

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT TEACHES NEW CURRICULUM TO COUNTY STUDENTS

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IRON RIVER—Certainly the middle-school years of a student's life can be challenging in any number of ways. Over the last three months, the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department has tried to help West Iron County sixth graders navigate some of the tricky waters they'll experience as they transition through their teen years.

DIHD health educator Kelly Rumpf guided the students through a program called “Botvin *LifeSkills Training*: Promoting Health and Personal Development.”

The curriculum was taught in health classes--at West Iron in Lisa Johns' classes and as well as at Forest Park. The two county schools were the first that Rumpf taught the curriculum.

“It came about because there is a substance abuse problem in the U.P.,” said Rumpf, who added that she will teach the unit at Kingsford beginning this week. “Student initiation rates are climbing.

“We approached the two schools initially to see if they were interested. We received our initial grant through NorthCare to provide this program to these schools.”

According to the Botvin *LifeSkills Training* website, [lifeskillstraining.com](http://lifeskillstraining.com), the program is a research-based substance abuse prevention program that is designed to reduce the risks of alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse and violence by targeting the major social and psychological factors that promote the initiation of substance use and other risky behaviors.

The training program promotes healthy alternatives to risky behavior through activities designed to:

- Teach students the necessary skills to resist social (peer) pressures to smoke, drink, and use drugs
- Help students develop greater self-esteem and build self-confidence
- Enable students to effectively cope with anxiety

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