

# USPSTF finds evidence lacking to prevent illicit drug use in youth

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(HealthDay)—The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) finds

that the current evidence is insufficient to recommend primary care-based interventions to prevent illicit drug use in children, adolescents, and young adults. These findings form the basis of a draft recommendation statement published online Oct. 1 by the USPSTF.

Elizabeth O'Connor, Ph.D., from the Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research in Portland, Oregon, and colleagues conducted a systematic review of [primary care](#)-relevant interventions to prevent illicit and nonmedical drug use in children, adolescents, and young adults. Twenty-five trials with 17,482 individuals were included in the review.

The researchers found that in 16 of the general prevention trials, health outcomes were reported, but no single outcome was widely reported and no group differences were seen in most trials. Illicit and nonmedical drug use was reduced by some of the general prevention interventions, but the results were inconsistent across the literature, with no statistically significant association for [illicit drug use](#). Based on these findings, the USPSTF concludes that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of primary care-based behavioral counseling interventions to prevent or reduce illicit drug use among children, adolescents, and young adults (I statement).

"It is critical to find effective ways for clinicians to keep children and teens from starting to use drugs in the first place," USPSTF member Michael Silverstein, M.D., M.P.H., said in a statement.

**More information:** [Draft Evidence Review](#)  
[Draft Recommendation Statement](#)  
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