

# A participatory handbook for youth drug abuse prevention programmes

A guide for development and improvement



**United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention  
Vienna**

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**A guide for development and improvement**



UNITED NATIONS  
New York, 2002





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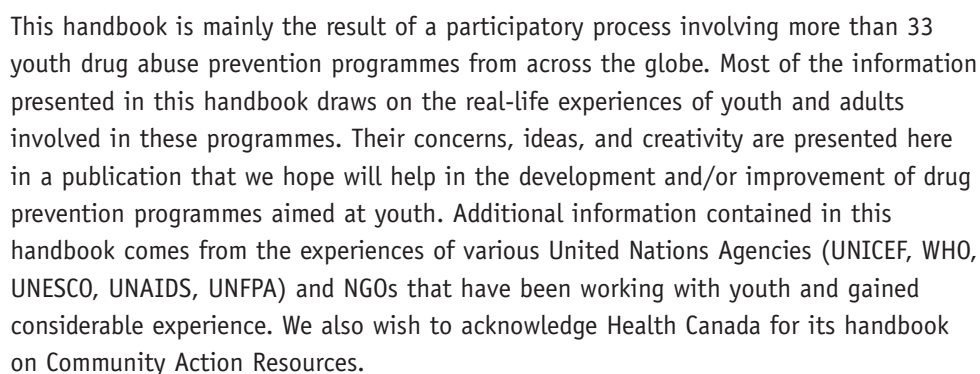
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# Acknowledgements

This handbook draws on the work of a vast number of people and organizations who have been involved in the work of the Network of Youth Programme for the Prevention of Substance Abuse. We would like therefore to thank the numerous people who have directly and indirectly influenced or contributed to the production of this handbook.

Selim Iltus and Kim Sabo of the Children's Environment Research Group worked with UNDCP on the development of the overall concept of the handbook and wrote a preliminary version of chapters 1, 2 and 3. Stefano Berterame (UNDCP, Demand Reduction Section) wrote further text modifications and edited the handbook. Gautam Babbar (UNDCP, Demand Reduction Section) revised the handbook and worked extensively on chapters 1,2 and 3, writing further text, editing and rewriting, harmonizing the style and preparing the handbook for its final publication. Barbara Remberg (UNDCP, Scientific Section) provided useful inputs for the chapter on the various drugs. Jouhaida Hanano (UNDCP, Demand Reduction Section) prepared the pre-publication layout and design of the handbook. Special thanks goes to Gary Roberts (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse) and to the staff of the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) for the help and assistance provided during the course of the project.

This handbook has been prepared thanks to the generous contribution provided by the governments of Canada, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.



This handbook is mainly the result of a participatory process involving more than 33 youth drug abuse prevention programmes from across the globe. Most of the information presented in this handbook draws on the real-life experiences of youth and adults involved in these programmes. Their concerns, ideas, and creativity are presented here in a publication that we hope will help in the development and/or improvement of drug prevention programmes aimed at youth. Additional information contained in this handbook comes from the experiences of various United Nations Agencies (UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNFPA) and NGOs that have been working with youth and gained considerable experience. We also wish to acknowledge Health Canada for its handbook on Community Action Resources.

*This publication has not been formally edited.*



# CHAPTER 1

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## Introduction

**Why this handbook was written** Not another handbook! Do we hear many of you say this to yourself as you sit down to go through this volume? Why another one?

Well, let us start by spelling out our reasons for developing this handbook and hopefully, by the time you've reached the end of this section, you will realize that this is NOT just another handbook.

Substance abuse as a social phenomenon is all the more worrisome because of its prevalence among youth. Over the last two decades or so, countries all over the world have seen an alarming rise in the incidence of substance abuse amongst the most productive and crucial section of their populations.

If substance abuse is to be tackled, then it stands to reason that the people who should lead this effort must be youth themselves, since they know their own needs better than anyone else.

In order to empower concerned young people who want to DO SOMETHING about drug abuse, the UNDCP, in collaboration with selected Youth Groups from all over the world, started the process of putting together a tool for youth groups to use when they want to organize and start taking action against substance abuse.

Note carefully; this handbook is a TOOL, which means that its effectiveness really depends upon the way you use it; it is meant for people who WANT to do something, it is meant to help you ORGANIZE yourself to take ACTION and that it was written by YOUTH themselves.

This handbook has three aims, first, to help a carefully selected target group; second, having identified the target group, to find out the real issues that concern them by asking them what these are and, third, to then help the target group find solutions to these problems.

The main purpose of this handbook, then, is to provide tools for both young people and adults who want to establish drug prevention programmes with the participation and active involvement of youth and the community. This handbook will also be useful to those who are already involved in existing youth drug prevention programmes and who are interested in assessing and improving their established programme.

Some key concepts that guide this handbook are:



## Participation

Youth participation in the development of programmes is important for many reasons. Young people have ideas and solutions to propose and if they are given the chance to be heard and to work, their contribution

can be extremely significant. Participation provides young people with a sense of purpose and direction, giving them the feeling of being more connected to the activities and the mission of the programme.



## Peer-to-peer

Young people are usually much more effective than adults in communicating prevention messages to other young people because they share similar

experiences, use similar language, and their interactions are often more authentic than those of adults.



## Cultural sensitivity

Because local conditions, populations, and cultures differ from one part of the world to another, it is necessary that programmes come up with unique and specific

solutions for their own communities. Sometimes, drug abuse prevention messages do not respect the culture and traditions of the people they are supposed to help.

However, it has been found that there are many similarities between the various approaches to prevention and the ways in which they respond to the needs of youth. In the next few pages, you will find some of these common features that have had a positive impact in preventing drug abuse among young people.



This handbook will cover five broad areas. *First*, some general information about drugs. More detailed information can be obtained from the various UNDCP publications mentioned in the appendix, (which will be compiled when the complete handbook is published). In particular, the handbook will provide an overview on drug abuse among young people. It is our hope that this information will be useful in understanding the drug culture in your region.

*Second*, you will find some methods and techniques to help you find out quickly what the drug abuse situation in your own city, town, community, neighbourhood, or school is like. Learning about the drug culture in your community will help you to understand the prevention needs of young people. *Third*, the handbook will guide you through the process of analysing the information that you collected and then planning some initiative to address drug abuse problems that may be present.

*Fourth*, you will be provided with a number of methods and techniques that have been effective in addressing the problem of drug abuse among youth. You may consider using some of these when developing a drug abuse prevention programme.

Finally, you will get some information on how to manage your programme and evaluate your work.

References for additional resources including: ways to contact other programmes, how to join a drug prevention network, relevant Internet and email addresses and other books and printed materials are available at [www.odccp.org/youthnet/](http://www.odccp.org/youthnet/)

## Who wrote the handbook and how

For some time now, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) has been working to establish a global network of youth programmes for drug abuse prevention by implementing a three-phase project that would:

- ❖ Identify youth drug prevention programmes whose participation in the project would contribute to a better understanding of drug-related problems and potential solutions;
- ❖ Stage a special event to highlight these programmes and the effective contribution that young people have made in drug abuse prevention around the world;
- ❖ Establish a network of youth programmes to compare notes, exchange lessons learned and identify innovative prevention programmes.

Thirty-three drug-prevention programmes from around the world were invited to participate in a *Youth Vision Jeunesse Drug Abuse Prevention Forum* held in Banff, Canada in 1998. In preparation for this event, each programme was asked to run 10 workshops with their members. The goal of these workshops was to develop young people's thinking about drug issues, and have them evaluate their programmes. The information that we got from the groups about how they identified the problems of



their communities, the methods they used to mobilize support and the way they designed their interventions enabled us to start working on a handbook for other youth groups that wanted to set up drug abuse prevention programmes. In fact, the idea for such a handbook was implicit

in the discussions that the young people had at the above-mentioned Prevention Forum, where all the youth emphasized the need to share effective tools and techniques with other groups around the world.

The information collected was collated into this handbook and draft versions were sent out to the participating groups. What is presented here is the first part of a work in progress. The first section of this handbook will guide you in identifying the problems, planning your interventions and forging partnerships. In the course of thematic meetings that the UNDCP will organize over the next three years, young people will write the next section of the guidebook on the various tools that can be used to make interventions. These meetings will bring together youth groups that specialize in using sport, performance, the media, indigenous cultural traditions, music and the dance scene and more traditional methods of drug education. At each of these meetings, the young people will themselves help write a chapter for this handbook on how best to use these various tools in preventing drug abuse.

During the Banff Forum, the participating programmes demonstrated how various techniques and methods could be used in drug abuse prevention. The range of techniques used was astounding in its diversity from football to street theatre, and from graffiti to Maori dances. The message that came through clearly was that the innovativeness of youth programmes and their ability to pick and choose methods that are effective in their respective contexts need to be recognized and utilized by International Organizations such as the UNDCP.

At the end of the Banff Forum, the various comments and suggestions made by the young people, were compiled into a document by a committee of their peers. This, *The Vision from Banff*, outlining the aspirations of the youth who met in the Youth Vision Jeunesse, was presented to the United Nations Special Session on the World Drug Problem in June 1998. (Complete document at [www.undcp/youthnet/youthnet\\_about\\_us.html](http://www.undcp/youthnet/youthnet_about_us.html)).

## **Who is this book written for/ The TARGET**

This handbook aims at providing tools for both young people and adults who want to establish new drug prevention programmes through youth and community participation.

This handbook will also be useful to those who are already involved in existing youth drug prevention programmes and are interested in assessing, evaluating and improving their established programme. In both cases, the major goal is to increase the level of youth participation in assessing, planning, operating, and evaluating their programmes.

Youth participation in the creation of programmes is very important for many reasons. Participation provides young people with a sense of purpose and direction, and allows them to feel more connected to the programme's mission. Also, young people are much more effective than adults in communicating prevention messages to other young people. Finally, young people can create programmes that meet their own needs. Throughout this book, you will hear young people talk about the value of creating something for, of and by youth.

## How should this book be used?

There are three types of information provided within this book. These are:

- General information about drugs, drug use, and existing programme approaches and their drug prevention techniques;
- Hands-on work tools such as workshops, checklists, and format grids that are intended to be used as aids for collecting information;
- References for additional resources including: ways to contact other programmes, how to a join a drug prevention network, relevant internet addressees and email addresses, and other books and print materials.

The format of this handbook allows for individual sections to be copied and utilized in individual or group settings, as needed. In order to avoid repetition, you will often be directed from one section of the book to another.

## What could you expect by following this manual?

At the very least, using this manual well will lead you to understand how an effective youth programme can be started, sustained and evaluated. You will learn how to collect information about the problems in your area, how to build partnerships with important sections of your community and about the various tools you can use in your programmes. You will also get some pointers about the situations in which different kinds of tools will be useful and how to evaluate your programmes.\*

\* This handbook is a work in progress and it is not intended to be the definitive word on drug abuse prevention. Drug abuse patterns and trends change rapidly and UNDCP continues to work with young people and youth workers to identify effective methods for preventing drug abuse. It would be helpful if you could provide us with your comments on this handbook or information on programmes that you consider successful or simply tell us what is your experience, your successes and your failures. You can report to us by filling the Lessons Learned form in the annex. You may send material, information and ask questions at the following address: Youthnet, C/O UNDCP, Demand Reduction Section, P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna AUSTRIA, Fax: (+43-1) 26060 5866, E-mail: gautam.babbar@undcp.org







# CHAPTER 2

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## Understanding substance abuse

If you are going to develop a drug abuse prevention programme in your community, it is important that you know what the various drugs are that are being used in your community, where they come from, what their effects are, by which names they are known etc. This section will give you information about various drugs that are found across the world and their effects. If you would like more details about the effects of particular drugs, we suggest you look up the following websites:

[www.undcp.org](http://www.undcp.org)

[www.nida.org](http://www.nida.org)

[www.freevibe.com](http://www.freevibe.com)

And if you don't have access to the Internet, write to us at the address given on the previous page and we will try and give you the information that you want.

### All about drugs

#### *What are drugs?*

A very basic question but one that needs to be clarified. For, if we start thinking of drugs as just the substances that cause problems or are abused by people we know, then we are likely to ignore other substances that, for one reason or another, are not thought of as drugs by our immediate communities.

A psychoactive substance is any substance people take to change either the way they feel, think, or behave. This description covers alcohol and tobacco as well as other natural and manufactured drugs. In the past, most of the drugs that were used were made from plants. That is, plants grown and then converted into drugs such as cocaine, heroin and cannabis (or marijuana). In the 20th century, people found out how to make drugs from chemicals. These are called man-made, or synthetic drugs, and include speed, ecstasy, LSD, "batu", "hot ice", "kleenex", "adam" and "meth", etc.

What follows is a brief description of the most common drugs of abuse.

# CANNABIS

## ***What does it look like?***

Marijuana is made from the dried flowering, fruiting tops and leaves of the cannabis plant. Its colour ranges from greyish-green to greenish-brown. It can look like a dried herb, or coarse, like tea.

Hashish is the dried, compressed resin separated from the flowering tops of the plant. It is sold in

block pieces, and ranges in colour from light brown to nearly black. It is stronger than marijuana.

Sometimes, the juice or resin of the hemp plant is extracted. This hash oil or cannabis oil is the strongest form of the drug and is also called honey oil or red oil. It is a dark, almost black, thick liquid and is sold in small bottles.

## ***How is it used?***

Marijuana is usually smoked in hand-rolled cigarettes and can be cooked in foods and eaten as well. Hashish is usually smoked in a pipe or

cooked in foods and eaten. Cannabis oil is usually smoked with tobacco, smeared on to cigarettes or occasionally eaten.

## ***The effects of using cannabis***

Young people may have very different experiences using marijuana depending on the strength of the drug and height, gender and weight of the person. Some people feel happy and they feel like they can do anything. Sometimes they babble and laugh more than usual. Marijuana can make you very hungry or give you "the munchies", increases your pulse-rate and makes your eyes red. At a later stage, you will find you feel sleepy and become quiet. Cannabis smoke contains 50 per cent more

tar than smoke from a high-tar cigarette, so regular use of cannabis increases the risk of lung cancer and chronic bronchitis. Regular use of cannabis can make you psychologically dependent on it. Your heart rate usually increases when you use cannabis. Using cannabis also leads to some problems in what are called our "psychomotor" functions, that is, in the ability to coordinate our actions. This is especially important when you are doing things like driving, operating machinery etc.

## **Street names**

Cannabis, marijuana, blow, resin, hashish, oil, green, grass, hooch, weed, dope, gungun, ganja, hash, leaf, pot, bango, hemp, marihuana, thai-sticks, buddha-sticks, joint-sticks, kif, marie-jeanne, sinsemilla, charas, hash, khif, shit, H, hashish. Sometimes, marijuana is also used in combination with other substances like PCP or crack cocaine. In such cases, a whole new array of names comes into play like "boat", "acc", "amp", etc.

A good link for street names is: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/streetnames/default.asp>

# COCAINE

Cocaine is prepared from coca leaves, which are greenish-yellow leaves of different size and appearance. Cocaine is often called the “champagne of drugs” because of its high cost.

It makes you feel like your body is going very fast. Your heart races and the “highs” and “lows” are sudden. Crack, which is smoked, is a much stronger form of cocaine.

## ***What does it look like?***

Cocaine usually comes in a white powdered form and crack looks like hard white rocks.

## ***How is it used?***

Cocaine is usually snorted up the nose. It can also be injected or smoked. Crack is smoked.

## ***The effects of using cocaine***

A small amount of cocaine will raise your body temperature, make your heart beat faster, increase your breathing, make you feel over confident and make you more alert with extra energy. When crack is smoked, all of these feelings are intensified.

Excessive doses may lead to convulsions, seizures, strokes, cerebral haemorrhage or heart failure. Long term effects of cocaine/crack use will lead to strong psychological dependence, and other health problems like destroying nose tissues, breathing problems and losing weight.

## **Street names**

Cocaine, crack, coke, C, charlie, nose candy, toot, bazooka, big C, cake, lady, stardust, coco, flake, mister coffee, blanche, koks, snow.

# HEROIN

Heroin is a drug obtained from morphine and comes from the opium poppy plant. Heroin is a drug that slows down your body and mind.

It is a very strong painkiller and can be one of the most dangerous things to mix with other drugs.

## ***What does it look like?***

Heroin usually comes in a rock or powdered form, which is generally white or pink/beige in color and could come also in dark grey/medium brown.

## ***How is it used?***

Heroin can be injected, snorted, smoked, or inhaled. This last method is often called “chasing the dragon”.

## ***The effects of using heroin***

When injected, heroin provides an extremely powerful rush and a high that usually last for between 4 and 6 hours. The effects of heroin include a feeling of well being, relief from pain, fast physical and psychological dependence, sometimes nausea and vomiting, sleepiness, loss of balance, loss of concentration and loss of appetite.

An overdose can result in death. One of the most dangerous effects of injecting heroin is the increased possibility of contracting AIDS. A lot of the time, people who inject heroin use each other’s needles and this is the main source of infection. Studies have also shown that people who are “high” on drugs tend to have unprotected sex. This too puts you at risk of getting the AIDS virus.

## **Street names**

Hammer, horse, H, junk, nod, smack, skag, white, beige, white lady, white stuff, joy powder boy, hairy, harry, joy powder.

# AMPHETAMINES

Amphetamines are stimulants and affect your system by speeding up the activity of your brain and giving

energy. Ice is a strong type of amphetamine, and is very similar to crack.

## ***What do they look like?***

Amphetamines are man-made drugs and relatively easy to make. Usually, they are white or light brown powder and can also come the

form of a pill. "Ice" usually comes as colourless crystals or as a colourless liquid when used for injecting.

## ***How are they used?***

Amphetamines can be swallowed, snorted, injected or smoked.

## ***The effects of using amphetamines***

Amphetamines can cause an increase in your heart beat, faster breathing, increase blood pressure and body temperature, sweating, make you more confident and alert, give you extra energy, reduce your appetite, make it difficult to sleep

and might make you talk more. You may also feel anxious, irritable, and suffer from panic attacks. Frequent use can produce strong psychological dependence. Large doses can be lethal.

## **Street names**

Amphetamines, Speed, ice, browns, footballs, hearts, oranges, wake ups, black beauties, crystal meth, crack meth, cat, jeff amp, dexies, rippers, bennies, browns, greenies, pep pills.

# ECSTASY

Ecstasy belongs to the same group of chemicals as the above category that is, stimulants, and is most often used in the form of tablets at rave parties. Ecstasy is a

drug that speeds up your system by increasing your physical and emotional energy. Like amphetamines, ecstasy is also a synthetic (or man-made) drug.

## ***What does it look like?***

Ecstasy is usually a small, coloured tablet. These pills can come in many different colours. Some ecstasy tablets also have pictures on them, such as doves,

rabbits or champagne bottles. The colour or the "brand" of the tablet is usually unrelated to the effects of the drug.

## ***How is it used?***

Ecstasy tablets are usually swallowed.

## ***The effects of using ecstasy***

You'll probably feel happy, warm, loving and more energetic. You would feel emotionally close to others, you might say or do things that you usually would not. Feelings of depression and tiredness after stopping the drug, nausea and vomiting, rise in blood pressure and heart rate, possibly even death due to overheating of the body and dehydration or

loss of water are some effects of ecstasy. Prolonged use of ecstasy could lead to brain and liver damage. The book "Ecstasy" by Irvine Welsh gives a vivid description of the effects of ecstasy and the kinds of things people do when under the influence of this drug. There is mounting evidence that using ecstasy can lead to brain damage.

## **Street names**

Ecstasy, adam, essence, MDM, MDMA, XTC, eve, MDE, MDEA.



# INHALANTS AND SOLVENTS

Inhalants and solvents are chemicals that can be inhaled, such as glue, gasoline, aerosol sprays, lighter fluid etc. These are not drugs at all and are, in fact,

legally available from a large number of shops. However, they are abused widely by the poorer sections of society, particularly street youth.

## ***What do they look like?***

Inhalants can look like almost anything (glue, paint thinner, gasoline, lighter fuel, cleaning fluids, etc).

They usually come in tubes or bottles.

## ***How are they used?***

Often, the chemical is placed in the bottom of a cup or container and then placed over the nose and mouth. Other methods include:

soaking a rag in inhalant; placing a rag in bag or sack; placing the bag over the face and inhaling the vapours.

## ***The effects of using inhalants***

Inhalants may give you a high for a very brief period of time. They make you feel numb for a short period of time, dizzy, confused, and they give you progressive drowsiness. They can also cause headaches, nausea, fainting, accelerated heartbeat,

disorientation, and hallucinations. They can damage the lungs, kidney and liver in the long term. They can also cause suffocation, convulsions, and coma.

## understanding drug abuse

### Understanding drug abuse / Why do young people use drugs?

Experts who have studied drug abuse have come up with what they call the "Modified Social Stress Model" to understand why particular individuals start abusing drugs.

This is really just a fancy term for something that is very common-sensical. What the experts say is that there are a number of factors in ones life that can cause one to start using drugs; these, they call RISK FACTORS. At the same time, there are some other factors that prevent one from doing so and these are called PROTECTIVE FACTORS. If the risk factors in an individual's life outweigh the protective factors, it is likely that (s)he will start abusing drugs.

**Think of it along these lines:** What is the chance that THAT particular boy or girl will fall in love with you? Now most of us know that it is not just a matter of being decent looking. There are many other factors, some of which will work in your favour and some of which will go against you. For example, does the object of your desire have another boy/girl friend, do your interests match, are you in the same school or college and so are likely to meet often, do you have common friends who will act as your messengers?





Depending on how you answer these questions, there will be a greater or a lesser chance that you will get what you want. The same goes for drug abuse.

Both kinds of factors, that is, risk and protective factors, can be further divided into two. They can be either personal or environmental. Personal factors are those that have to do with the individual and environmental factors are those that have to do with the social, familial and physical environment that the person lives in.

We will now list out some of these factors so that in the course of your prevention work, you will be able to identify those young people who are most at risk and hence, need more attention from you.

## RISK FACTORS

### *Personal factors*

- ⚡ **Being a man or a woman** – worldwide, many more men than women use drugs. However, this is changing. For example; the 1999 Drug Use Survey in the USA questioned 25,500 young people ages 12 to 17, and found that 16 per cent of the girls and 16.7 per cent of the boys had used drugs. The other thing to remember is that often, girls abuse licit or legal substances like alcohol, prescription drugs and other substances that are socially accepted.
- ⚡ **Being young is in itself a risk factor** – young people are in a constant struggle to establish their identities, and answer questions like, “Who am I? What is my role in society? What do I want to be?” Finding answers to these questions is never an easy thing and it takes some time. Often, during this period, you can start doubting yourself, your ability to achieve and to do things. It is then that you may try to “forget about the world” or “drown your sorrows by abusing different substances.
- ⚡ If a person has **mental problems**, (s)he is more likely to start using drugs.
- ⚡ **Undeveloped or underdeveloped personal skills** like the inability to take decisions, to express what (s)he feels, to assert themselves, to solve problems, etc. also put an individual at greater risk of succumbing to substance abuse.

### ***Environmental Risk Factors***

The environmental factors that are likely to encourage substance abuse are:

- ❖ The young person's parents do not know how to look after him/her emotionally, physically or in terms of providing the right kind of support and guidance;
- ❖ The person does not have a family;
- ❖ The person's parents, brothers or sisters abuse drugs of any kind;
- ❖ The young person is being mentally, physically, sexually or verbally abused;
- ❖ The young person is moving around with a group of people who abuse drugs;
- ❖ The society that the person is part of has cultural and/or religious values that encourage substance abuse or the media, advertising and attitudes in the society condone abuse;
- ❖ The person is homeless and is living with or without his/her family on the streets;
- ❖ There are few/no opportunities for education;
- ❖ There is a lot of free unstructured time in which there are no constructive, imaginative and challenging activities to take part in;
- ❖ There are no job opportunities or even the hope of getting a fulfilling job;
- ❖ Health services are not provided or if they are provided, they are not youth friendly;
- ❖ There is widespread availability of licit and illicit substances, since laws and regulations that are supposed to discourage or prevent abuse are not stringent or are not enforced.

## **PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

### ***Personal Factors***

The main factors that protect an individual against drug abuse are:

- ❖ Well-developed personal skills to deal with difficult situations such as an ability to analyse situations, to take quick decisions, to communicate with others, to relax, to negotiate and enter into compromises etc.

### ***Environmental Protective Factors***

- ❖ Good personal connections to people including family members and friends, animals and things that encourage caring, sharing and bonding. For example, having a friend who is willing to help them out in difficult situations, who has good personal skills, or having a pet that they must look after. In both these cases, one has to learn to be responsible not only for something/one else but for your own self.
- ❖ Adequate resources to meet physical and emotional needs of the person, e.g. schools, youth friendly health services, social centres with recreational activities, sport facilities, employment opportunities etc.
- ❖ Cultural norms that discourage substance abuse. For example, Gujarat in India, the State where Gandhi came from, has a long tradition of temperance. Alcohol is prohibited and the community at large does not tolerate intoxication. The extent of drug abuse in this state is much smaller than in other parts of the country.
- ❖ The laws that regulate substance use are stringent and well enforced and access to licit and illicit drugs is limited or difficult.

When you go into a community and select your target group for prevention, you must keep in mind these factors while deciding what action to take. Remember though, that all the factors that we have spoken about are a generalization on the basis of the experiences of people who have worked in the field of drug abuse prevention for years.

These factors by no means cover all the possible things that contribute to young people taking drugs. And they certainly don't give you ONE reason or even THE most important reason for drug abuse.

These are just meant to give you an idea of the kinds of things that you need to be on the lookout for when you go into the community to collect information about the causes of drug abuse.





# THE BIG IDEA

*One of the worst things about drugs is that they most commonly affect young people who, because they ARE young, already have problems in their lives. There are many difficult physical and emotional changes that take place when young people move from childhood to the teenage years, a period often called adolescence. This is generally the time when most young people begin experimenting with drugs. However, youth around the world have many different reasons for using drugs. In many cases, young people turn to their friends for support. These friends don't always just pressure them to use drugs but often offer drugs as a solution to their problems.*

*The reasons for doing drugs vary from country to country and from one economic class to another, but there is a certain underlying theme. For example, one of the reasons given by youth from the developed world and from the middle classes in the developing world was BOREDOM.*

*Now, what a strange word that is. Think about it. What is boredom? A lack of interest in anything, a lack of willingness to do something, a lack of motivation to involve yourself in any kind of activity that makes you feel good, frustration with what you have and don't want... A little bit of thought will make you realize that boredom has less to do with a lack of fun and much more with the lack of opportunities to express oneself.*

*Similarly, another reason that came out during discussions with youth from the developing world and the poorer sections of society was a lack of basic rights like food, health, education and the chance to earn a living.*

*Either way, both kinds of reasons point towards one underlying factor, namely the lack of power, of control over ones life. In the case of BOREDOM, this lack of power shows itself in a feeling of not being able to do what you want. Every choice that you get is a choice that you don't want, largely because somehow you know that these are not choices that you had any say in. In the case of a lack of basic rights, this lack of power is felt more immediately as an absence of things, medicines, food, shelter, and water, which are essential for life.*

*It was this sort of reasoning that led all the young people who met at the forum in Banff\* to TAKE CONTROL. The one thing that really tied all the youth together was a willingness to stand up for their rights, to demand their rightful place in each of their societies. The message that came out was, the "high" you get from fighting for your right to be heard and the right to make a difference to the way we live, removes the need for artificial highs.*

*To sum up, more often than not, it is a lack of power that pushes young people to seek "freedom" in drugs. This lack of power may be felt as boredom, as starvation, as abuse, as a lack of opportunities to earn etc. And since power is something that is never given freely by those who have it to those who don't, young people need to learn how to become more powerful.*

*You cannot do this by fighting in the streets or rioting after football matches but by learning how to build partnerships with those who have control over your lives, by using your youth, your fresh ideas and your open minds to find better ways of doing.*

*And this is part of what this handbook will help you do.*

\*See page 7 for details.



## Basic prevention principles

While setting up drug abuse prevention programmes, there are a few general principles that you should follow. These are not in any way meant to restrict the choices that you have but are a sort of distillation of the common wisdom of the people who have worked in the field of drug abuse prevention.

Understand them and keep them in the backs of your minds. However, you don't need to consult them at every step.

- ❖ Drug abuse prevention programmes should be community based, that is, they should involve the whole community or at least the most important parts of it.
- ❖ Your programme should not be too narrow in its focus; for instance, you should not just say that we are an anti-cannabis programme and ignore all the other substances that are abused in your community. Since all forms of substance abuse are usually related to each other in what causes them, you should look at the whole range of substances on a broad scale.
- ❖ Since it is usually young people who are most at risk, they should be the main focus of your programmes. But you must take care to involve other groups which may have an influence on the living conditions and social environment of the main target group.

- ❖❖ Whoever said that prevention is better than cure definitely got it right. It is much better to prevent young people from starting to use drugs than entering at a later stage and helping them give up drugs. This is important to keep in mind because even though some of your programmes will aim at trying to give healthy and creative alternatives to young people who are already using drugs, you must not forget that there is a whole section of your community who might start abusing drugs. And it is this section that you will also need to pay attention to.

You can try and prevent drug abuse by creating healthy and attractive alternatives to substance abuse. Alternatives to substance abuse are attractive if they combine and encourage individual skill development, interesting leisure activities and a supportive attitude in the community.

The following basic elements should provide you with some food for thought:

- ❖❖ ***Promotion of health***

Health can be promoted through personal and cultural practices, which cover basic social and recreational needs. This means that you should support common practices in your community as a whole and in each of the members that promote healthy lifestyles and try to discourage those practices that damage physical and mental well-being.

- ❖❖ ***Focus on people and encouragement of social interaction***

Social skills are best learned in social environments. All your activities should therefore have a strong element of social interaction. Strategies that improve the social climate as a whole should be pursued. Understanding and cooperation between different generations will be improved if you organize activities in which both young and old can take part. This will help young people to communicate with their parents and other adults who influence their lives in the community.

- ❖❖ ***Local involvement of young people and respect for cultural values***

All your activities should closely involve young people from the particular area that you are working in. The values that you try to promote through your programmes should respect cultural traditions of the communities. For example, if you organize a song contest for both boys and girls in a community where girls are not supposed to sing and dance in front of strangers, you will probably meet a lot of resistance.

- ❖❖ ***Encouragement of positive alternatives***

"Positive" is a relative term which must be seen in the light of local values, with understanding of the needs of young people and what appeals to them. All your strategies should try and reinforce the desirable traditions and practices in the community rather than trying to scare people into changing their ways. Of course, this does not mean that you should not talk about the wrong things that you see, but it is better to talk about them calmly than trying to scare people into not doing them.

### ❖ ***Gaining from research and experience***

All your activities should build on existing research-based evidence regarding (a) How to identify substance abuse related problems; (b) How to find out the causes of the problems; (c) How to find out the possible preventive responses to the identified problems; (d) How to effectively implement preventive activities; (e) How to judge the effectiveness of your activity/programme.

### ❖ ***Long-term perspective***

Your programmes should take a long-term view of the situation. Changes in the social climate, acceptance of health-promoting values and making interactive, health-promoting activities part of the local culture are all difficult and time-consuming tasks.

### ❖ ***Specific populations***

The specific needs of vulnerable or disadvantaged youths such as street children, refugees, minority youths and in some cases, young women should be identified and addressed locally.

### ❖ ***Community development***

Often, the communities that you will be working in may lack resources and provide few opportunities for young people. Prevention programmes require that there is some hope for economic and social improvement. In deprived communities, programmes should be combined with community development work, such as education, health and social services, housing, sanitation or income-generating activities. In order to do this, you may have to talk to local government figures, your representatives in local assemblies, and the rich and influential people in the area and other more powerful people. Please understand that no one expects you to change all these things on your own, you will NOT have failed if you can't make a difference in all these cases. But you will damage your chances of success if you don't even consider these problems and try and come up with innovative ways to combat them.

### ❖ ***Using the media and popular youth culture***

Young people are strongly influenced by the mass media and other sources outside the local community. Your programmes should try and encourage people like famous pop stars, TV channels and local heroes to contribute to the promotion of health among young people. You can do this by:

- Learning to cope with such influences, advocating more responsible media and treatment of youth issues,
- Encouraging the mass media to look at their marketing practices towards young people,
- Utilizing media and popular youth culture for promoting local health messages and projects.





# REMEMBER...

*No particular approach or strategy has been proven through rigorous scientific study to be consistently effective over the long term in reducing drug abuse. However, there is some consensus among experts, practitioners and youth themselves on what kinds of elements need to be taken into consideration when designing your prevention programmes for youth:*

- a) Not all young people are the same and they are not all equally vulnerable. Strategies should be carefully tailored to clearly defined target groups;*
- b) Using different strategies all together is probably the best way to approach the drug abuse problem. Ideally, they should combine the knowledge/attitude/behaviour approach with health promotion, and the building of self-esteem and resistance skills;*
- c) Your strategies should try to encourage individual strengths and those things that protect individuals in stressful situations and environments, and should try to give youth a set of specific skills for resisting peer pressure to use drugs, for example in communications or relationships with peers. It is also important to offer young people accessible and low-cost opportunities to meet together, cultivate an appreciation for the arts, play sports and take part in other challenging activities that develop self-confidence;*
- d) You should involve young people from your target community at every stage of the development of your prevention programmes;*
- e) Prevention should not focus on one drug only, but it should address, within the wider concept of health promotion, substance abuse in general, including that of tobacco, alcohol and inhalants;*
- f) Young people are usually open to new information if it is factual and does not contradict every part of their personal experience of drugs. Scare tactics reduce the trust that youth may have in the advice of adults and in some cases, even encourage risky behaviour;*
- g) Prevention programmes should include the family and the community at large in order to reinforce the information that is communicated to young people in the context of prevention activities.*



# CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 3

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## Finding out what your community needs and planning a programme

### Finding out what your community needs

#### *Introduction*

There are many ways in which you can collect information about your communities' needs and there are many aspects of your immediate locality that you might consider important. What follows is a sample of the kinds of information you might want to collect and some suggestions about how you can do this.

Just a word of caution here, this list may seem too long and complicated but please, feel free to pick and choose. You do not have to have all this information and you do not need to use all the methods we describe. Treat this as a menu card, select what you think is most appropriate. And if there is something that you don't understand or you would like more information about, please write to us and we will try and get back to you with what you need.

Before deciding on the type of programme you want to develop, the first thing you will need to do is to get together a youth planning team. This team will help you do the activities (needs assessment and programme planning) listed below. The goals of these activities are to:

- ∴ define the drug culture in your community;
- ∴ identify the young people who would most benefit from participating in a programme;
- ∴ define the types of activities and approaches that would be interesting to youth;
- ∴ develop a strategy for reaching youth;
- ∴ understand what young people in your community are doing and what they would like to do in order to prevent drug use in their community.



# DRUG CULTURE

*Drug abusers may be part of a powerful “culture” where drug use is considered “normal”. They may come from a tradition of social drug use, such as a community of adults who drink home brew, smoke cannabis or chew khat as a social activity, despite the negative effects that this habit has on their health and the well-being of their families. Drug use, particularly drinking, may be part of their family culture. Drunkenness, good natured or violent, may be tolerated within their family. Parental drug use is an especially powerful influence on children’s behaviour.*

*There is also what we call the “drug culture” of pop music and movies. It may be useful for you to be aware of how powerful this drug culture is for young people. For example, the Rastafarian Reggae star Bob Marley, one of the most popular recording artists of all time, was an advocate of cannabis use that had social, recreational, and religious sanction. Young people may have deep affection, even reverence for figures like Marley and they might try to copy him or follow what some call his “philosophy”.*

*With TV and the Internet, young people feel that they are part of a global culture that glorifies the values of “sex, drugs and rock and roll”. There are some popular musicians who openly admit to drug use – giving young people expectations and misconceptions about the effects of drug use, such as it helps make you creative, charismatic or popular, and these misconceptions influence experimentation and continued abuse.*

## Developing a youth planning team

### ❖ **Why do you need a youth planning team?**

Developing a new drug prevention programme can be a very long and difficult process, but it can also be a lot of fun! Therefore, you will need as much help and support as you can get. Early on in your work, you will find the help of other young people who share your ideals very important.

### ❖ **Who should be on your team?**

While putting together a team, you want to include some young people who live in your community and who share the same concerns about drug use as you do. You may also want to find young people who have skills that will be useful for programme planning.

In the planning team try to include young people who are:

- Concerned about the drug use in your community
- Energetic
- Good at working with others in small groups
- Know about drugs in the community



- Good readers and writers
- Good artists
- Know about the people in the community
- Have been involved in drug prevention programmes
- Good at talking with others
- Computer users/ good with numbers

In case you got the wrong idea from that long list, please understand ***we are not saying that each person needs to have all these qualities***. As a whole group, you should try and have all these capabilities so that all aspects of your programme can be handled.

You ***may also want to include a few adults*** on your planning team who have the skills listed above. Adults may be useful on your team because they can help to promote your cause and talk to community leaders.

When you find it difficult to communicate with older people or when you encounter a person who thinks that young people are not capable of taking action on such serious issues, it is helpful to have adults who are supportive of what you do on board.

While selecting your teammates keep an open mind and don't hesitate to include young people who are different from you. In many cases, it is very helpful to hear other views.

However, remember people who are on the planning committee will be role models for other youth. Therefore, it may be important to set rules about the use of drugs or alcohol by planning team members.

#### ❖ ***The size of your team***

There are no set rules about how big or small the team should be. The planning team can be made up of a few dedicated youth or many young people who have less time to work on planning. Groups larger than 10 or 15 may face difficulties in organizing their efforts. If necessary, new people can be added as the work increases.

#### ❖ ***Where to find team members***

Finding youth for your planning team will be one of the first big challenges you will face. Often, the best approach is through personal contacts and word of mouth. You can start by asking your friends and encouraging them to ask others. You can contact other youth organizations and community centres. Young people can also be located where they “hang out”, so you may want to look in plazas,

parks, arcades or clubs. The other way to approach this would be to work through your school. If your school has a community service programme, you can talk to the teacher in charge or you may even want to suggest it to your head teacher and try and organize something after school hours.

### ❖ ***Working together***

It is important that the team members work together so that everybody's views are heard and decisions are made democratically. The group should set up rules for working together and making decisions. Everyone should express their point of view and most of the time, you will find two or three different views being agreed upon by most of the people. To get to agree on one point of view, each group should then make a small speech outlining what the merits of their approach are. You should not criticize the other points of view just because they are not yours. If, by the end of this process everyone does not agree on one approach, you should simply have a vote, where the approach with the largest number of supporters is adopted. You must take care, however, not to divide the planning group into factions where personalities or other factors become the key. As far as possible, you should try and convince each other of your approach and use the vote only as a last resort.

### ❖ ***Where to work***

The team should find a good place to work regularly. Meetings can be held at team members' homes but it might be better to work out of a community centre, temple, church, mosque or school. In this way, you begin to create an identity, a place to get mail, and to set up a bulletin board for communication. In addition, if all goes well, you may be able to use this space as a long-term centre for your programme.

### ❖ ***The future of the planning team***

When you actually start your programme, the planning team can continue to serve as an advisory committee or members of the team can be given new roles and can participate actively in the running of the programme. This will depend on the organizational structure of your programme.



# THINGS TO REMEMBER

## A checklist

- We have people on our team who have useful skills*
- Every team member has a chance to speak and have his or her opinions heard*
- We have enough people on our team to get all of the work done*
- We have looked for team members in as many places as we could*
- We did not reject any volunteers because of their ideas or background*
- We have contacted adults who might be helpful*
- We have found a good place to work together*

## The information you need

The following is a suggested list of the kinds of information that you might want to collect during the needs assessment process. We have identified three different categories of information that you might want. These are The Current Drug Abuse Situation in your community, The Causes of Drug Abuse, and The Consequences of Drug Abuse. In each category, we have suggested several questions you may answer before starting your programme. Finally we have listed ways to collect information to help answer each of these questions. These different ways of collecting information are called “Methods”. These methods will be described in detail in the next part of the chapter.

Depending on your unique situation, you do not need to answer all of the questions listed or use all of the methods described. By picking and choosing the most important topics and by using one method to answer many questions, you should be able to design a study that is both efficient and manageable for your group.

## The drug abuse situation in your community

Before you set up a prevention programme you will want to know about the drug situation in your community. Questions on this topic might include:

### ❖ *What are the most common drugs in your community?*

Drugs that are available in your community are often the ones most used. Your drug prevention programme will be more effective if it works on decreasing the use of drugs that are most common in your community.

*Some methods suggested for finding out about the most common drugs in your community\**

- Group workshops (especially using grouping and sorting)
- Interviews young people,
- Finding existing information.

### **∴ Who uses what?**

It is likely that there are different groups of youth who use different types of drugs. For example, very young homeless children might use glue, and cocaine may be used by young people with money. It is important for you to learn about this in order to decide which groups of young people you would like in your programme.

*Some suggested methods for finding out who uses what:*

- Group workshops (especially discussions, role playing and performance);
- Interviews.

### **∴ Where is each drug used and why?**

Drug use may be related to specific activities. You may want to think about places where young people hang out, such as the street, dances and raves, sports events, concerts, etc. These locations may be good places to find young people and give them information about your programme. Also, you might think about doing programme activities in or close to these locations. On the other hand, you may also want to direct youth's attention away to these locations.

*Some suggested methods for finding out where drugs are used and why:*

- Observations;
- Group workshop (especially mapping, discussions, role play);
- Interviews with youth, adults and law enforcement.

### **∴ How much do young people know about the effects of drug use**

It will be very helpful for you to determine the level of knowledge that your future programme members have about drugs. Using this information, you can decide if you want to use an educational approach in your programme. For example, if you find that young people know very little about drugs, then you might want to teach them more.

*Some suggested methods for finding out about how much young people know about the effects of drug use on individuals and the community.*

- Workshops (especially, discussions, written methods, visual methods such as sorting, categorizing).

\* While you can use any one or a combination of these methods, they are listed in order by preference. Though all of these methods are useful, we think that in most communities, the first methods listed are the easiest to use and will provide the most information.



❖ ***What is young people's knowledge of the local and worldwide implications of drug trafficking and abuse?***

The more fully that young people understand the issues of drug trafficking and use, the more likely they are to become involved in creating change. It has been shown that programmes, which focus on community action, can be very successful at preventing drug use. As youth begin to define the problems themselves, they develop strategies for action and feel part of a larger movement. You may want to start by getting to know how much the young people in your community know about the local and worldwide implications of drugs so that approaches can be developed to educate and motivate youth to become involved in action-based projects.

*Some suggested methods for finding out how many young people know the local and worldwide implications of drug trafficking and use:*

- Workshops (especially role playing, discussion);
- Documentation.



## ROLE PLAYING EXERCISE



*Let youth act out different roles in drug trafficking. These roles may include farmer, worker, drug lord, smuggler, dealer, user, etc. Using play money, give each player a sum that represents his or her wealth. Let the young people act out how each person gets paid during drug trafficking. You should have a discussion about how much money each player should have before you start. For example, the drug lord will start with more money than the farmer will.*

*Let the group act out all of the transactions (both money and drugs) that usually go on during drug trafficking. For instance, begin by performing as a farmer or landowner who hires workers to sell their products to the drug lord. At the end of the performance, let the group compare the money that each character ended up with and discuss who benefited and who lost.*

❖ **What are your community's attitudes, values and beliefs about drug abuse?**

Sometimes, Drug Abuse prevention programmes do not respect the culture and traditions of the people they are supposed to help. Therefore, it is important to learn what the members of your community are thinking about drugs and drug abuse. A programme which has similar values to the community has a greater opportunity for success. In your search, you may discover that different groups will have very different and conflicting values towards drugs. This activity is designed to help you understand the range of values, beliefs and attitudes within your community. Using this information, you will begin to make decisions about the values that your programme should support and those that it should try and discourage.

Suggested methods for finding out the beliefs, attitudes and values about drug abuse in your community:

- Workshop activities (interactive story development with adults and youth);
- Interviews.



## INTERACTIVE STORY DEVELOPMENT

### with adults and youth

*Establish an audience of adults and youth who have different values. Present or act out a story where characters are either "moral" or "immoral". For instance, a young person has a close friend who starts using drugs and they don't know what to do. He is afraid that his friend is in danger but knows that if he tells his parents who are very violent, the youth will be beaten. The group will discuss the correct action "either to tell the parents or not to tell the parents", talk to the young person etc. Try to come to an agreement about what to do.*

❖ **Finding out about programmes in your area**

As a new programme, you will want to contact other existing programmes to find out what they are doing so that you don't repeat their efforts. Also, you can learn from their successes and failures. As you interview and observe these programmes' activities, you may be able to think of ways to become partners with them. In the beginning, your resources may be very limited and other programmes may be able to support you by giving you technical help, providing space, materials, office support, etc.

Suggested methods for finding out about the programmes in your community:

Finding the programmes:

- Documentation;
- Word of mouth.

Learning about the programmes:

- Informal conversations;
- Visits;
- Observation.

### ❖ **Who needs help in your community?**

Deciding on the group of youth you will be working with is one of the most important decisions you will make. Therefore, it is necessary for you to identify all the different groups of young people who need help. Unfortunately, your programme probably will not be able to serve everyone. Your decision to select one or two of these groups will depend on many factors. Some youth may not be easy to reach, others may be too young or too old for the activities you have planned, etc. Deciding who should be in your programme will be discussed later in greater detail; however, in order to make a good decision, you should collect some information before planning your programme.

Suggested methods for finding out who needs help in your community:

- Documentation;
- Survey;
- Focus group.

## The causes of drug abuse in your community

### ❖ **Why do young people use drugs?**

In the previous chapter, we had given an indication of the different kinds of reasons that may lead young people to abuse drugs. While these are the general reasons, there may be some very specific factors in your area, for example the easy availability of a particular kind of drug, the social acceptance given to particular forms of abuse etc. You need to find out the specific causes if you are to target them effectively.

Different groups of young people might have different reasons for using drugs, such as boredom, curiosity, influence of friends, poverty, etc. Once you find out why young people use drugs in your community, you can begin to create a programme for them.

Some suggested methods for finding out about why young people use drugs:

- Group workshops (especially discussion, written methods and role playing),
- Interviews.

❖❖ ***How does drug use relate to poverty?***

Often, drug use and poverty go hand in hand. You may want to discover whether or not young people are using drugs in your community because they are poor or if young people become poor because of their use of drugs.

Some suggested methods for finding out how drug use relates to poverty:

- Interviews;
- Workshops (especially discussion, written methods and role play).

❖❖ ***How do young people's relationships with friends and peers lead to drug abuse?***

Many times, young people abuse a drug for the first time with a friend. This question is important for you to answer in order to understand more about what goes on in a young person's life. Using this information, you can create a programme that helps youth develop healthy friendships.

Some suggested methods for finding out how young people's friendships lead to drug use:

- Interviews;
- Workshops (discussion, role playing, stories and written methods).

Different groups  
of young people  
might have different reasons  
for using drugs.





# STORY



*One group sent in the following example of a story that was written by one of its members.*

*Jose lived on the street; his parents had died when he was six years old. He picked rags on the street and collected enough money to get himself a meal late at night. He had many friends on the street though his best buddy Carlos had been acting strange for the past few weeks. Moody, withdrawn and angry.*

*One night, as Jose was sitting on the sidewalk eating his dinner, a man came up to him and started talking to him. He asked him his name, where he lived and who he had in his family. Now Jose was not used to people just chatting him up and he was a bit scared. But the man seemed really kind and started telling him about his own life. Jose was now at ease. Later the man bought Jose an ice cream and told him that he would walk him back to the corner of the street that was Jose's home.*

*They were walking back in the darkness, just talking casually when suddenly the man pushed Jose into a dark alley. He held his hand over Jose's mouth to stop him from shouting and with the other hand, he ripped off Jose's shorts.*

*Jose was so scared, he kicked and fought but the man was too strong. He did horrible things to Jose and after about one hour of hurting the little boy, the man walked off into the night.*

*Jose trudged back to his corner of the street, weeping and hurting so badly. He had cuts and bruises where the man had beat and bit him. As he lay down sobbing on his plastic sheet, he heard Carlos lie down next to him.*

*How he wanted to tell Carlos what had happened to him! But Carlos had been so cut off for the last few weeks that Jose did not say anything. He just lay there sobbing.*

*After a while Carlos asked Jose "what's the matter, why are you crying?"*

*Unable to stop himself, Jose told him everything. As he finished his story, Carlos just looked at him in the eye and started laughing!*

*"Ha ha ha" he roared, tears running down his face. Jose could not understand what was going on. He got really angry and sat up, 'What do you think is so funny?' he asked Carlos. Carlos just went on laughing, Jose finally lost his mind and smacked him hard, "WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING? I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY FRIEND!"*

*"yes I am" said Carlos, "and that is why I am going to tell you something. You think what happened to you was horrible, the worst thing that has ever happened? Well, grow up boy, we live on the street and here you never say this is the worst thing, because soon enough, something even worse will happen to you." "you think you are going to lose your mind just because a man knocked you around a bit? Well, smarten up, my friend, get some courage, if you let yourself feel too much you will hurt more."*

*Saying this, he held out a piece of silver foil with a brownish powder on it, "just follow what I do and it will stop hurting so much"*

*Photograph: Stefano Berterame*

❖ ***What is the relationship between the family and young people's abuse of drugs?***

While drug abuse negatively affects young people's relationships with their families, problems within the family can also lead young people to abuse drugs. It will be useful for you to understand and listen to young people's stories in order to discover how to create a programme that deals with these issues. Further, this information can help you determine how and if to include family members in programme efforts.

Some suggested methods for finding out the relationship between the family and young people's abuse of drugs.

- Workshops (role play and performance, discussions, stories and written methods);
- Interviews.

## The consequences of drugs on your community

Drugs affect the lives of young people in many different ways. It is important to identify the effects of drugs because you can use this information to help determine the type of programme to create. Also, this information can be used to convince other young people to join and support your efforts. Information you may want to collect includes:

❖ ***How does drug abuse affect the health of young people?***

You may want to assess the damage that drug use has had on young people's health in your community. This information can be a powerful tool when trying to raise funds and support for your programme.

Some suggested methods for finding out about the effect of drug use on the health of young people in your community

- Documentation: Your local medical centre or doctor will have records of the kinds of illnesses that are common among young people. You should try and ask about these, you could also read up some general information on the ill effects of a particular drug that you know is popular in your community and then try and find out if many people show these symptoms. The last can be done through personal interviews, observation etc.
- Workshop (especially discussions, role play).  
Often drug abuse leads to violence and criminal activities. If you can show how drugs lead to an increase in crime and violence in your community, it will be easier for you to gain support for your programme from adults and other organizations.

Some suggested methods for finding out how drug use impacts safety and security in your community.

- Workshops (especially discussion groups);
- Mapping methods (especially communities based maps and tours);
- Documentation.

### ❖ ***How does the abuse of drugs affect youth's ability to stay in school and do well?***

It has been shown that youth who are using drugs often do badly in school or drop out. Depending on the approach taken in your programme, you may choose to work closely with schools in order to keep young people from dropping out. In addition, schools may be a good place to reach out to youth who may be thinking about using drugs.

Some suggested methods for finding out the effect of drug abuse on young people's ability to stay in school.

- Interviews with teachers;
- Workshops (discussions, stories and written methods);
- Surveys (both teachers and students);
- Documentation.



## SOME GOOD QUESTIONS

### to ask teachers\*

- *How common is drug abuse in your school?*
- *What happens when young people start using drugs?*
- *Can you tell us some stories about your experience with young people using drugs? (Please don't use any names)*
- *How do you think a drug prevention programme can help youth do better or stay in school?*

*\*These questions are sample questions you may want to ask. There is more information about how to create an interview in the Methods section below.*



## QUESTIONS

## METHODS SUGGESTED

••• What are the most common drugs in your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group workshops (especially using grouping and sorting)</li><li>• Interviews with other young people</li><li>• Finding existing information</li></ul>
••• Who needs help in your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documentation</li><li>• Survey</li><li>• Focus group</li></ul>
••• Finding out about programmes in your community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documentation</li><li>• Word of mouth</li><li>• Visits</li><li>• Informal conversations</li><li>• Observation</li></ul>
••• What are your community's attitudes, values and beliefs about drug abuse?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshop activities including interactive story development with youth and adults</li><li>• Interviews</li></ul>
••• What is young people's knowledge of the local and worldwide implications of drug trafficking and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshops, especially role playing and group discussions</li><li>• Documentation</li></ul>
••• How much do young people know about the effects of drug abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshops especially discussions, written methods, visual</li></ul>
••• How does the abuse of drugs effect youth's ability to stay in school and do well?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interviews with teachers</li><li>• Workshops (discussions, stories and written methods)</li></ul>
••• How does drug abuse have an impact on safety and security in the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshops, especially discussion groups</li><li>• Mapping especially community-based maps and tours</li><li>• Documentation</li></ul>
••• What is the relationship between the family and young people's abuse of drugs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshops, especially role playing, stories and discussions</li><li>• Interviews</li></ul>



## QUESTIONS

## METHODS SUGGESTED

•• How do young people's relationships with friends and peers lead to drug abuse?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interviews</li><li>• Workshops (discussion, role playing, stories and written methods)</li></ul>
•• What are the most common drugs in your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group workshops, especially using scoring and grouping</li><li>• Interviews with young people</li><li>• Finding existing information</li></ul>
•• Who uses what? Why do young people abuse drugs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group workshop (especially discussion, written methods and role playing)</li><li>• Interviews</li></ul>
•• Where is each drug abused and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observations</li><li>• Group workshop (especially mapping, discussions, role play)</li><li>• Interviews with youth, adults and law enforcement</li></ul>
•• How does drug abuse affect the health of young people?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documentation</li><li>• Workshop (especially discussions, role play)</li></ul>
•• How does drug abuse relate to poverty?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interviews</li><li>• Workshops (especially discussion, written methods and role play)</li></ul>

## Ways to collect information – METHODS

### **Ethics**

While collecting information, you should be very careful about four things.

First, you should make sure that your safety comes first. No information is valuable enough to risk your life or health. Because you are exploring drug issues, you may come across crime and violence. Be very careful about where you go and whom you talk to. Use common sense. If you would not go into a neighbourhood before, don't do it now.

Second, you should not use or reveal the names of people who you interviewed and the people who they talked about. This is called "anonymity".

Thirdly, you must resist the temptation to make general statements about groups of drug abusers. Getting information is a tough job and requires patience. Sometimes you may feel that you know all there is to know about a particular problem or issue and you may want to do a quick and not very thorough survey of the situation. This would not be a good idea. If your programme is to be successful, you must get as much detailed information as possible.

Finally, people may talk about some sensitive issues that should not be revealed to the public. This is called “confidentiality”. So you should always respect the anonymity and confidentiality of the interview.

## How to collect information

### Observations

#### ❖ Purpose

Observations are when you watch a group of people, an activity or a setting over a period of time. They are useful when you want to collect information about what young people actually do in their daily lives. Observations are different from all of the other methods because they help you to understand what people are actually doing rather than what they are saying. Many times, people are not always able to tell you what they really do and sometimes they may mislead you on purpose. On the other hand, observations can be tricky because sometimes what you see might not be what is really happening. For example, it may look like young people are shaking hands but they may be exchanging money for drugs.

#### ❖ How to do observations

Before starting your observation, you will want to determine what you will be looking at. It is impossible for one person to observe everything at the same time. So try to focus on one or two activities at once. The youth assessment team should discuss what the goals of the observation should be.

Observations can be general or systematic.

**General observations** are done to get an overall picture of a situation. Some possible goals might be to find places where young people hang out, discover the activities that young people are doing, look at the difference between boy and girl activities, etc.

Once you decide on the goal of the observation and the locations where you will be doing the work, you are ready to conduct the actual observation. Spend an hour or two in one place observing what is going on around you. Be sure to listen and watch carefully. Try to remember everything you see, hear and smell. Once you leave the observation site, you can begin to take notes. Write down everything you saw. If you are working in teams, you should compare your notes and see if you are seeing the same thing. If there are any differences, you can set another time to go back to the location and conduct another observation.

**Systematic observations** can be done after you have completed the general observations described above. Systematic observations require you to record what you see while you are observing it. The purpose of systematic observations is to count the things you are observing. In order to do a systematic observation, you will need to prepare observation sheets. For example, to understand how young people in your community spend their time outside of school or home, you can prepare a table. On the left hand side of the table, you can write down all of the different activities young people are involved in. You should include the most common activities you observed during the general observations. On the top of the table, you can list the three places where you will be conducting your observations. You may also want to create separate columns for boys and girls so that you can look at the differences between boy and girl activities.

The next step is to go to the different locations and count the number of boys and girls involved in the different activities. Write the number of young people down under the correct column. In order to be able to compare your results in three locations, it may be a good idea to do the observations at the same time and on the same day. Therefore, you will need to send different team members to different locations at the same time. Once you have collected the information, you will want to add up your results.

The table below can help you make decisions about your programme. For example, it can tell you where to conduct your programme. It can also tell you about the most popular activities for young people. You can then include these in your programme to attract young people.

Activity	Place 1		Place 2		Place 3	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Sports						
Drug use						
Hanging out on street						
Fighting						
Working						
Playing cards						

### ❖ Size of the observing group

Observation can be done individually or in teams. Teams of two or three young people are suggested for several reasons, one because it is safer and two because each young person can take responsibility for a different task, such as taking notes or pictures.

### ❖ Space and Location

Observations are often done in the streets or in other public places, such as coffee shops, gas stations, plazas, and parks. You should be aware that others might get upset when they see you taking notes in certain places, such as schools, stores and religious places. In this case, you will either need to end your observations immediately or get permission to continue.

### ❖ Equipment

For general observations, all you need is a good memory and a pen and paper to record your thoughts afterwards. For systematic observations, you will need observation sheets, pencils and in many cases, a clipboard or a hard surface to write on. Sometimes, you may want to take some photographs and will need a camera and film.

### ❖ Time

Depending on the areas you need to cover, observations, especially systematic ones, can take a lot of time. Expect to spend at least an hour in one location each time you go out. The total time you spend doing observations will also depend on when and where certain activities take place. For example, if there is a market on certain days in the plaza, you may want to do observations on market days and non-market days.



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

*For the observation to be good, you have to make sure that you are not disrupting the activities that take place around you. Try to blend in as much as possible with events around you. If you walk around in large groups, talk loudly, and visibly take many notes and photographs, people are likely to get nervous and want to know what you are doing. This may cause people to change their actions. You should be particularly careful when doing observations in locations where drugs are being used, bought and sold. If you are using a camera, you should be careful not to take photographs in places where there is drug dealing or trafficking.*

be careful



## IMPORTANT

*While doing observations, you may sometimes see people doing things that are illegal. For example, you may see drugs being sold. In some countries, you are bound by law to report to the police any illegal acts that you observe. That is to say, it is a crime not to report to the police any crime you see being committed. It is therefore advisable to find out if this is the case in your country before you start doing observations. Again remember, when you are dealing with drug abuse, you are likely to get directly or indirectly involved with the activities of well-organized and dangerous criminals. Keep your wits about you and take all possible precautions to be safe. Make sure you get advice from more experienced people about the legal aspects of the situation.*

### Interviews

#### ❖ Purpose

An interview is a two-way conversation where a person asks questions to collect information and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions, and behaviours of another person. In many cases, interviews can be a valuable source of information because they allow you to see a subject from the eyes of different people. If the person you are interviewing thinks the topic is important and they trust you, they will give you information that you will not be able to collect in any other way.

#### ❖ How to do an interview

##### *Selecting people to interview*

If you get the chance, it is best to set up your interview in advance. You can contact the person and ask them politely if they would be willing to talk to you. But in many cases, you may just go to a location and interview people who are willing to speak to you as they walk by. This is called *a person on the street interview*. In either case, you should always make it clear to the person what the subject of the interview is and what you want to learn from them.

##### *Creating interview questions*

Before conducting an interview, you will need to write down the questions or at least the broad issues that you want to ask the subject about. You may want to start with a few general questions (easy questions that make the person feel comfortable) and continue to make the questions more specific as you move forward. You should make sure that your interview is not too long. It is a good idea to practise your interview with a friend in order to see how long it will take and which questions are clear.



### *Conducting and recording interview*

After introducing yourself and your topic of interest, you can start asking the questions on your list. If some of the answers are unclear or you would like more information on a subject, you can ask a follow-up question.

You will need some way to record what is being said. The easiest way to do that is by writing the answers down. If you have a tape recorder, you may want to record the interview. You should get permission from the interviewee before you begin taping. Even if you tape the interview, it is often helpful to take notes so that you can review the answers and ask additional questions at the end of the interview. Remember that some people may be uncomfortable talking about drug issues. Make sure that you are sensitive to this and never try to force anybody to answer questions that they don't want to answer. Sometimes it is better to ask questions about their impressions of other people. For instance, instead of asking "have you ever used marijuana," you might ask: How many people in the community do you think have used marijuana.

### *Review and discuss answers*

As soon as you are finished with the interview, you will want to listen to your tape and/or review your notes. When listening to a tape of an interview you will need to make a written record of what was said. This is called a *transcript*. If you did not tape the interview, you will want to re-write your notes clearly so that you can read them and understand them later. When you have finished a number of interviews, you will review all of the transcripts and notes and come up with conclusions related to the drug issues you are studying. In many cases, there may be more than one way to interpret the result of an interview. Therefore, it is a good idea to discuss these results with the rest of your group.

### *Size of the group*

While you can do an interview one-on-one, in some cases, it may be a good idea to have two people interviewing one person. One person can ask the questions while the second person records the answers. Choose these roles ahead of time and allow one person to lead the interview.

## ❖ **Space and location**

Two things to think about when selecting a space to conduct your interview are noise and comfort. While it is often difficult to find a place that is completely quiet, try to choose a location that is relatively quiet. If you are interviewing people on the street you may want to find a place to sit down, especially if the interview is more than a few minutes long.

### ⚙️ **Materials and equipment**

A pad of paper and a pen or pencil is all you need to conduct a good interview. However, as mentioned before, a tape recorder is often helpful, especially if you want to make notes of exactly what and how a person has said something.

### ⚙️ **Time**

An interview can take as little as a few minutes but can also last for a couple of hours. The proper length of an interview depends on the person you are interviewing, the topic and the place you are interviewing in. For instance, when interviewing on the street, you may want to make it brief because people are often rushing from one place to the next. Since issues related to drugs are complex, you may need approximately half an hour to forty-five minutes to get detailed information. While preparing the interview, it is important to see how long it will take and remove the questions that are unnecessary.



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

*It is very likely that because you are talking about issues of drugs and drug abuse, people will expect their names and identity to remain hidden. You may want to look back at the section titled "Ethics" to learn more about "confidentiality" and "anonymity".*

*Remember that the people who are being interviewed are volunteering their time, so be polite and never force them to answer your questions.*

*Given the sensitive nature of drugs and drug use, do not schedule interviews in locations where you feel unsafe. Use common sense, if you have any concerns about an interview do not do it! Remember you cannot start a programme if you are lying at the bottom of a river...*



# A GOOD INTERVIEWER

- ✔ **is a good observer**
- ✔ **is attentive**
  - looks at the informant when listening
  - conveys verbally or non-verbally his/her attentiveness
  - does not distract the informant while listening
  - keeps from getting distracted
- ✔ **is sensitive to the feelings of the informant**
  - not demanding answers to questions
  - is able to empathize, not sympathize or pity
  - accepts if informant does not want to tell something
  - knows when to back off if informant getting distressed
- ✔ **is precise about the question asked**
  - is sure the question is phrased correctly
  - does prior tests to check possible answers to the question
  - explains the question if necessary
- ✔ **is able to tolerate silences**
  - senses when to say nothing
  - not anxious about getting all information in allotted time
  - not rushing to the next question
- ✔ **is adept at using prompts**
  - when informant remains silent
  - repeating the question
  - repeating the last few words spoken by the informant
- ✔ **is adept at using probes to delve deeper into an issue**
  - asks for an example
  - asks for clarification
  - asks for more details
- ✔ **is adept at using checks**
  - Summarize the informant's thoughts  
(E.g., So, if I understand you correctly  
What this means, then, is that...)
- ✔ **with group interviews, manages to let everyone have a say**
  - by avoiding a dominant person to hog the entire limelight
  - by encouraging shy and quiet persons to share views
  - by focusing on the topic

## CHECK LIST

- Create interview questions
- Select people to interview
- Conduct interview
- Remember to ask follow-up questions whenever you don't understand the answer
- Record responses
- Review and discuss answers

## Surveys

### ❖ Purpose

Surveys are useful when you want to understand the views of a large group of people. A survey is a small set of questions that can be answered simply (e.g. checking 'Yes' or 'No' boxes). Often, surveys are given to a select group of people who represent the population that you are interested in. For example, in order to have a survey that represents the views of students in your school, you would need to give out surveys to some children in every class.

### ❖ How to do a survey

After deciding the topic of your survey and selecting the group you will survey, you will need to sit down and write your survey questions. Your questions should be simple and clear. The survey should not be too long. While there is no exact rule for the length of a survey, remember people won't fill them out if they take more than a few minutes to answer.

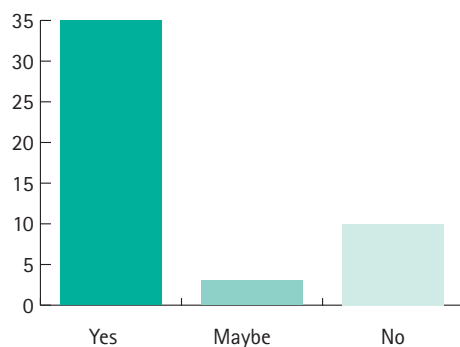
### *The survey can have two types of questions: 'closed-ended' and 'open-ended'.*

Closed-ended questions are the ones that can be answered by choosing between given options such as, checking a 'Yes' or 'No' box, circling a number, choosing between 'sometimes,' 'often,' 'never,' etc. Closed-ended surveys are difficult to make because you have to guess the possible answers a person might give you. However, after the surveys are collected, 'closed-ended' questions are easy to analyse. For instance, you can count the answers and state that a certain number of people said 'NO' and a certain number said, 'YES.

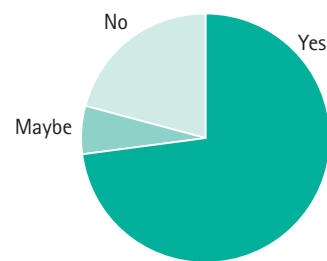
Open-ended questions require the person who is filling out the survey to write an answer in a given space (see the examples below). Open-ended answers need to be read closely in order to figure out what the person is saying. Similar answers then need to be grouped together.

Surveys can be conducted in several different ways. If the population you are interested in meet regularly in a specific location, you can hand out and collect the surveys during these meetings. For example, to collect information from students, (with the permission of the teacher) you can hand out surveys at the beginning of a class and collect them during the same class period. To survey people on the street, you may need to ask them the questions and fill out the survey yourself. This way of surveying can be more time consuming and can be dangerous depending on the location (see section on safety in interviewing). Finally, surveys can be mailed out to collect information about a large group of people. Remember that in this type of survey, not everyone who gets a survey will return them. For example, if you want to start a soccer programme and would like to find out which neighbourhood in your city would support it, you might want to survey parents in different areas to see if they are interested. This is an expensive approach because you will not only mail the surveys to people but you will also need to provide a self-addressed stamped envelope so that the surveys can be returned.

*Analysing surveys* involves counting the answers to each question and comparing the totals. For instance, if you surveyed 50 people in a specific neighbourhood, asking the question “would you send your child to a soccer programme?” and 35 people answered 'Yes', 3 answered 'Maybe' and 10 answered 'No', you can conclude that there is enough interest in that area. A good way to show your results to others is through graphs and charts. Two examples of how to illustrate your data are shown below.



Bar Chart



Pie Chart

Surveys are useful  
when you want to understand  
the views  
of a large group of people.





## ANALYSING SURVEY DATA

### can be fun with a group

*A lot of the time when we think data, we think, what a bore! But analysing survey data can be made quite entertaining. For example, you can cut up the answer sheets question by question and keep all the questions in separate envelopes. Once all your envelopes are full, you can count all the little strips and note down on a table the number of yes's or no's you get for particular questions. Of course, this is not something you can do for open-ended questions.*



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

*Preparing survey questions is tricky. Three things to keep in mind are:*

- 1. You should have a clear understanding of the goals of your survey. What information do you need? What questions are most important to have answered?*
- 2. The questions have to be very clear and precise. Look at the example below that illustrates how to do a survey. One of these examples shows a good way to ask a question and the other shows a bad way.*
- 3. What you will do with your survey results and how you will analyse them.*

### Discussion groups (focus groups)

#### 🌟 Purpose

A focus group includes a number of people coming together to discuss a specific topic or topics. The goal of this method is to generate a discussion that supports the participants to share their opinions. This rich interaction between people with similar and different views provides an in-depth understanding of a given topic(s). This method is a quick and easy way to collect information from a number of individuals. In addition, focus groups work well with young people because, while children and youth are often shy during interviews, they enjoy getting involved in discussions with their peers.

## ❖ **Conducting a discussion**

*Selecting participants* is the most critical part of planning a focus group. The whole idea is to bring together a group of people who have a genuine interest in the topic that is being discussed even if they have different views. The group can either be very similar (like a group of street kids) or it can consist of very different people (such as street children, parents, teachers, etc.). A second goal of a mixed focus group would be to establish links between different groups in the community.

*Questions should be prepared in advance* of the actual meeting. If not, the discussion may get out of control and participants may take over, never answering your initial questions.

*A group leader, or facilitator, should be chosen.* Ideally, this person should be one of your planning team members. It is her/his responsibility to keep the conversation moving and make sure that everyone gets a chance to speak. The facilitator should make sure that key topics are covered while at the same time letting the group explore and expand on issues that are important to them. When you have trouble getting the participants to talk and express themselves, you may want to use some of the performance techniques listed in the section below.

While the focus group is going on, you will need to *document what is being said*. A tape recorder is the most popular way to do this. However, when listening to these tapes, it is not always possible to identify who is saying what. Therefore, it is also important to take notes during the session. You will want to select a note taker prior to the focus group. A 'graphic recorder' is another person who can also be useful during the meeting. The graphic recorder writes down the key ideas of the discussion on a large paper or chalkboard so that all of the participants can see it. This gives the participants a sense of where they are in the discussion and see if their points are being understood and recorded correctly.

*Sorting/categorizing and ranking.* Sometimes there are other things you can do as a group in addition to discussions. These exercises can include sorting and organizing a group of material in a way that represents the common understanding of a group.

## ❖ **Size of the group**

The size of the group should be no more than ten and no less than four, not counting the facilitator, the graphic recorder and the note taker. Small groups are easier to run, however, they don't always allow for a good discussion. On the other hand, large groups can be difficult to run because it may be hard to give everyone the chance to speak.

### ❖ **Space and location**

Focus groups can be conducted in places large enough to hold all participants. It is important for the location to be easy for the participants to get to. Wherever you hold the focus group, it should be quiet so that the participants can be heard and not distracted.

Seats should be placed in a circle so that all participants can see each other during the discussion. The graphic recorder should not be seated. A successful focus group can be held outside in a courtyard with a group of people sitting in a circle on the ground.

### ❖ **Materials and equipment**

The only things that are essential to run a focus group are people, papers and pens.

### ❖ **Time**

A focus group will take at least two to three hours. This gives the group enough time to warm-up and begin talking to one another.

Participants might be strangers and need to be introduced to one another.



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

*It is important to have an equal representation from all affected parties. For example, if you are establishing a programme that will be used equally by boys and girls, make sure to include both boys and girls in your focus group. Also, during the focus group, make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to voice his or her ideas. Sometimes you will find that it is difficult for girls and boys to discuss things together or to be very frank about their views when they are in the same group. If you are going to be discussing topics that might cause such a problem, it is best to have two separate groups for boys and girls. The facilitator should not voice his/her own opinions and views but give others the chance to do so.*

equal representation

## Written methods

### Individual and joint story writing

#### ❖ Purpose

Written methods help you to gain an understanding of the personal and group experiences of young people. Generally, young people find this activity fun and are very willing to write stories about their own experiences. Writing stories often allows youth to be candid and open. These stories help you see the world through the eyes of these young people. Through story writing, it is possible to get substantial information about young people's feelings towards drugs.

#### ❖ Method

Writing stories about drug issues can be done individually or as a group. In other words, each young person may want to write their own story or the group may want to write a story together. Story writing in a group is more difficult than individual story writing. During group story writing, young people have to talk together about how the story should go and agree before putting it on paper. If you choose group story writing methods, you may want to take notes or record the story writing sessions because the conversations are often rich and highlight many interesting perspectives.

In order to focus the young people on writing stories that will be helpful for your data collection, you might want to give them a topic to write about. However, sometimes it is even helpful to give them the beginning of a story and let them fill-in the rest. See the example below.



## SAMPLE STORY TOPIC

*Things are not going well for Pedro/Ram/Rahim at home and he has just been kicked out of school. He is upset and spends the night out. That night he meets an old friend who suggests that he should try drugs to raise his spirits. Please complete the story.*

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

❖ **Size of the group**

Story writing can be done with one person or 15. If group writing turns out to be too complicated and people have too many different opinions, young people can write their own stories and discuss them with the group afterwards.

❖ **Space and location**

A quiet and private space is all that is needed to do story writing with young people.

❖ **Materials and equipment**

You will need paper and pen or pencil. If the group wants to share these stories with one another, it may be a good idea to use large sheets of paper or a chalkboard and write using big letters so that all can see.

❖ **Story analysis**

If there are a large number of stories written by young people, it is possible to look for common themes among them. A good way to understand these stories is to read them to a group of youth and have them talk about how well the story reflects their lives and the situation in their community.



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

*Remember to have young people write stories about the places and issues that are most important in their lives with regards to drugs. The stories do not need to be very long, sometimes a few paragraphs can reveal much about how the young people are feeling and thinking.*



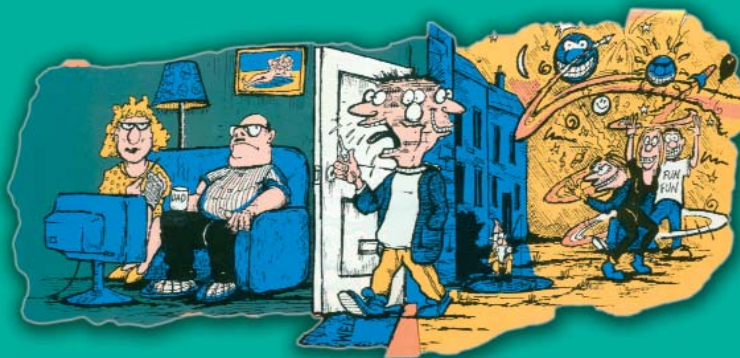


# STORY

## Dale's First Trip

It is Dale's 16th Birthday and his friend Rob tells him "Have I got a present for you!". He pulls out a trip with a Yin Yang print on it, Dale looks worried but his mates say "don't be soft", so he puts it in his pocket and off they go to the local pub.

Reluctantly Dale takes the trip. At first nothing happens, but after a few more drinks he gets abit giggly and things start to change. Soon he is tripping his socks off. This is fun, fun, fun thinks Dale, what a great birthday. Then Dale begins to talk to the ash tray. Suddenly Dale wants to pee so he runs to the toilet and looks in the mirror and his face starts to fall to bits. Dale thinks this is both funny and scary. Later Dale and his mates go for a long walk in the park and end up in the bandstand where they spend the next 4 hours laughing at nothing, that was the fun part. Much later it begins to get dark and Dale is still tripping, now comes the bad part. Dale gets home and has to talk to his parents, they don't see the funny side. The night ends with Dale in bed wide a wake, can't sleep and the curtains can't stop moving..... Dale thinks to himself "God, I feel shit! What a wierd Birthday."



## Diaries and journals

### ❁ **Purpose**

Diaries and journals are basically used to monitor and evaluate an on-going process. Young people can keep diaries about the activities of their programme or their own personal growth. This information is useful when you are trying to determine what is working about a programme and what needs change. Further, diaries and journals are useful as a staff or team development tool.

### ❁ **Method**

When used as an individual tool for staff development, young people can write about their struggles working in a youth group. These writings can be discussed periodically with the larger group and suggestions can be made in order to support that young person in his or her development.

When used as a group, journals can be a useful way of looking at your programmes progress over time. This is called monitoring. As a group, young people can keep a journal of all of their activities. This journal should be accessible to all members so that they can look at it and see their work over time. Group members can write in the journal about daily events, take attendance, take pictures, draw, etc. In this way, the group has a complete document that illustrates all of their daily activities and their accomplishments.

### ❁ **Materials and equipment**

It is important to keep the journal in a bound notebook, rather than individual pieces of paper that might get lost or lose their order.

### ❁ **Time**

It is important to continue the journal writing activity for a long period of time so that you can see the changes over time. For example, in the beginning some people may start writing very negatively about the programme or the process, however, they may change their minds by the end. Therefore, it is important to continue the journal writing for a long period of time.

### ❁ **Analysis**

It is not necessary to analyse journal entries like other forms of data. Journals are valuable tools because they help you keep track of the programme as it develops. Journals are also a good way for the youth participants to record their personal feelings and ideas about what is going on. When used in this way, authors can share certain entries with other group members during discussions and training sessions.



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

*If group journal writing is being done, it is important to make sure that the book is kept in a place where all participants can use it. If individual journal writing is being done, make sure that members have a safe and private place to keep their journals. In both cases, it is good practice to have set times for journal writing within the programme. In this way, journal writing will be done regularly.*

### Visual methods

#### ❖ Purpose

Visual methods are very helpful when young people cannot read or write. However, they are also creative and fun ways to illustrate young people's views and real life situations. Visual methods should never be the only method used in a needs assessment. They are usually used in addition to other forms of data, such as interviews and focus groups. They are a good way to illustrate the ideas developed during those other data collection activities.

#### ❖ Method

##### *Drawings*

Drawings can be done individually or as a group. The size of a drawing can range from very small to mural size (or large wall drawings).

Individual drawings are useful for young people to express their ideas in a quick and easy way. Other people's drawings are often very hard to understand. Therefore, it is important that the drawing is discussed with the artist. Large drawings and mural size drawings can be successful when trying to give a collective message to the community.

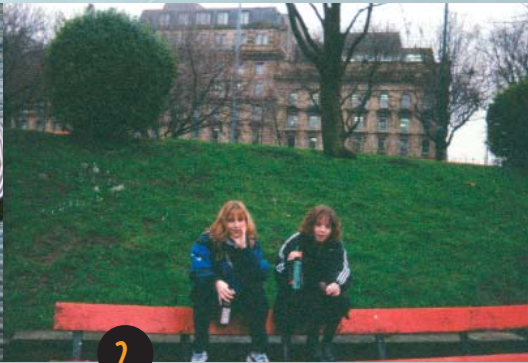
##### *Storyboards*

Storyboards are useful when trying to tell stories. Storyboards show a series of events over time and can be created out of drawings, magazine pictures and/or photographs. Most youth are familiar with storyboards through comic strips. If cameras and film are available a quick and easy way to make a storyboard is through photo drama.



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# Photo





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## Photo drama

*“Photo Drama” involves a group of young people to develop a scenario and act it out while recording it through photography. The result is a photo essay composed of a number of photographs. The photographs can also be annotated with subheadings and displayed to communicate an idea, event or a story to others.*

*At the beginning of the process, young people need to come up with a story line. This can be done as a writing exercise or a storyboard. The storyboard can be as simple as a sheet of cardboard with empty boxes drawn on it. Each box represents a photograph, and the content of the photograph can be drawn or written in it.*

*The next step is to identify a director, camera-person and assign roles to every individual in the group. While the director will have some control over the setup, the strength of the method comes from the ability of the children to express themselves. If necessary, adults can support the camera-person and the director by providing some photo basics (e.g. have the sun behind you while shooting).*

*Once all the photos are shot, they are sent for development and printing. The group meets when the photos are ready. They order and past them on the storyboard. You may also want to write a few sentences under each picture in order to make the story clear.*

# drama



### Collages

Photographs are chosen out of magazines and or newspapers. You then cut the pictures out and position and paste them on a sheet of paper or cardboard. A collage is different from a storyboard because in a collage, many small elements come together to make a whole which usually has a very strong message. Also, constructing a collage can be a good group activity. While conducting a group collage, every individual has the freedom to choose an image and place it wherever she or he likes. Sometimes young people like to do collages because they are easier to do and often the final product is very interesting and expressive. In a collage, it is very important to choose the magazines and newspapers carefully. Make sure that there are a wide variety of images. The more images to choose from, the more successful the collage will be at expressing the young people's feelings. It is worth the time to collect a large number of magazines and images before trying to do a collage. Often, the young people can bring in images from home.



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

*Drawing, collages and storyboards often have many meanings. The person who is looking at the art might have an opinion about the meaning of the drawing, collage or storyboard. However, the artist may have a very different idea. In this way, discussions with the artist are necessary in order to understand the meaning of these images.*

constructing a collage  
can be a good group activity.

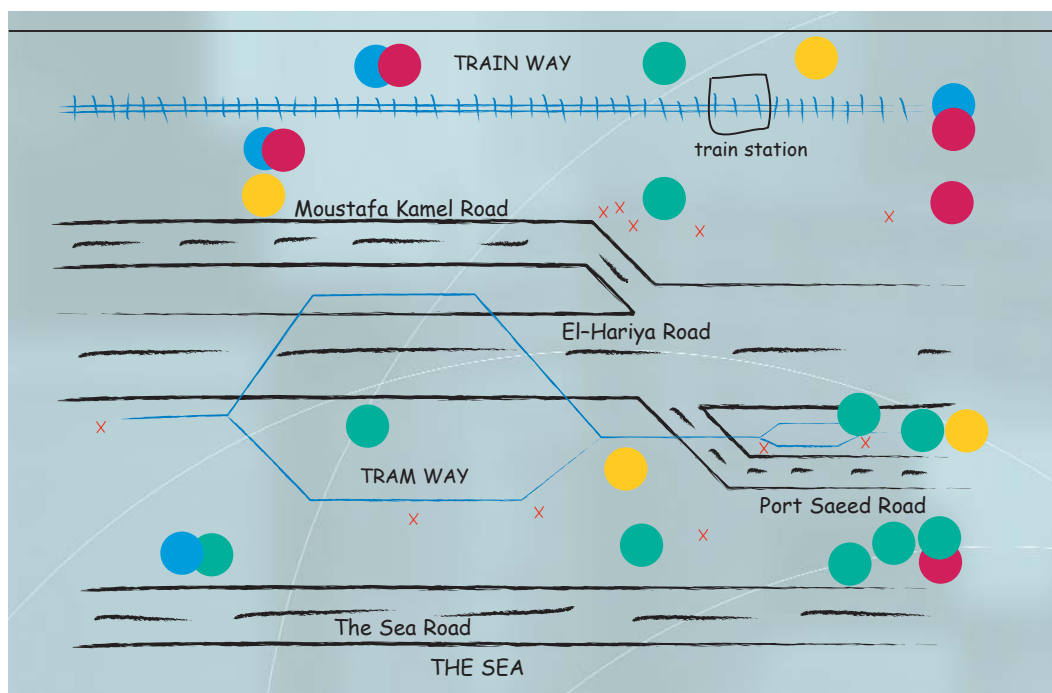
## Mapping methods

### Maps

Maps are drawings that show different parts of the environment around you. For young people who are not familiar with maps, a good way to introduce maps is to ask them to draw their neighborhood or city as if a bird flying very high was seeing it.

#### 🌟 Purpose

Maps can be great tools to summarize a lot of information about space on a single drawing. For example, a drug map of a community might show the areas that drugs are bought and sold in, where young people hang out, where programmes are located and where young people live. Very detailed maps created for a needs assessment can also serve your programme over time. For example, you can monitor your own programme activities by marking areas where you are currently working and areas where young people hang out.



### ❖ **Method**

The first step for doing a community map is to get hold of a base map of the neighbourhood. A base map is a simple map that shows the main streets, bridges and landmarks in a city or a neighbourhood. Usually, these maps can be obtained from municipal offices such as a Town Hall or a local library. In big cities, it is possible to use tourist maps. If no maps are available, you can create your own.

Once the base map is ready, a group of young people can add useful information by marking different areas. Different types of information can be shown by marking them with different colours, pens, dots, etc. For the needs assessment, these maps can be useful to make decisions about where your target population of youth may be located or where ideal locations for programme activities might be. It may be good to look at where the schools, community centres, and other programme exist in order to determine a good location for your programme centre or activities.

Sometimes a quick way of adding information on a base map is to take a group tour of your neighbourhood. A group of young people can walk around with a base map and mark different types of information as they go along. This not only allows for discussion before marking the maps but also allows the group to see the activities and locations first-hand.

### ❖ **Size of group**

The more people who are involved in creating a map, the richer and more interesting the map will be. However, a map can grow over time and everyone does not have to participate at the same time. If the map is big enough and displayed in a public location, young people can keep adding information as time goes by.

### ❖ **Space, location and materials**

If maps are needed for a short period of time, they can be drawn on dirt or sand. In general, the larger the map, the more opportunities for everyone to add to them. Some big maps of neighbourhoods painted on display boards or sides of buildings can be useful when trying to include the community in your programme planning and development.

## Role playing/performance

### ❖ **Purpose**

Performance is useful because it allows young people to move around the room freely and work collectively to develop creative themes for discussion. Because performance is make-believe, young people often find that they can talk about painful and emotional issues freely. Performances are also good ways to show parents and community members what you are doing and find out how they feel about drug issues. During these events, young people can use performance to initiate conversations with audience members.

### ❖ **Method**

Performance can be useful in many different ways; when collecting information about drug issues, for deciding on who should be involved in the programme and what type of programme you will create. Through performance you can have young people act out:

- their daily lives
- the role of drugs in their lives
- the possible problems that they are likely to face when they establish their drug prevention programme

It is possible to start a performance in several different ways. You can start with a simple script, the beginning of a story, or just by assigning specific roles. However, it is good practice if the performers act out their parts spontaneously, allowing them to illustrate the different ways in which they understand the issue or circumstance. It is important to understand that this kind of performance is very different from traditional theatre. It does not have a script and the play can be stopped and re-directed at any point. Further, audience members are often invited to participate with the actors. They can critique and help recreate scenes as the play develops.

### ❖ **Size of the group**

Performance can be done with any size group, ranging from a single performer to a large production. Remember that people can participate even if they do not want to perform on stage. They can be directors, writers, costume designers etc. Further, every member of the audience can be a performer and should be encouraged to participate as directors and/or actors.

### ❖ ***Space and location***

The performances are interesting for community members to watch. While they can be located in a fixed place, they can be even more effective if they go where the audiences are. Many groups manage to provide information through street performances and reach young people who are not in typical youth organizations, such as schools.

### ❖ ***Materials and equipment***

Performance can be done with very little materials. However, if you are going to do a performance in the community in which you are collecting information, you might want to create a more formal performance with costumes and props. All young people can work on the creation of the sets, costumes and props.

### ❖ ***Making use of the information***

When doing performances, it is important to keep track of different issues that have been raised in a written form so that the group can discuss and reflect on these. In some cases, you may want to use this information to create surveys or interviews for the other community members. This method is sometimes called “narrative analysis”.

## **Documentation**

Some information about drugs, drug use, and young people in your community exists already. It may be possible to locate this information in your local library. Also, governments may have published reports on drugs and drug use. Often, you can call the government and ask to have this information sent to you, free of charge. Another good source of information is the materials published by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) located in Vienna, Austria. Many documents are available on-line. If you have internet access, i.e., a computer with a phone line, this information is easy to access. Their address is listed in the resource section at the end of this handbook. Finally, remember that there are many young people like you all around the world who face similar problems regarding drugs. Summary information about many youth drug prevention programmes is listed in the resource section. You may want to contact programmes which have similar goals and activities as those you are planning.



Notes



Notes

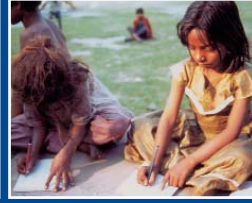


Notes



*This handbook is a work in progress and it is not intended to be the definitive word on drug abuse prevention. Drug abuse patterns and trends change rapidly and UNDCP continues to work with young people and youth workers to identify effective methods for preventing drug abuse. It would be helpful if you could provide us with your comments on this handbook or information on programmes that you consider successful or simply tell us what your experience is, and what your successes and your failures are. You can report to us by filling the lessons learned form in the annex. You may also send material, information and ask questions at the following address:*

Youthnet, C/O UNDCP Demand Reduction Section, P.O.Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria  
Fax: (+43-1) 26060 5866, E-mail: [gautam.babbar@undcp.org](mailto:gautam.babbar@undcp.org)/[stefano.berterame@undcp.org](mailto:stefano.berterame@undcp.org)





This handbook is mainly the result of a participatory process involving more than 33 youth drug abuse prevention programmes from across the globe. Most of the information presented in this handbook draws on the real-life experiences of youth and adults involved in these programmes. Their concerns, ideas, and creativity are presented here in a publication that we hope will help in the development and/or improvement of drug prevention programmes aimed at youth.

# HANDBOOK

كيفية الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة  
يمكن الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة من المكتبات ودور التوزيع في جميع أنحاء العالم. استعلم  
عنها من المكتبة التي تتعامل معها أو اكتب إلى: الأمم المتحدة، قسم البيع في نيويورك أو في جنيف.

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