

# INTRODUCTION

Adults who work with young people are often heard to say 'I know what young people need', but they very rarely sit down and assess what these needs are. They just take it for granted that they know. This training element requires people to take time out to check their assumptions about young people's needs. It asks people to:

- i) think back to when they were young and reflect on what it was like for them growing up;
- ii) look at society today and the attitudes held about young people;
- iii) assess the needs of young people; and
- iv) look at ways in which their particular Programme can meet those needs.

## A NOTE ON METHODS

### STRUCTURE OF THE MATERIALS

The materials are broken into six parts:

- 1. Preliminary Exercise - How People Learn** - A brief introduction to learning theory.
- 2. Initial Thoughts - The Needs Of Young People** - A short introductory exercise designed to start people thinking about the needs of young people.
- 3. Growing Up - Reflecting on Personal Experiences** - One thing everyone has in common is that 'we were all young once', yet it is easy to forget what it was like to be young. Our own experiences are valuable and can help us to reflect on young people's needs.

“Once we have looked at our experiences and opinions we can use this to analyse and assess the needs of young people we work with”

4. **Attitudes & Opinions - What Do We Think About Young People** - We all hold values about what we think is right and wrong for young people. These values will be a product of our own experiences and they can either help or hinder us when we work with young people. Before we can assess whether they are a help or a hindrance we need to be clear about what they are.
5. **Analysing Experiences and Opinions - What Do Young People Need?** - Once we have looked at our experiences and opinions we can use this to analyse and assess the needs of young people we work with. We will also look at some ideas from other people and see how these match our own.
6. **How Does Your Programme Meet These Needs And What Resources Are Available?** - We can now apply our knowledge to any particular programme and ensure that young people's needs are taken into account. As well as this we need to look at the resources we have and see if we are making the best use of them. Some firm plans will be drawn up at this stage.
7. **Review of the Training** - It is important to review the effectiveness and efficiency of any training which has taken place.

A separate diagram (page 16) shows the outline for the training element. You may want to use this as an introductory explanation of what will be covered should you choose to use all of the materials in this section in the order outlined.

## ARRANGEMENT OF THE MATERIALS

The training materials are arranged according to the six sections of the training element and for each section there are:

- a selection of training exercises; and
- some back-up materials which you can photocopy, write on a blackboard etc.

Should you decide to use all of the materials in the order outlined it is important that at least one exercise is done from each of the six sections but you can choose which one you want to use. The choice will depend on:

- the amount of time you have; and
- the training resources you have available.

At the end of this section some possible combinations have been outlined, explaining why particular exercises were chosen.

Alternatively, you may wish to use only one or two of the exercises as a contribution to a training programme that you have designed. The materials lend themselves to being used in such a manner.

# THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE – OUTLINE

