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Dear Educators:

It is with great pleasure that we present the *Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Practice Materials Using Prevention Concepts*. This innovative product is the result of a tri-agency agreement between the Departments of Education (DOE), Children and Families (DCF), and Health (DOH) and supported by the Governor's Office of Drug Control. Incorporating prevention concepts into materials that correlate with the Sunshine State Standards and assist students in preparing for the FCAT was first recommended at the 1999 Governor's Drug Summit. In response to this call-to-action by statewide prevention leaders, the Bureau of School Safety and School Support, Office of Safe Schools spearheaded this initiative to produce a package of innovative materials. DCF's Substance Abuse Office provided funding to make this idea a reality.

These units were designed to assist teachers in addressing critical math, reading, writing, and science skills, while concurrently delivering substance abuse prevention messages. Paradox Learning Systems, Inc. developed these materials, which were extensively reviewed and edited by a cadre of experts from the field that included over 300 teachers and district-level prevention leaders. Additionally, DOE subject area specialists reviewed the materials for area content, Assessment and Evaluation Services staff provided FCAT formatting guidance, and prevention specialists provided prevention content evaluation.

These practice materials integrate alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) prevention concepts into subject area practice items for the fourth, fifth, eighth, and tenth grades. There are materials available for each of these grade levels and include teacher preparation information as well as skill-appropriate student practice items. It is important to note that students will benefit from using these FCAT-formatted materials to sharpen their skills in math, reading, writing and science, while learning developmentally appropriate information to enhance healthy decision-making.

For example, through the use of these materials, students will:

- Practice math skills by calculating the societal costs of tobacco-related illnesses
- Increase reading comprehension skills while reading passages related to the dangers of drug use

- Learn critical thinking skills by analyzing and interpreting an alcohol-related media message


These materials will enhance any subject area in many different settings, including, but not limited to:

- Red Ribbon (Drug Awareness) campaigns, which are held annually in the month of October (For 2003, the dates are October 23-31)
- After-school/tutoring programs
- Alternative disciplinary settings for students who may be at greater risk of using substances
- Remediation programs

These materials are available at the Bureau of School Safety and School Support, Office of Safe Schools website, <http://www.firn.edu/doe/besss/safehome.htm>. Click on *FCAT Practice Materials Using Prevention Concepts*, which is listed under *HIGHLIGHTS*. For additional information, you may also call the Office of Safe Schools at (850) 245-0416 (SunCom 205-0416).

We encourage you to use these materials when preparing your students to achieve at their highest academic level. This is an excellent opportunity to integrate healthy life messages into the learning process to positively affect the well-being and safety of our students.

Sincerely,




James R. McDonough, Director
Governor's Office of Drug Control



Jim Horne, Commissioner
Florida Department of Education



Jerry Regier, Secretary
Florida Department of Children & Families



John O. Agwunobi, Secretary
Florida Department of Health