



## From Top-Down Messaging to Collaborative Prevention

### Can Government-Think Tank Partnerships Make Youth Anti-Drug Education More Effective?



#### A Case Study of HKPRI's "Troublesome Cannabis" Talk

## 1 Background

Number of drug-taking students in Hong Kong



The steady increase in student drug use reveals room for improvement in drug prevention measures.

Narcotics Division, Security Bureau (2024)

## 2 Whats HKPRI

- Established 1995 as independent non-profit think tank
- Ranked top 100 in Asia (UPenn Global Think Tank Index 2015-2020)
- Mission: Policy research to support Hong Kong governance.



## 3 What Actions have HKPRI taken in Youth Anti-Drug Education

- Created government-partnered picture book Trouble brought by CBD
- Hosted CBD prohibition talks at Primary and Secondary schools
- Aims: Educate youth on legal and health consequences of drug use



## 5 Theoretical Analysis on Cognition

Dual-Process Theory (Kahneman, 2011)

- System 1 (intuitive):**  
Prison Sentence
- Activates immediate awareness

- System 2 (analytical processing):**  
Legal facts (Cap.134),
- Engages analytical thinking

Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977)

- Vicarious punishment: 17.5-year prison video
- Shows consequences of drug trafficking
  - No model for imitation is shown

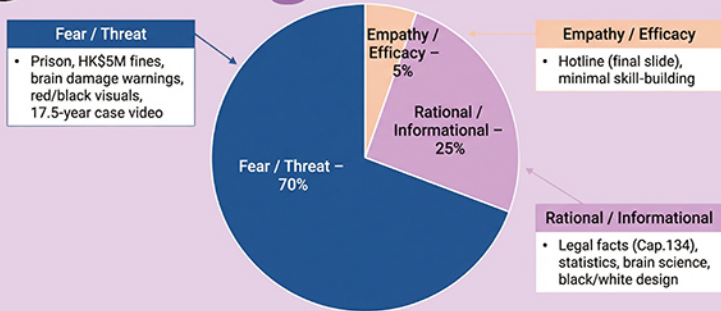
## 4 Method

Content analysis of slides from HKPRI CBD talk coded for:

- Peer appeals
- Rational information
- Empathy/support



## 6 Findings



Message Frame Analysis

## Gap Analysis:

Current Approach :

- About 70% are fear / deterrence, mirroring government "zero-tolerance" law-and-prison messages.
- Only 5% provide support (hotline, coping), mostly at the very end.
- SEL and skills (refusal, emotion coping, peer pressure) are largely absent – students hear what not to do, but not how to do it.
- The talk is mainly one-way lecture with minimal interaction

- Risk:** 1. Defensive Avoidance 2. Message rejection / reactance 3. Credibility and impact limits

## 7 Theoretical Framework

Why 1 + 1 Can > 2

- 1. Socialization (Giddings, 1897)**
  - Government = Rules
  - Think Tank = Understanding → Complete value formation
- 2. Institutionalization (Zucker, 1977)**
  - Government = Policy mandate
  - Think Tank = Teaching tools → Sustained practice
- 3. Eppm Theory (So, 2013)**
  - High threat + Low efficacy = Avoidance x
  - High threat + High efficacy = Behavior change ✓
  - Government = Threat / Think Tank = Efficacy
  - → Real impact
- 4. Policy learning**
  - ✓ Pre/post evaluation
  - ✓ Evidence feedback
  - ✓ Continuous improvement
  - → System that learns

## 8 Recommendation

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Balance Threat + Efficacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach refusal skills</li> <li>• Show success stories</li> <li>• Practice scenarios</li> </ul> | <b>Integrate SEL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer pressure resistance</li> <li>• Emotion regulation</li> <li>• Decision-making tools</li> </ul> |
| <b>Pilot innovations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactive workshops</li> <li>• Peer-led discussions</li> <li>• Co-design with youth</li> </ul>      | <b>Build follow-up</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher toolkits</li> <li>• Parent materials</li> <li>• Evaluation measures</li> </ul>           |

## 9 Conclusion

- HKPRI aligns with government policy but doesn't innovate beyond deterrence.
- 70% fear + 5% efficacy = missed potential
- True collaboration means: Government delivers threat, think tanks deliver skills.
- Together: 1+1>2.



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