

241 *An Alcohol Abuse Early Intervention for First Nations' Adolescents*

This paper describes the development of and pilot results for an alcohol abuse early intervention program targeting at-risk First Nations youth conducted in partnership with schools and communities. The intervention was based on traditional Mi'kmaq knowledge and teachings in order to make the program as meaningful and relevant as possible in the partner communities (Comeau, Stewart, Mushquash, Wojcik, Bartlett, Marshall, Young, & Stevens, 2005). It was based on previously established, successful psychoeducational approaches and cognitive-behavioral techniques for young drinkers from the majority culture (Conrod, Stewart, Comeau, & MacLean, in press). The pilot results were positive. Compared to pre-intervention, students who participated in the intervention drank less, engaged in less binge-drinking episodes (i.e., 5 drinks or more/occasion), had fewer alcohol-related problems, were more likely to abstain from alcohol use, and reduced their marijuana use at four-months post-intervention. No such significant changes were observed in a non-random group of eligible students who did not participate in the intervention. Future research should determine if this intervention is effective for at-risk youth in other First Nations communities across Canada, and whether the promising, but preliminary results with marijuana mean that the benefits of the intervention might extend to adolescents' use of substances other than alcohol, even though alcohol was the targeted substance of use.