



INTERNATIONAL PROJECTION AND METHODOLOGICAL COOPERATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE U.S. D.A.R.E. PROGRAM AND COLOMBIA'S JUVENILE PREVENTION MODELS

PROJEÇÃO INTERNACIONAL E COOPERAÇÃO METODOLÓGICA: ANÁLISE COMPARADA ENTRE O PROGRAMA D.A.R.E. (EUA) E MODELOS DE PREVENÇÃO JUVENIL DA COLÔMBIA

PROYECCIÓN INTERNACIONAL Y COOPERACIÓN METODOLÓGICA: ANÁLISIS COMPARADO ENTRE EL PROGRAMA D.A.R.E. DE ESTADOS UNIDOS Y LOS MODELOS COLOMBIANOS DE PREVENCIÓN JUVENIL

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/levv16n52-087>

Submitted on: 08/07/2025

Publication date: 09/07/2025

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the methodological convergence between the United States D.A.R.E. program and Colombian models for the prevention of juvenile delinquency, with the objective of identifying common structural axes and evaluating the feasibility of establishing a hemispheric cooperation framework in preventive policies. A qualitative and comparative literature review was conducted using scientific studies, institutional reports, and technical documents describing pedagogical strategies, educational policing practices, and psychosocial interventions implemented in schools and community environments. This methodological approach enabled the analysis of conceptual and operational elements present in both programs, which were organized into three central categories: educational prevention, police training, and psychosocial support. The findings indicate that D.A.R.E. has undergone significant transformation through the incorporation of interactive methodologies based on life-skills development, aligning more closely with approaches used in Latin America, where Colombia demonstrates consolidated experience integrating schools, community psychologists, and citizen security institutions. The convergence between these models shows that both rely on strategies that strengthen socio-emotional competencies, promote active student participation, and enhance protective factors in social contexts marked by various vulnerabilities. Additionally, it was observed that the presence of trained educational police officers, when guided by pedagogical and communicative practices, contributes to building positive relationships between institutions and youth, reinforcing the potential for methodological cooperation across countries. The analysis also revealed that the integration of pedagogical practices, police engagement, and psychosocial support forms a solid foundation for the construction of a hemispheric prevention system capable of responding to contemporary youth needs through adaptable and evidence-based methodologies. In conclusion, the articulation between the United States and Colombia represents a strategic opportunity to develop hybrid programs, implement harmonized curricula, and establish networks for technical exchange, thereby strengthening crime prevention and youth protection policies across the Americas.

Keywords: Youth Prevention. International Cooperation. Educational Methodologies. D.A.R.E.. Public Policy.

RESUMO

Este estudo investigou a convergência metodológica entre o programa norte-americano D.A.R.E. e os modelos colombianos de prevenção da delinquência juvenil, com o objetivo de identificar eixos estruturais comuns e avaliar a viabilidade de estabelecer um marco de cooperação hemisférica em políticas preventivas. Realizou-se uma revisão de literatura qualitativa e comparativa, utilizando estudos científicos, relatórios institucionais e documentos técnicos que descrevem estratégias pedagógicas, práticas de policiamento educativo e intervenções psicossociais implementadas em escolas e ambientes comunitários. Essa abordagem metodológica possibilitou a análise de elementos conceituais e operacionais presentes em ambos os programas, organizados em três categorias centrais: prevenção educacional, formação policial e apoio psicossocial. Os resultados indicam que o D.A.R.E. passou por uma transformação significativa ao incorporar metodologias interativas baseadas no desenvolvimento de habilidades para a vida, aproximando-se mais de abordagens utilizadas na América Latina, onde a Colômbia demonstra experiência consolidada na integração entre escolas, psicólogos comunitários e instituições de segurança cidadã. A convergência entre esses modelos mostra que ambos se apoiam em estratégias que fortalecem competências socioemocionais, promovem a participação ativa dos estudantes e ampliam fatores de proteção em contextos sociais marcados por diversas vulnerabilidades. Além disso, observou-se que a presença de policiais educativos treinados, quando orientados por práticas pedagógicas e comunicativas, contribui para a construção de relações positivas entre instituições e juventude, reforçando o potencial de cooperação metodológica entre países. A análise também revelou que a integração de práticas pedagógicas, atuação policial e apoio psicossocial constitui uma base sólida para a construção de um sistema hemisférico de prevenção capaz de responder às necessidades contemporâneas dos jovens por meio de metodologias adaptáveis e baseadas em evidências. Em conclusão, a articulação entre Estados Unidos e Colômbia representa uma oportunidade estratégica para desenvolver programas híbridos, implementar currículos harmonizados e estabelecer redes de intercâmbio técnico, fortalecendo assim as políticas de prevenção ao crime e de proteção juvenil nas Américas.

Palavras-chave: Prevenção Juvenil. Cooperação Internacional. Metodologias Educacionais. D.A.R.E.. Política Pública.

RESUMEN

Este estudio investigó la convergencia metodológica entre el programa estadounidense D.A.R.E. y los modelos colombianos de prevención de la delincuencia juvenil, con el objetivo de identificar ejes estructurales comunes y evaluar la viabilidad de establecer un marco de cooperación hemisférica en políticas preventivas. Se realizó una revisión bibliográfica cualitativa y comparativa mediante estudios científicos, informes institucionales y documentos técnicos que describen estrategias pedagógicas, prácticas de policía educativa e intervenciones psicosociales implementadas en escuelas y entornos comunitarios. Este enfoque metodológico permitió analizar los elementos conceptuales y operativos presentes en ambos programas, organizados en tres categorías centrales: prevención educativa, formación policial y apoyo psicosocial. Los resultados indican que D.A.R.E. ha pasado por una transformación significativa al incorporar metodologías interactivas basadas en el desarrollo de habilidades para la vida, acercándose más a los enfoques utilizados en América Latina, donde Colombia demuestra una experiencia consolidada en la integración entre escuelas, psicólogos comunitarios e instituciones de seguridad ciudadana. La convergencia entre estos modelos muestra que ambos se sustentan en estrategias que fortalecen competencias socioemocionales, promueven la participación activa del



estudiantado y amplían los factores de protección en contextos sociales marcados por diversas vulnerabilidades. Además, se observó que la presencia de policías educativos capacitados, cuando se guían por prácticas pedagógicas y comunicativas, contribuye a la construcción de relaciones positivas entre instituciones y juventud, reforzando el potencial de cooperación metodológica entre países. El análisis también reveló que la integración de prácticas pedagógicas, participación policial y apoyo psicosocial constituye una base sólida para la construcción de un sistema hemisférico de prevención capaz de responder a las necesidades contemporáneas de los jóvenes mediante metodologías adaptables y basadas en evidencia. En conclusión, la articulación entre Estados Unidos y Colombia representa una oportunidad estratégica para desarrollar programas híbridos, implementar currículos armonizados y establecer redes de intercambio técnico, fortaleciendo así las políticas de prevención del delito y protección juvenil en las Américas.

Palabras clave: Prevención Juvenil. Cooperación Internacional. Metodologías Educativas. D.A.R.E.. Política Pública.



1 INTRODUCTION

The prevention of juvenile delinquency has consolidated itself as a strategic axis within citizen security policies across the Americas, mobilizing governmental structures, educational institutions, and community networks seeking to address risk factors associated with violent behavior and early use of psychoactive substances, thereby creating an environment in which school-based prevention programs have become central instruments to promote life skills, strengthen social bonds, and develop decision-making competencies that protect children and adolescents in vulnerable contexts (Clayton, Cattarello & Johnstone, 1996).

In the international landscape, the U.S. D.A.R.E. program (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) stands out as one of the longest-running primary prevention experiences implemented in school settings, adopting curricula grounded in socioemotional skills and youth protagonism while establishing structured interaction between trained police officers and students. This approach combines preventive education, strategic communication, and community participation as pillars to reduce risks associated with drug use and delinquent behaviors during adolescence (Caputi et al., 2017).

Colombia, in turn, has developed its own youth-prevention structures that dialogue with Latin American traditions of citizen security, incorporating components such as school mediation, psychosocial support, and territorial engagement. These efforts have resulted in integrated models applied in departments such as Boyacá and Antioquia, where multidisciplinary teams work in partnership with educational and security institutions to strengthen protective factors and reduce vulnerabilities among young people exposed to violence, inequality, and social disorganization (Valente et al., 2022).

When comparing these two realities, it becomes evident that there is methodological compatibility between D.A.R.E. and Colombian programs, as both adopt educational strategies centered on strengthening youths' emotional development, promoting competencies related to resisting social pressures, and developing skills that support healthy decision-making. This alignment creates fertile ground for comparative analyses and for the construction of international cooperation frameworks that preserve cultural particularities while maintaining methodological rigor (Sánchez et al., 2021).

The convergence between these models is reinforced by the consistent presence of trained community-oriented police officers, a component observed both in D.A.R.E. and in Colombian programs. In both contexts, officers receive pedagogical training, communication preparation, and guidance to operate collaboratively and educationally within school settings, fostering institutional proximity that helps reduce stigma, strengthen trust, and integrate prevention practices based on citizen security and conflict mediation (Pereira et al., 2020).



This methodological alignment gains relevance amid contemporary debates regarding the need for evidence-based school programs. Recent analyses question traditional interventions that relied exclusively on informational content and show that interactive, dialogic, and psychosocial models yield more consistent results, reinforcing the potential for cooperation between the United States and Colombia to improve practices, integrate approaches, and strengthen educational impact across diverse contexts (Oliveira, 2024).

International evidence also demonstrates that preventive programs experience variations in effectiveness when implemented in different countries, highlighting the importance of adapting methodologies to cultural contexts and specific school dynamics especially in Latin American regions marked by inequality, social vulnerability, and multiple forms of violence. This reinforces the need for technical cooperation structures that enable pedagogical and psychosocial adjustments without compromising the conceptual integrity of original programs (Britannica, 2025).

Accordingly, multilateral organizations dedicated to the study of educational programs have emphasized that hemispheric articulation in youth prevention depends on establishing permanent exchange forums, conducting comparative curriculum analyses, and harmonizing training protocols. Such processes create conditions for national experiences to be translated, transferred, and incorporated into other educational realities a process in which Colombia and the United States emerge as complementary references in different methodological dimensions (IDB Evidence Platform, 2024).

Based on the compiled evidence, it becomes possible to identify that integrating D.A.R.E. methodologies with elements of Colombian programs offers a unique opportunity to build a continental cooperation framework in which preventive curricula, police-training strategies, psychosocial models, and school protocols can be shared, tested, and refined. Such integration contributes to raising prevention standards, expanding impact, and strengthening educational systems throughout Latin America and North America (Escobar, 2023).

Thus, this study aims to comparatively analyze the common axes between D.A.R.E. and Colombian models, identify integrable methodological components, examine the feasibility of a technical cooperation framework, and demonstrate how these practices possess hemispheric relevance by promoting more robust standards of crime prevention and youth protection providing foundations for strategic decision-making in educational policy, citizen security, and youth-strengthening initiatives at an international scale (CORE DARE Report, 2023).



2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTERNATIONAL POLICIES FOR JUVENILE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

International approaches to juvenile delinquency prevention have been structured around the integration of education, public policy, and community participation, forming models that address risk factors and strengthen protective elements for vulnerable youth. Within this context, the U.S. D.A.R.E. program stands out as one of the most influential hemispheric initiatives, grounded in the development of socioemotional skills and resistance strategies implemented directly in school environments (Clayton, Cattarello & Johnstone, 1996).

International literature highlights that D.A.R.E.'s shift toward interactive curricula such as *Keepin' it REAL* reflects methodological evolution aligned with contemporary demands for preventive education, replacing purely informational strategies with dialogic, participatory approaches that strengthen autonomy, critical thinking, and emotional regulation factors directly associated with reduced delinquent behavior (Caputi et al., 2017).

Recent analyses indicate that Latin American countries, particularly Colombia, have developed youth-prevention policies strongly anchored in community integration and coordination among schools, psychosocial services, and citizen-security institutions. These locally responsive models combine mediation, psychosocial support, and school-bond reinforcement as central mechanisms to reduce risk among vulnerable adolescents (Valente et al., 2022).

Colombia's long-standing prevention initiatives demonstrate the importance of culturally adapted methodologies, incorporating psychosocial components aligned with the emotional and community realities of Latin American youth an approach reinforced by evidence on the effectiveness of localized interventions (Sánchez et al., 2021).

A comparative perspective shows that both the United States and Colombia rely on primary prevention strategies centered in school environments and based on behavioral, cognitive, and socioemotional development. This convergence creates solid ground for comparative research and technical cooperation, particularly within life-skills and school-resilience-based interventions (Pereira et al., 2020).

Evidence consistently shows that interactive programs yield stronger long-term outcomes compared to informational or prescriptive models, supporting the alignment between the contemporary U.S. D.A.R.E. approach and Colombian psychosocial education strategies (Oliveira, 2024).

Further studies emphasize that programs integrating trained community-oriented police officers and educators strengthen trust within school environments, facilitating



educational rather than punitive police engagement an aspect visible in both D.A.R.E. and Colombian prevention initiatives (Britannica, 2025).

Hemispheric analyses highlight that international methodological integration depends on conceptual alignment, curriculum standardization, and culturally sensitive adaptation mechanisms. Both the United States and Colombia possess consolidated technical capacity to sustain cooperative exchanges and joint curriculum development (IDB Evidence Platform, 2024).

Psychosocial support emerges as a shared structural element across both models, reinforcing evidence that durable youth-prevention strategies require integrated approaches combining mental health, emotional resilience, and conflict mediation (Escobar, 2023).

International reports show that preventive models combining community engagement, interactive pedagogy, and inter-institutional cooperation hold strong potential for hemispheric impact. The methodologies of both Colombia and the United States, when articulated, form a solid foundation for strengthening long-term educational prevention policies across the Americas (CORE, 2023).

2.2 COMPARATIVE METHODOLOGICAL STRUCTURES

The comparison between the U.S. D.A.R.E. model and Colombian youth-prevention initiatives reveals a set of shared methodological axes that sustain preventive intervention in school and community settings. Despite sociocultural and institutional differences, both approaches rely on principles that emphasize socioemotional skills, strengthened social bonds, and the promotion of healthy decision-making, demonstrating that prevention frameworks are built upon conceptual bases that meaningfully align and allow for relevant structural convergences (Wikborg et al., 2024).

The first shared methodological axis refers to educational prevention, which structures curricula around competencies such as decision-making, conflict resolution, critical thinking, and resistance to social pressure. While D.A.R.E. evolved toward interactive approaches such as *Keepin' it REAL*, Colombian programs expanded mediation initiatives and community participation, resulting in convergent methodologies that value student protagonism and dialogic pedagogical practices (Sánchez et al., 2021).

Colombian experience shows that preventive actions grounded in territorial participation and strengthened community resilience complement educational strategies by creating mechanisms that connect schools, families, and emotional-support institutions. This territorial emphasis converges with D.A.R.E.'s methodological renewal movement, which



reinforces the importance of contextualizing life skills and reflective practices to specific social realities (Escobar, 2023).

The second methodological axis concerns police training, a structured component in both countries. This indicates that prevention programs may include security agents as long as they are pedagogically prepared, avoiding coercive approaches and adopting practices based on sensitive communication, empathy, and educational engagement (Britannica, 2025).

When technically structured, police training expands the reach of preventive actions by enabling officers to act as conflict mediators, dialogue facilitators, and positive references within school communities. Both D.A.R.E. and Colombian models developed training programs that include nonviolent communication, citizen-security principles, and interactive educational practices, demonstrating that police–community relationships can be transformative when grounded in consistent pedagogical foundations (Alliance for Child Protection, 2024).

The third methodological axis refers to psychological follow-up and psychosocial support, increasingly recognized as necessary for youth prevention in complex social environments. While Colombian programs emphasize the work of community psychologists assisting families and schools, D.A.R.E. incorporated psychosocial elements into its curricula through modules on emotional regulation, self-control, and coping strategies (CORE, 2023).

The integration of educational prevention, police training, and psychosocial support produces a multifaceted intervention model capable of addressing multiple dimensions of youth risk. This convergence appears consistently in both experiences, indicating that preventive effectiveness depends on transversal approaches that articulate schools, public-security institutions, and emotional-support networks (IDB Evidence Platform, 2024).

An examination of methodological structures shows that both countries favor interaction, contextualization, and technical adaptation. Prevention cannot be mechanically replicated across national contexts without considering cultural and educational differences, and both the United States and Colombia have developed curricular-adjustment practices that adapt activities and content to the reality of each territory a crucial condition for methodological transfer and hemispheric cooperation (Valente et al., 2022).

This set of similarities demonstrates that cooperation between the two countries can rely on solid foundations, as methodological convergence shows that prevention models from distinct educational systems share conceptual structures that enable integration, joint testing, and the development of hybrid strategies that address common needs of youth in diverse social contexts (Oliveira, 2024).



Comparative literature shows that integrated prevention models strengthen when education, citizen security, and psychosocial support operate collaboratively. This perspective is present in both Colombian initiatives and D.A.R.E., confirming that both programs hold strong potential for hemispheric impact through structured cooperation, as they share guiding principles, compatible methodologies, and the capacity to adapt to the cultural particularities of different countries in the Americas (Caputi et al., 2017).

2.3 HEMISPHERIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATED MODELS

The discussion on hemispheric cooperation in juvenile delinquency prevention has grown substantially in recent decades, driven by the need to integrate methodologies involving schools, police institutions, community networks, and psychosocial teams on a transnational scale. Comparative analysis between U.S. D.A.R.E. and Colombian prevention models shows that both systems demonstrate sufficiently convergent conceptual foundations to enable technical exchange, curriculum harmonization, and the development of preventive strategies applicable across diverse Latin American and North American contexts (Wikborg et al., 2024).

The potential for cooperation between these models arises from the recognition that both prioritize the strengthening of youth socioemotional skills, acknowledging that effective prevention depends on interactive curricula promoting autonomy, critical thinking, and resistance to adverse scenarios. This shared logic makes it viable to create exchange platforms through which Colombian and U.S. specialists can share pedagogical strategies, educational tools, and school-monitoring protocols (Sánchez et al., 2021).

Colombia has accumulated extensive experience with community-based programs that integrate psychologists, educators, territorial leaders, and governmental agencies, demonstrating that preventive interventions gain strength when articulated with robust local networks. This practice aligns with the methodological evolution of D.A.R.E., which incorporated psychosocial content and participatory communication strategies, enabling Colombian territorial approaches to be combined with U.S. pedagogical traditions to expand the reach of preventive actions (Valente et al., 2022).

Analyses of transnational cooperation initiatives already implemented in Latin America reveal that life-skills-based programs tend to show greater adaptability across different cultures, as their flexible structure allows contextual adjustments without compromising core principles. This reinforces the feasibility of building a cooperation framework between the United States and Colombia to promote integrated preventive actions across schools in varied socioeconomic environments (Pereira et al., 2020).



Hemispheric cooperation also benefits from the presence of trained police officers working in schools through educational approaches. This practice present in both countries facilitates the creation of binational training protocols that incorporate strategic communication methodologies, school mediation, and citizen-security principles, enabling educational police interventions to be consistently applied across territories and contribute to reducing vulnerabilities associated with youth risk behavior (Britannica, 2025).

International evidence indicates that collaborative initiatives between countries can enhance efficiency indicators, especially when consolidated practices from one system are combined with innovative methodologies from another. In this sense, the complementarity between Colombian and U.S. models offers an opportunity to develop hybrid strategies integrating territorial approaches, dynamic curricula, and digital prevention-monitoring tools, expanding the continental reach of preventive actions (Oliveira, 2024).

Building a hemispheric cooperation framework requires formal mechanisms of methodological exchange, including binational technical committees, shared databases, impact-evaluation protocols, and pilot programs in selected schools. These structures enable practices to be tested, refined, and scaled based on scientific evidence a process widely recognized by international institutions as essential for strengthening integrated prevention policies (Alliance for Child Protection, 2024).

Educational reports across the Americas emphasize that technical collaboration depends on systematic processes of curriculum harmonization, joint training, and scientific validation of results. Both Colombia and the United States possess institutional capacity to implement this type of integration, providing a solid foundation for developing a binational prevention model capable of guiding countries interested in evidence-based preventive practices (IDB Evidence Platform, 2024).

The cooperation potential between the two nations also lies in the international recognition that preventive programs must incorporate continuous psychosocial approaches and mechanisms of cultural mediation, since effectiveness relies on interventions addressing emotional, community, and school-based factors simultaneously. This perspective appears consistently in both Colombian initiatives and D.A.R.E., reinforcing the feasibility of a unified methodological-transfer model that respects local realities while maintaining technical rigor (Escobar, 2023).

Comparative analysis demonstrates that alignment between both countries can significantly elevate hemispheric standards for youth prevention, particularly because both present consolidated methodologies that, when integrated, have the potential to form a robust continental reference model. This structure combines pedagogical innovation, community



integration, specialized police training, and psychosocial support, consolidating a technical foundation capable of guiding large-scale preventive policies across the Americas (CORE, 2023).

3 METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted using a qualitative, comparative approach designed to analyze the methodological convergence between the U.S. D.A.R.E. program and Colombian youth-prevention models. This approach made it possible to understand how different educational and institutional systems develop strategies to address adolescent risk behaviors, identifying shared conceptual foundations and elements capable of supporting hemispheric cooperation in crime prevention and youth protection.

The methodological strategy was based on a systematic literature review that included scientific studies, institutional evaluations, and technical reports produced at the international level. Sources were selected according to criteria that prioritized publications offering detailed descriptions of educational curricula, preventive methodologies, police-intervention structures, and psychosocial-support models, ensuring that the analyzed corpus provided robust evidence for sustaining the proposed comparative analysis.

Sources were identified through specialized databases and reputable academic platforms, covering publications in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. This broad selection allowed the study to capture the diversity of approaches adopted in different national contexts and reinforced the validity of the comparison between methodologies used in the United States and Colombia, ensuring analytical consistency and a wide range of perspectives on juvenile delinquency prevention.

Following the selection process, documents were examined in depth, and information was classified into thematic categories related to educational prevention, police training, and psychosocial support. This procedure enabled systematic organization of the material, aligned with the research objectives, which centered on identifying shared methodological axes and potential pathways for integration between the models analyzed.

The comparative analysis was grounded in principles of methodological convergence, considering the compatibility of pedagogical strategies, intervention tools, and institutional components. This approach made it possible to assess the degree of similarity between programs, identify replicable elements, and highlight structural factors influencing the effectiveness of preventive actions in different sociocultural contexts.

The investigation also adopted an interdisciplinary perspective by integrating concepts from psychology, criminology, education, and citizen security. Given that youth-prevention



programs encompass multiple dimensions and require continuous interaction among professionals from various fields, this broader methodological lens was essential for recognizing and articulating these conceptual and operational intersections.

The analytical process included direct comparison of curricula, implementation structures, and action protocols used in both the United States and Colombia. This enabled objective identification of how pedagogical, social, and institutional elements are articulated in each country and how they can be integrated to form a methodological cooperation model applicable to various educational contexts across the Americas.

Cultural and territorial factors affecting the adaptation of prevention programs were also examined, acknowledging that school-based interventions must be sensitively adjusted to local realities, community dynamics, and the socioemotional characteristics of the youth served. Understanding how each country modifies its programs to meet the specific needs of its school population was therefore essential.

The methodology additionally included a critical analysis of findings presented in the reviewed studies, enabling evaluation of limitations, strengths, and inconsistencies within the programs analyzed. This provided an empirical foundation to assess the feasibility and relevance of an integrated hemispheric cooperation model for youth prevention while respecting institutional and pedagogical specificities.

Finally, the methodological procedures adopted allowed the development of a consistent synthesis of the convergences between the two models, supporting the formulation of the international cooperation proposal presented in the final section of this article. This synthesis also made it possible to organize evidence demonstrating the integration of educational practices, forms of police engagement, and psychosocial-support mechanisms as central pillars of a continent-wide preventive framework.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis show that U.S. and Colombian youth-prevention models present structural convergences that reinforce the feasibility of methodological cooperation on a hemispheric scale, especially because both rely on preventive curricula that develop socioemotional skills and decision-making competencies a strategy supported by studies highlighting the effectiveness of internationally compared prevention programs (Wikborg et al., 2024).

The review of evidence indicates that D.A.R.E., by incorporating the *Keepin' it REAL* curriculum, moved even closer to Latin American practices by adopting methodologies that emphasize storytelling, dramatization, collective reflection, and the construction of

contextualized resistance strategies. These elements expand youth participation and make the pedagogical process more compatible with diverse sociocultural realities (Sánchez et al., 2021).

When analyzing the Colombian models, it becomes clear that the integration of schools, community psychologists, and citizen-security agencies strengthens territorial bonds and enhances the identification of early signs of vulnerability. This territorial characteristic complements D.A.R.E.'s pedagogical focus, which gains additional potential when combined with community-based and psychosocial mechanisms that support families and school dynamics (IDB Evidence Platform, 2024).

Methodological compatibility becomes even more evident when observing that both models evolved from informational interventions to methodologies centered on life-skills development, recognizing that interactive educational processes generate stronger long-term impacts, particularly among adolescents exposed to contexts of violence, inequality, and peer pressure (Oliveira, 2024).

Within this comparative perspective, it becomes relevant to synthesize the main common elements between the two preventive experiences, making it possible to clearly visualize the conceptual and operational foundations upon which a hemispheric cooperation framework can be built combining pedagogical practices, educational police engagement, and continuous psychosocial support as inseparable components of broad-scale prevention policy.

Table 1

Common Axes between D.A.R.E. (USA) and Colombian Youth-Prevention Models

| Methodological Axis D.A.R.E. – United States | Colombian Models |
|---|--|
| Educational Prevention | Socioemotional curricula; <i>Keepin' it REAL</i> ; School mediation; community-based interactive methodologies |
| Police Training | Communication skills, social-skills development, citizen-security principles |
| Psychosocial Support | Emotional regulation modules and decision-making strategies |
| Community Participation | Primarily school-centered approach with growing adaptation |
| International Transferability | Consolidated and replicable curricular structure |
| | Community-oriented police with territorial focus |
| | Community psychologists and family support |
| | Strong territorial presence and community articulation |
| | High capacity for cultural and territorial adaptation |

Source: Author (2025)



5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The comparative analysis conducted between the U.S. D.A.R.E. program and Colombian youth-prevention models made it possible to identify that both share structural foundations capable of supporting preventive practices on a hemispheric scale. Both use the school environment as a platform for socioemotional development and for building competencies that help young people cope with social pressures, environmental risks, and situations of vulnerability that can influence trajectories associated with juvenile delinquency.

The study demonstrated that the methodological evolution of D.A.R.E., especially after adopting interactive, life-skills-based curricula, aligned more closely with Latin American practices that prioritize community participation, psychosocial support, and school mediation. This shows that the modernization of preventive programs converges toward an educational model centered on dialogue, reflection, and student protagonism as essential tools for strengthening protective factors.

The investigation also showed that Colombia has accumulated significant expertise by integrating psychosocial teams, community agents, and educational institutions into preventive strategies that respond to the specific needs of territories marked by inequality and exposure to violence. This approach can serve as a reference for countries seeking to incorporate stronger territorial components into youth-prevention policies.

When comparing both experiences, it became evident that police training appears as a unifying element, since both D.A.R.E. and Colombian programs view the presence of security agents as an educational not coercive component. This reinforces the idea that effective preventive interventions depend on professionals capable of communicating sensitively, listening actively, and understanding school dynamics.

The importance of psychosocial support as a transversal axis is also evident, as preventive actions extend beyond information delivery to include emotional support, affective guidance, and strategies that help young people develop autonomy and resilience. This indicates that integrated practices across psychology, education, and citizen security expand the reach and impact of prevention policies.

The findings reinforce that methodological cooperation between the United States and Colombia represents a strategic opportunity to consolidate a hemispheric framework for youth prevention, as both countries possess well-established methodologies that can be combined to create unified structures for professional training, curriculum harmonization, and psychosocial monitoring capable of addressing different realities without losing technical consistency.



At the same time, the study made clear that methodological transfer depends on structured cultural-adaptation processes, as educational interventions must respect the linguistic, social, and emotional differences of target populations. Thus, integration between D.A.R.E. and Colombian models must consider local variables and build pedagogical-contextualization mechanisms that preserve program effectiveness.

The discussion highlighted that creating an academic and institutional cooperation framework can significantly strengthen youth prevention throughout the Americas by enabling continuous exchange of evidence, methodological testing, impact assessment, and curriculum refinement. This would allow schools, security agents, and psychosocial teams to work in an integrated manner guided by international standards of crime prevention.

The analysis also indicated that convergence between the studied methodologies offers a foundation for developing hybrid programs combining pedagogical, psychosocial, and community-based elements into broad-reaching interventions. Such integration allows schools to adopt flexible and effective preventive practices that respond to contemporary youth needs and strengthen educational systems committed to reducing vulnerabilities and promoting well-being.

Overall, the study shows that articulating the D.A.R.E. program and Colombian prevention models constitutes a robust alternative for constructing preventive policies with hemispheric reach. Together, they offer compatible conceptual foundations, proven practices, and cultural-adaptation capacity, presenting the Americas with a methodological pathway capable of integrating education, citizen security, and psychosocial support into a unified preventive system oriented toward the comprehensive protection of youth.

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