



## Appendix 2: Examples of unintended consequences from social programmes

### Scared Straight Programme

What is it: A programme piloted in the late 1970s in the United States with the intention to prevent juvenile career criminals from continuing on the path of delinquency. This was to be achieved by conscripting the convict to spend the entire day in a maximum prison to see first-hand what typical jail life looks like in order to instil fear to would-be criminals.

What people thought it would do: The programme would deter at-risk juvenile criminals leading to decreased crime rates locally and across the country since the programme was documented and televised.

What the evidence demonstrated: The programme produced contrary results: The evidence showed *increases* in criminal behaviour for former juvenile participants.

What went wrong?: Prison experiences cemented attitudes of criminality; juveniles perceived themselves as better criminals than those in prison who were already apprehended.

### Virtual Infant Parenting Programme

What is it: A programme involving teenage girls of ages 13 to 15 participating in pregnancy-detering awareness training. The programme requires teenagers to care for infant simulators in the form of dolls that cry, need to be fed, cleaned, and taken care of all round the clock—just like real-life babies.

What people thought it would do: It was hoped that the programme would delay teen pregnancy and improve knowledge and awareness around issues of real-life everyday demands and pressures of teen motherhood.

What the evidence demonstrated: The evidence showed that the programme actually *increased* the likelihood of girls falling pregnant.

What went wrong?: The participants enjoyed the attention they were receiving while caring for the infant stimulators—this energised their desires to have a baby.

### Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Programme

What is it: A proactive programme intended to arrest drug use by students before it begins. It was designed to empower participants to develop skills to resist the lure of substance use such as alcohol and illegal drugs.

What people thought it would do: It was hoped that the programme would have a positive impact on shaping young students' attitudes towards substance use. It would also empower them to say 'No' to drugs and alcohol.

What the evidence demonstrated: The evidence revealed an *increase* in drinking patterns and illegal substance use amongst participating students.

What went wrong: The programme wasn't sensitive to youngsters' propensity to, by principle, adopt an opposing position to what was taught. Or, simpler put: "telling a certain type of kid that he shouldn't do drugs may simply result in him trying drugs out of spite."