



Youth are our most valuable resource. We want to promote the healthy growth and development of youth and give them skills for making healthy choices that will affect life-long behavior patterns and the quality of their adult lives.

OUR HISTORY

Though FOCUS was founded in 1997, we adjust to meet the changing/expanding needs of students and the prevention of adolescent risk behaviors in our ever-changing society. FOCUS was developed in Jacksonville City Schools, Jacksonville, Alabama, during the 1997-98 academic school year. FOCUS began in an effort to expand prevention of adolescent risk behaviors from a selected group of peer helpers to all students interested in making a difference in the school. FOCUS is inclusive and all interested students have the opportunity to participate. The program was co-founded by Sue Jones, Jacksonville High School Health Educator, and Tom Robertson, HIV Prevention Coordinator-Alabama Department of Public Health. What began with 12 students at Jacksonville High School has grown into a funded project with schools from all 67 counties involved since Alabama Department of Public Health began funding the project in 2001. FOCUS has grown into one of the most recognized prevention programs in the State of Alabama.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- 1 To provide opportunities for all students to be involved in the reduction of adolescent risk behaviors.
- 2 To promote school and community partnerships for the reduction of adolescent risk behaviors.
- 3 To empower students to help each other through peer helping and others through community service opportunities.
- 4 To provide resources for facilitators and students to enhance their prevention efforts.



FOCUS is based on developing 21st Century Skills through Project-Based Learning. Students work together to help decrease adolescent risk behaviors by:

- Developing leadership skills
- Peer helping
- Planning education and awareness events
- Participating in community service projects
- Utilizing focus groups to gather information

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Our Sponsors



DIFFERENCE MAKER AWARD

The Facilitator chosen as the "Difference Maker" will receive \$1,000 cash to be used however they choose. The "Difference Maker" will be chosen based on their school's activities, their level of involvement with FOCUS, and the creation of successful prevention activities and events.

Eligibility Requirements:

- The FOCUS Facilitator must be nominated using the Difference Maker form located at www.thefocusprogram.com
- The winner must be a facilitator at a registered FOCUS school

Judging Criteria:

- The school's FOCUS activities that were led by the Facilitator.
- The Facilitator's level of involvement with FOCUS throughout the year.
- The Facilitator has demonstrated dedication and commitment to creating successful prevention activities and events.

JOIN US!

See FOCUS Schools by visiting the website and clicking on Participating Schools.



\$1,000 PRIZE



Register online at www.thefocusprogram.com

A trained staff is available to assist schools in Grades 7-12 with implementation of FOCUS! Membership is Free! As part of our network, FOCUS Facilitators have access to peer helping training, electronic publications and informational resources, including:

- On-Line Facilitator Training Modules
- Implementation Guide
- Character Traits and Quotes
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Certificates for Students
- Use of FOCUS Logo
- Student Webcasts



FOCUS may be implemented as an Elective Class; "LEADERS in Health Advocacy" (ALSDE Code: 250010) or Peer Helping (ALSDE Code: ???) as an Extra-Curricular.

Partners: Addiction Prevention Coalition (APC), Alabama Campaign for Adolescent Sexual Health, Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE), Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS)

GET INVOLVED

Students in Grades 7-12 across the state of Alabama participate in FOCUS.
Market Your Students' Success Stories! Include FOCUS on your school's website under Clubs and Activities.

Use your school's social media and website to share FOCUS activities.

Register as a FOCUS School at thefocusprogram.com