



POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

SHPD PROGRAM/SERVICE

The more assets young people experience (i.e. caring relationships, meaningful participation and high expectations) , the less likely they are to engage in a wide range of risky behaviors, and the more likely they are to engage in positive behaviors. Search Institute 2000.

Historical Background: In order to provide young people positive alternatives to substance use and gang involvement, in 1991 San Francisco Unified School District developed a Positive Alternatives program for middle school and high school students. Components of grant proposals submitted and awarded to SHPD included developing access to positive alternative activities. Through a collaborative with the San Francisco Police Department, Pacific Leadership Institute, and the Blue Water Sailing Foundation, SHPD has been able to offer sailing , ropes courses, and backpacking trips (MS only) to select middle and high school students. Additional grant funding was secured to develop a before school/lunchtime physical activities program.

Site coordinators were identified and provided a stipend to implement this program and participate as a member of the site based Middle School Healthy School Team or the High School Health Promotion Committee.

What is the goal of the Positive Alternatives Program?

The goal is to provide positive alternative activities including sailing, backpacking and ropes courses to middle and high school students to increase their self-esteem.

What is the Positive Alternatives Program?

A selection criteria is established at each school site to identify student participants. Activities provided to students include:

- **SAILING:** includes spending the day aboard vessels skippered by an experienced captain. Students are given an introduction to sailing operations and basic on-board safety procedures. Students work cooperatively to accomplish a common goal: a smooth sailing trip.
- **ROPES COURSE:** includes warm-ups, games, group initiative problem solving, low ropes course elements and rigorous physically and emotionally challenging events.
- **BACKPACKING:** (middle school only) an outdoor three-day adventure consisting of mental and physical challenges which emphasize teamwork, trust, individual, and group effort. Includes organizing and packing equipment, hiking away from roads and electricity, and preparing and cooking meals.
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES:** (middle school only) includes opportunities to participate in before school or lunchtime activities. Hip-hop dance, basketball, volleyball, tennis, martial arts, badminton, soccer and ping pong are some of the activities offered at participating middle schools.



For further information contact:

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