Keepin’ it REAL
KENYA PILOT FINDINGS

✅ Keepin’ it REAL has proven effective at preventing youth alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and increasing anti-drug attitudes and beliefs

✅ Youth also develop life skills such as decision-making, risk assessment and interpersonal communication

✅ The skills developed in this program aid in the prevention of multiple youth problem behaviors

REFUSE: say “no” in a clear, direct, & respectful manner

EXPLAIN: provide a reason or reasons for not doing something undesirable or harmful

AVOID: physically keep yourself away from risky situations or places

LEAVE: remove yourself from a situation that is dangerous, threatening, or risky
The *kiREAL* program is managed by the Global Center for Applied Health Research (GCAHR) at Arizona State University.

*kiREAL* is a culturally-grounded curriculum that has proven effective at preventing and reducing youth substance use in settings all over the world.

GCAHR, in conjunction with the African Institute for Child Studies, is adapting the *kiREAL* curriculum for the Kenyan culture.

### Demographic characteristics

The *kiREAL* pilot study in Kenya involved:

- **4** Schools
  - 2 experimental
  - 2 control
  - Around Nairobi

- **841** Students
  - 55% female
  - 45% male
  - 10-16 years of age
  - (average = 13.2 years)

Due to methodological challenges during implementation, the results are reported for a smaller subset of the sample above:

- **3** Schools
  - 2 experimental
  - 1 control

- **533** Students
  - 55% female
  - 45% male
  - 10-16 years of age
  - (average = 13.2 years)
Pre-test results
Substance use vulnerability prior to intervention

Use of REAL strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refuse</td>
<td>39.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses when feeling pressured to do something dangerous or unhealthy

Past 30-day substance offers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

Effects of the intervention

The efficacy of *Keepin’ it REAL* was assessed comparing the experimental and control group students, while adjusting for pre-existing differences between them on demographic characteristics like age and gender.

**Intervention effects on substance use frequency** (unstandardized)

*Keepin’ it REAL* students reported relative reductions in the frequency of *alcohol use* (only in females), *heavy drinking* (in females and males), *prescription drug misuse* (females only) and *ecstasy use*. The control group showed relatively better results in the use of *cigarettes* (marginally) and *inhalants* (only in males).
Overall, *Keepin’ it REAL* strengthened anti-drug personal norms (especially in males) and perceptions of parental disapproval of substance use, while increasing negative expectancies about drug use and its harmfulness in males. While it lowered females’ estimates of the prevalence of substance use by school peers, in males it increased estimates of how many of their friends used substances.

*Keepin’ it REAL* students (and females in particular) reported increasing use of the REAL strategies of *avoid* and *leave*, as well as the strategy of providing an *excuse*. They also reported increasing likelihood of relying on *violence*.
Next steps for kiREAL in Kenya

2020
- Efficacy analyses continued
- Disseminate preliminary findings
- Secure funding for individual interviews

2021
- Conduct individual interviews with teachers about the acceptability and feasibility of Keepin’ it REAL
- Conduct qualitative analyses of interviews with teachers and students’ qualitative responses to the post-test
- Synthesize all qualitative data to identify prevention needs
- Continue synthesizing quantitative and qualitative data to identify prevention needs
- Dissemination activities
- Begin planning cultural adaptation and a larger, more representative efficacy trial
- Secure funding for a larger, more representative efficacy trial
- Write article on the pilot feasibility results
- Begin cultural adaptation of curriculum