

# Escape Addict, a playful school-based program to prevent psychoactive substances use in students from Normandy

<b>Submission date</b> 19/03/2025	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 24/07/2025	<b>Overall study status</b> Ongoing	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 24/07/2025	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Early psychoactive substances consumption (PSC) in youth impairs psychosocial and neurocognitive development with with short- and long-term consequences (Hamidullah et al., 2020; Castellanos-Ryan et al., 2017). Among French teenagers, lifetime use (experimentation) of tobacco and alcohol, and to a lesser extent cannabis, still begins in the early years of middle school, with an increase and installation of consumption in the transition to high school (Kopp, 2023 ; Obradovic, 2022).

Few prevention of PSC programs are evaluated, and heterogeneous effects of actions, with rare or limited replication are found (Santé Publique France, 2019, Tremblay et al., 2020). This lack of replicability is consistent with the low quality of theoretical implementation (Michie, 2014). The COM-B (Michie et al., 2011) appears as a key theoretical framework for understanding and supporting behavior change, and for designing and informing interventions, by choosing appropriate behavior change techniques (BCT, Michie et al., 2013). The use of technology, and in particular gaming, can enhance students interest in learning (Virvou et al., 2005) with interventions build on immersive, enjoyable, problem-based principles, and strategies that encourage health behavior change (Stapinski et al., 2018).

Escape Addict (EA) was first implemented in Switzerland, and designed as an escape game. Evaluations (Bezençon et al, 2022 ; Bezençon et al., 2023) reported that the one hour and a half experience was not sufficient to lead to significant change in PSC representations and behaviors. A french association, in collbaoration with actors in the field and researchers, adapted EA to its cultural context, and developed supplementary sessions to complete the game and foster behavior change basing the intervention on the COM-B model, integrating relevant BCT and using relevant prevention tools to communicate about PSC.

### Who can participate?

8th grade students from high schools in deprived background of Rouen Metropolis (Normandy, France) are eligible to participate.

### What does the study involve?

The first objective of the pilot study is to evaluate the feasibility (acceptability, implementation,

fidelity) of EA program ; The second objective of the study is to estimate the pilot effect-size of EA on the retardation of first experience and on the decrease of recent PSC. The PSC targeted by EA are alcohol, cannabis, tobacco and chicha ; outcomes are assessed by questionnaire at two study endpoints (baseline-post). The primary outcome is the proportion of adolescents who did not experience psychoactive substances. The secondary outcome is the proportion of adolescents who decreased their recent PSC (last month consumption). Other outcomes are motivational variables determining behavior change, assessed by COM-B questionnaire. The study will include secondary schools from disadvantaged backgrounds in the Rouen metropolitan area. 4 secondary schools 8th grade classes (around n = 300 students) will benefit from EA program. To investigate feasibility, a mixed method study, with quantitative indicators, and qualitative study based on process analysis and FIC model (Key Functions/Implementation /Context, Villeval, 2015) will be used, the latter allowing, in particular, to analyze the effects of the intervention in terms of social inequalities. Interviews and focus group will involve various actors engaged in the intervention (schoolchildren, school nurses, teachers, prevention staff, research and field team).

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The expected impacts are to develop a theoretically anchored, playful public health program in high school, targeting PCS, that is acceptable, easily implemented and adapted to students' social backgrounds. The benefits for participants are, with a decrease or delay of PSC use, also the improvement of psychosocial skills (i.e. psychosocial variables influencing behaviour, targeted by the model).

Where is the study run from?

1. Epidaure Institute of Cancer - Montpellier (France)
2. University Paul Valéry Montpellier III (France)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

January 2023 to December 2025

Who is funding the study?

Institut National Du Cancer (France)

Who is the main contact?

Florence Cousson-Gélie, [florence.cousson-gelie@univ-montp3.fr](mailto:florence.cousson-gelie@univ-montp3.fr)

**Study website**

<https://www.escape-addict.ch/>

## Contact information

**Type(s)**

Public, Scientific, Principal Investigator

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Scientific

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## **Additional identifiers**

### **EudraCT/CTIS number**

Nil known

### **IRAS number**

### **ClinicalTrials.gov number**

Nil known

### **Secondary identifying numbers**

INCa grant number : 2022-145

## **Study information**

### **Scientific Title**

Escape Addict : pre-post pilot effectiveness and feasibility study of a playful theory-based secondary school prevention program to delay and decrease psychoactive substances consumption in schoolchildren from Normandy

### **Acronym**

Escape Addict-Feasibility

### **Study objectives**

Escape Addict (EA):

1. Is a feasible program, that is acceptable for both targeted populations and people implied in

program implementation, useful, interesting and answer a demand and that can be successfully delivered

2. Demonstrates, at least, a weak to moderate effect on targeted behaviors: delay first experience of PSC and decrease PSC in adolescents from deprived background

3. Influence determinants the COM-B model that lead to behavior change: Capability, Opportunity and Motivation to decrease/not to use psychoactive substances in adolescents from deprived backgrounds

### **Ethics approval required**

Ethics approval required

### **Ethics approval(s)**

Approved 16/01/2023, Comité Ethique de l'Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3 (Route de Mende, 34199 Montpellier cedex 5, Montpellier, 34199, France; +33 4 67 14 20 00; contact. comite-d-ethique@univ-montp3.fr), ref: IRB00013686- 2023-02-CER

### **Study design**

Interventional feasibility and pilot pre-post effectiveness single-center study

### **Primary study design**

Interventional

### **Secondary study design**

Non randomised study

### **Study setting(s)**

School

### **Study type(s)**

Prevention

### **Participant information sheet**

Not available in web format, please use contact details to request a participant information sheet

### **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Prevention of psychoactive substances use among healthy schoolchildren

### **Interventions**

Escape Addict is a playful school-based prevention program (based on an escape game), and theoretically anchored in a behavior change model (COM-B, Michie et al., 2011, and Behavior Change techniques, BCT, Michie et al., 2014). It aims to delay and reduce the use of psychoactive substances (alcohol, cannabis, tobacco and chicha) by middle-school students (8th grade, 14-year-olds) from disadvantaged areas in Normandy (France). The program involves students, school staff and parents, and takes place in 4 stages

- a. Discovery of the tool by members of the educational community
- b. Preparation of the co-leadership of the student sessions and teasing of the students
- c. Carrying out the 4 sessions of the program with the students
- d. Carrying out the session with the parents and debriefing.

These sessions can be deployed throughout the school year.

**Intervention Type**

Behavioural

**Primary outcome measure**

The proportion of adolescents who did not experience psychoactive substances assessed by questionnaire at baseline and 6 months

**Secondary outcome measures**

The proportion of adolescents who decreased their recent (i.e. last month) PSC consumption measured using questionnaire at baseline and 6 months later

**Overall study start date**

16/01/2023

**Completion date**

31/12/2025

**Eligibility****Key inclusion criteria**

Educational Institutions :

1. Public middle schools
2. Middle school located in the Rouen metropolitan area
3. Must have adequate human, logistical, and material resources to allow for the implementation of the program

Students :

1. Must be enrolled in one of the included classes and institutions
2. Must be enrolled in 8th grade (equivalent to "classe de 4ème")
3. Must have been informed about the study and consented to complete the questionnaires (with no parental or legal guardian opposition)
4. Must have signed the participation form

**Participant type(s)**

Learner/student

**Age group**

Child

**Lower age limit**

13 Years

**Upper age limit**

15 Years

**Sex**

Both

**Target number of participants**

300

## **Key exclusion criteria**

Educational Institutions :

1. Middle schools already participating in another research protocol

Students :

1. Students unable to follow the study throughout its entire duration or those with impairments that prevent proper understanding of the study's requirements
2. Students who have already participated in an intervention regarding the consumption of psychoactive substances during the study period
3. Students whose parents have explicitly refused their participation through written notice to the school
4. Students who refuse or withdraw from the study at the time of measurement

## **Date of first enrolment**

01/02/2023

## **Date of final enrolment**

30/06/2025

# **Locations**

## **Countries of recruitment**

France

## **Study participating centre**

**Epidaure, Prevention Department of Institute of Cancer - Montpellier**

208, avenue des Apothicaires

Montpellier

France

34090

## **Study participating centre**

**Epsilon Lab of Health Psychology, University Paul Valéry Montpellier 3**

Rue du Pr. Henri Serre - Site Saint-Charles

Montpellier

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# **Sponsor information**

## **Organisation**

Epidaure Institute of Cancer - Montpellier

**Sponsor details**

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**Sponsor type**

Hospital/treatment centre

**Website**

<http://icm.unicancer.fr/fr/linstitut-du-cancer-de-montpellier/la-prevention/epidaure-departement-prevention-de-licm>

**Organisation**

University Paul Valery Montpellier - Epsilon Lab (Health Psychology)

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**Sponsor type**

University/education

**Website**

<https://epsilon.www.univ-montp3.fr/fr/pr%C3%A9sentation/pr%C3%A9sentation>

**Funder(s)****Funder type**

Research organisation

**Funder Name**

Institut National Du Cancer

**Alternative Name(s)**

The French National Cancer Institute, INCa

**Funding Body Type**

Private sector organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**

Research institutes and centers

**Location**

France

## **Results and Publications**

**Publication and dissemination plan**

The scientific valorization (publications in peer-reviewed journals) of the results of this study will be initiated soon: firstly, a publication of the protocol and the pilot efficacy results is envisaged; another publication will investigate the secondary outcomes and the theoretical anchoring of the intervention (COM-B model of motivation).

**Intention to publish date**

01/09/2026

**Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan**

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available due to the due to the storage, accessibility and sharing of data previously declared in the protocol to the University of Montpellier's Research Ethics Committee.

**IPD sharing plan summary**

Not expected to be made available