

Unique YOU

Program Description- *Unique YOU* is an evidence-based substance abuse prevention program that helps children realize their specialness and gain skills in communicating, identifying what causes uncomfortable feelings, and coping with their feelings in a healthy way rather than a destructive way. Positive self-esteem is critical to the development of a healthy individual. The importance of self-esteem and interpersonal skills is reflected in *Unique YOU* through discussions and engaging activities. Research and literature in the field of education and child development overwhelmingly demonstrates the connection between self-esteem, academic performance, and the formation of healthy beliefs, life skills, and overall happiness. This directly corresponds to decreased likelihood of abusing substances; extensive research proves that children learn more easily and are less likely to use drugs when their self-esteem is high. Through *Unique YOU*, students develop greater sensitivity to others' feelings and learn how to express their own. Students learn cooperation, teamwork, how to make wise decisions, how to say "no" to drugs, and how to solve problems. Classrooms that promote cooperation and communication help children raise their self-esteem. *Unique YOU* is designed to make a good classroom better. Students are also encouraged to talk to their family members at home after each session about the activities they have experienced, and to share their worksheets at home.

Program Requirements-

Time: Eight (45-60 minute) sessions, one per week for eight weeks (preferred program delivery method) **two sessions per week is offered, but is not the preferred method*

Grades: 3rd and 4th

Participants: Single class setting including all students. Also appropriate for recreational settings and nonprofit organizations.

Goals and Objectives-

The primary aim of *Unique YOU* is to respond to the need to instill a firm sense of self-esteem and awareness in children that can guide them through their lives and help them to make positive choices. Students will become clearer about their own personal goals and needs, and develop skills to fulfill them in healthy, non-destructive ways.

