

Introduction

General Description

On-Line is a pack of 40 training activities and information sheets about drugs for trainers of people who work with young people. The activities are primarily designed for trainers who wish to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes of workers in a variety of settings who work with young people. They have developed from information and ideas discussed at a 5-day conference on drug abuse held in Malaysia involving over 70 people from all Commonwealth countries.

Some of the training activities have been taken or adapted from existing published training materials on drug use that were exhibited at the conference. Where this is the case, the source is given as a reference number to the complete list of references and further reading in Appendix 1. The pack is not a comprehensive set of training materials on all aspects of drug use. However, it is intended to be a useful package of resources to help people develop their training programmes on drug use.

Drug use is a sensitive subject and there are many different views about effective ways of tackling it in training. Consequently, this pack seeks to use a wide variety of training methods, to be innovative and to be challenging. Many of the training activities are designed to enable participants to explore issues rather than have trainers simply give information. They seek to open up different viewpoints not close down or conclude with the 'right' answer.

Target group for the material

The people who could be 'trainees' that experience these activities could come from a wide range of backgrounds: youth workers, teachers, youth leaders, community workers, social workers, police officers, government officials involved in drugs work and so on. It will, of course, be up to the trainer to be clear about which activity to use and how to adapt them to suit their particular requirements.

Young people could also be on the receiving end of these materials. A deliberate attempt has been made to design many of the activities so that they could also be used with young people themselves. The fifteen activities that are particularly relevant for use with young people are marked with a tick in the summary in Appendix 2. In addition, 13 brief descriptions of ways of working with young people to prevent problems associated with drug use are given in the Handout accompanying Activity 26.

Structure of the Pack

The pack is divided into twelve sections covering different aspects of drug use and each section contains a number of training activities. This structure is closely linked to that of the Commonwealth Conference on drug use from which many of these materials originated.

A comprehensive summary of all the activities is given in Appendix 2 and this is a useful checklist when initially assessing which parts of the pack you may want to use. As the table on the facing page shows, the pack is focussed on prevention and early intervention strategies for tackling problems associated with drug use. There is less emphasis on training activities concerned with drug dependency or controlling the supply of drugs. This balance reflects the perceived training needs of the target audience for the materials and the need generally to develop more improved practice on prevention and early intervention work.

The style of the materials

A variety of techniques have been included but throughout the pack there is an emphasis on participative learning through group discussion, through experiential learning—doing something and reflecting on that experience through providing relevant information in a variety of ways—hand-outs, mini lectures, case studies and so on and through providing 'tools' to help the learner undertake analysis of issues, solve problems or plan for the future. In nearly all the activities, people are asked to work or discuss topics in pairs or in small or large groups to encourage participation.

Some particular points to note about the training activities are:

- The activities **vary in their length and complexity** from short, simple awareness raising activities to detailed skill or knowledge development. This range and complexity of activities is deliberate so as to provide materials that could be used by a variety of trainers including those with a good understanding and a sound background knowledge of the area and those for whom the topic and the issues is relatively new.
- It has been a real challenge to design a pack of training materials that is of direct relevance to all of the countries in the Commonwealth. It is inevitable that the pack will feel more

Table 1: The Sections of the pack

Section	Title	No. of exercises	Numbers	Pages
1	Facts about drugs	6	1-6	11-36
2	Attitudes to drugs	4	7-10	37-50
3	Why people take drugs	2	11-12	51-56
4	Planning drugs policies	3	13-15	57-76
5	Preventing the use of drugs—An overview	4	16-19	77-88
6	Preventing the use of drugs—Practice ideas	7	20-26	89-110
7	Making early intervention among drugs users	6	27-32	111-128
8	Managing people who are dependent on drugs	1	33	129-138
9	Controlling the supply of drugs	1	34	139-144
10	Minimising the harm drugs do	3	35-37	145-160
11	Support for drugs workers	2	38-39	161-166
12	Evaluating success in drugs work	1	40	167-172

relevant to some countries than others but all trainers will need to **introduce relevant local examples, experiences or case studies**, alongside the material in the pack.

- In some of the card game activities it is suggested you complete relevant cards to suit your situation. To assist this, Appendix 3 is a blank sheet of cards for you to complete.
- Many of the activities involve using flipchart paper—large sheets of paper to record notes or views of a group. However, this may not be possible and you may need to find other resources more appropriate to your circumstances.
- A summary of the training techniques used in the pack, and in which exercises, is given in Appendix 4.
- A list of the handouts included in the pack is given in Appendix 5.

Selecting activities to use?

It is not intended that you should use each of the activities in this pack. Rather, you should dip into the pack to select activities and methods that will achieve your objectives as a trainer for the group you will be working with and in the circumstances in which you find yourself. To help you choose which activities the pack contains:

- A summary of all the activities, including the purpose and methods, in Appendix 2.
- At the beginning of each section there is a summary of the problem that the training activities seek to address.

- At the beginning of each training activity there is a short description of the purpose of each exercise.

It is intended that you should feel free to modify and adapt activities to suit your situation as well as doing them in the way described, if appropriate. And, of course, you may want to use the training technique in one activity to work on a topic covered by other activities. Go ahead! There are no limits to the possible combinations you could try.

Being ready to train others

The key questions you must ask yourself are:

- Why do I want to do drug education?
- What areas of my knowledge, skills or activities do I need to work on or improve before training others?
- What particular training dilemmas am I likely to encounter when working on drugs issues and how will I deal with them.

To help you—the trainer—be most effective it is strongly suggested that you take the time to think through these questions. Some ways of doing that include:

- Undertake the activity entitled 'Why you want to do drug education?' in Appendix 6. This activity could also be used as a starter activity for a group you are training.
- Many of the exercises rely on working with people in groups. As a refresher on issues about working with groups, try doing Activity 29, 'Groupwork with Young People', but applying it to yourself on groupwork with adults on drugs issues.

- Think through your own training needs and choose activities in the pack you could do to help you meet them. Issues concerned with attitudes to drug use are particularly useful for everyone to be reminded of, and activities recommended are:

Activity 7 'The Opinion Game'

Activity 11 'Reasons and Excuses'

Activity 23 'Scare Tactics'

Activity 28 'Intervening In the Lives of Drug Users—Ourselves'

Activity 31 'Groupwork with Young People'

Activity 35 'Harm Minimisation in Practice'

- Discuss with a colleague what you will do if participants disclose information about their previous or current use of drugs. Or how you will respond if they ask you about your use of drugs previously or now:

—Will it be kept confidential?

—What groundrules will be agreed in advance?

—What would you do if a parent or a police officer demanded to know what someone had told you?

Activity 15 looks at this and other dilemmas for drugs workers by examining the content of guidelines for the conduct of staff who work with young people.

Planning a drugs training event

There are many different approaches to planning training and a variety of factors to take into account. A brief description of the key steps you might follow in choosing which activity to use is given in Appendix 7. When deciding which of the activities in the pack to use in your training consider:

1. What learning objective are you trying to achieve?
2. What are the participants like? An example of a pre-course questionnaire to send out is given in Appendix 8. It will, of course, need to be amended to suit your particular situation.

3. What kinds of activities will achieve the learning objectives?
4. What specific training activities will you use and how can they be adapted?
5. What groundrules need to be established with the training group at the beginning?

Evaluating your training

Evaluating training is often difficult. But how do you know if you have achieved what you set out to achieve? How do you know whether there were any unintended, but useful, outcomes from your training? What training methods and styles worked best? What didn't work so well? Two ways of evaluating your training are:

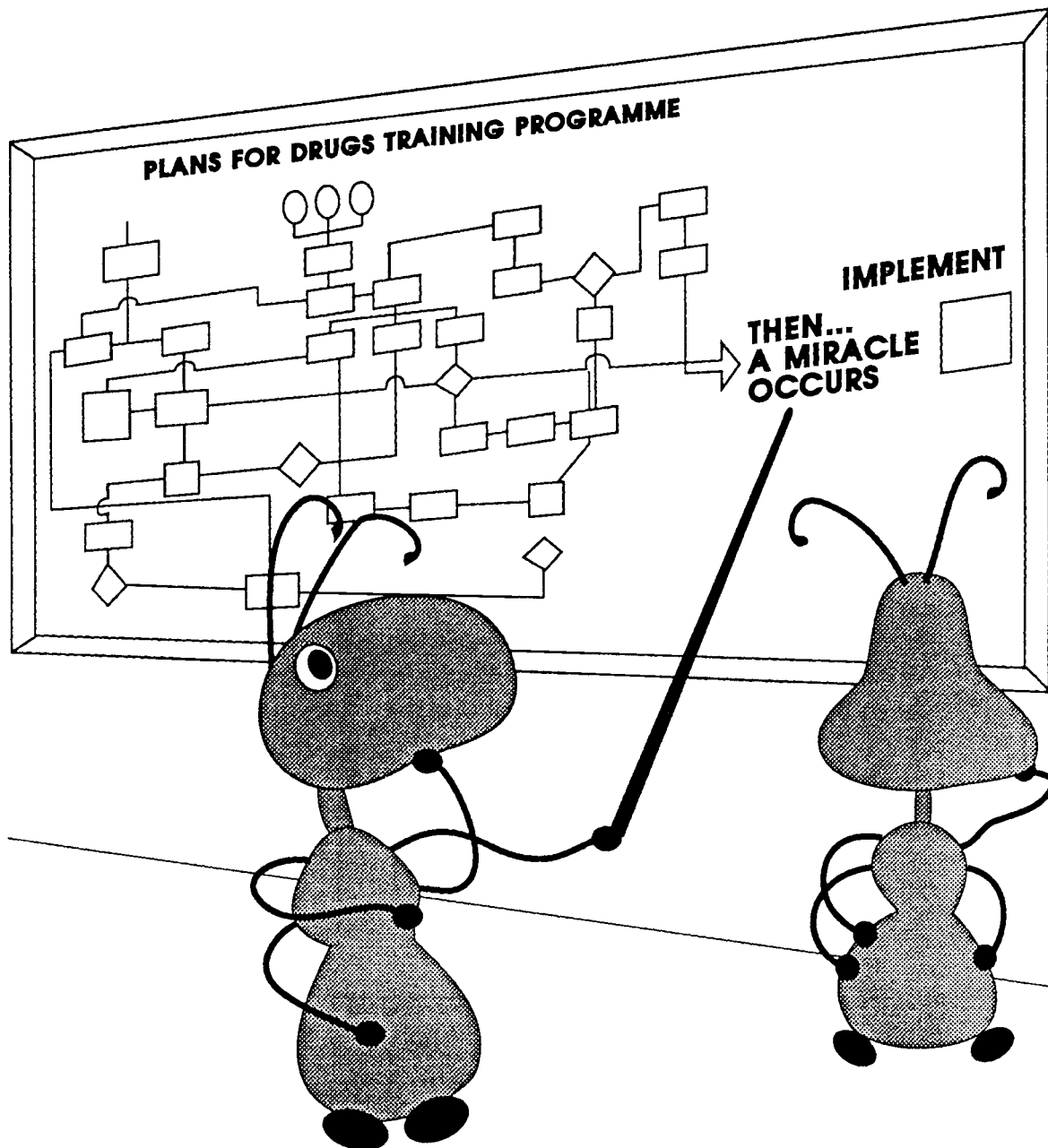
- (a) An end of course questionnaire (Appendix 9)

This will not tell you whether you've actually achieved any change in the person's behaviour or attitudes at work. Rather, it is a 'happiness sheet' to judge how people are feeling in the end, what learning they feel they have achieved, and what has made most impact on them at the time. You will need to amend it to suit your situation and the group you are working with.

Sometimes a questionnaire like this is an inappropriate way of ending an event. An alternative is to put up flipcharts with key headings such as 'How relevant was it?'; 'Elements you found most useful', etc. and ask participants to write on sticky labels their views for each heading. These are then stuck on the relevant flipcharts and everyone can see how people have found the course.

- (b) A post-course questionnaire (Appendix 10)

Ideally this should tell you whether anything has actually changed as a result of your training. Of course, it is difficult to account for other variations affecting people after the course but this will give you some idea of what's happening. Telephone interviews with a sample of the participants can be another way of doing this instead of, or in addition to, the questionnaire. Don't forget to amend the questionnaire to suit the group you have been working with.



“Good work... but I think we need just a little more detail right here”