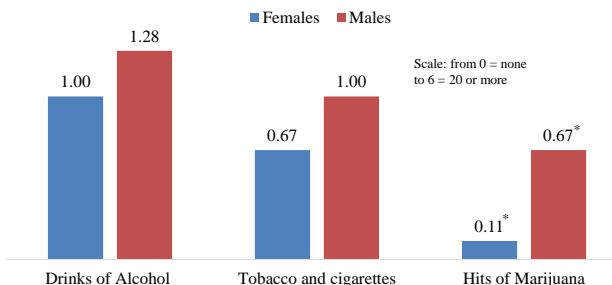
In all your life, how many times have you used...?



In the last 30 days, how many times have you used...?



In the last 30 days, how many...have you (consumed)?



*Significant gender differences at $p < .05$ (Student's t-test)

Likelihood of using the REAL strategies for alcohol offers

Responses to an offer of alcohol at a party... (0= never, 4=almost always)	Females	Males
Refuse (say no)	*2,65 (1,27)	*2,30 (1,29)
Explain (decline with an explanation or excuse)	2,36 (1,35)	2,21 (1,22)
Avoid (do not go to the party)	*1,32 (0,84)	*1,58 (1,02)
Leave (exit the situation)	2,56 (1,34)	2,31 (1,23)

*Significant gender differences at $p < .05$ (Student's t-test)

Conclusions

- The pretest demonstrated the need for prevention: last-30 day prevalence rates were 40% for alcohol, 19% for heavy episodic drinking, 20% for tobacco, and 11% for marijuana use.
- Males and females were equivalent on age, parent education, household size, and a proxy measure of family SES.
- Females had higher educational aspirations, but were similar to males on school grades and school connectedness.
- There were no significant differences by gender on alcohol and cigarette use.
- Compared to females, males reported more frequent recent and lifetime use of marijuana, as well as higher amounts of marijuana use.
- Students reported using the more direct Refuse, Explain and Leave strategies than the passive Avoid strategy.
- Females tended to use the Refuse drug resistance strategy more than males, while males used the Avoid strategy more often than females.

References

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