Training Frontline Workers
Young People, Alcohol & Other Drugs

Section

A

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Training Frontline Workers: Young People, Alcohol and Other Drugs

Background

The project **Training Frontline Workers – Young People, Alcohol and Other Drugs** is part of a broad strategy to support the educational and training needs of frontline workers. The training and support needs of frontline workers not designated as alcohol and other drug workers to enable them to work confidently with young people on illicit drugs is well recognised. This project attempts to meet this need. It was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing under the National Illicit Drug Strategy (NIDS).

Target occupational groups

This training resource has been developed specifically for the following groups of frontline workers:

- Youth Workers
- Accommodation and crisis workers
- Counsellors (including school based)
- Primary and community health and welfare workers
- Juvenile justice workers
- Teachers
- Police

Approaches to service delivery

The development of the resources brings together two approaches to service delivery:

- work with young people

- alcohol and other drug work

The two approaches which underpin these resources are summarised as follows:
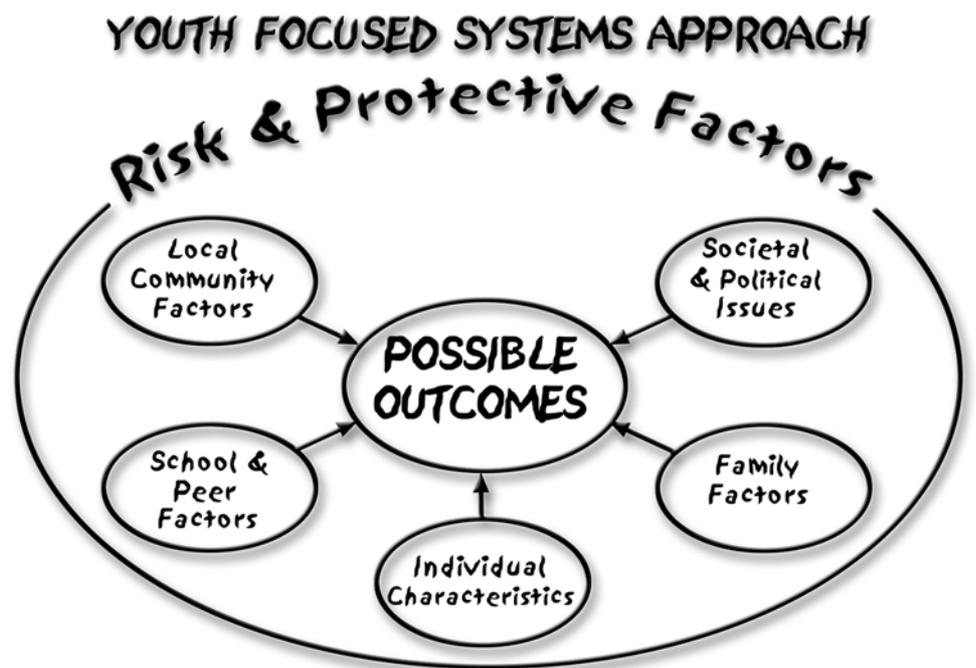
Working with young people

A **systems approach** is the most appropriate model to understand and work with young people. A systems approach assumes that no aspect of behaviour occurs in isolation, rather it occurs within a wider context. In other words, to understand young people we need to consider the individual, their family, the wider community and society as a whole as well as how they interact with each other.

The systemic youth-focused approach assumes that:

- Young people deal with challenges in ways similar to other people in society (some well, others not so well). Young people develop their coping strategies and skills by learning from others around them, through their own personalities and through trial and error.

- The term 'youth' is a social construction. Societal values and beliefs about young people determine the way in which they are treated within society (for example, young people are viewed differently in different cultures).

- Young people are not a homogenous group. Although young people share some common developmental issues, their backgrounds, experiences and cultures are as diverse as the rest of the population.

- Young people participate actively in their lives, make choices, interact with others, initiate changes and participate in our society. They are not passive victims of a dysfunctional society, family or peer group.

The following **social justice principles** guide work with young people:

- Access   -   equality of access to goods and services

- Equity   -   overcoming unfairness caused by unequal access to economic resources and power

- Rights   -   equal effective legal, industrial and political rights

- Participation -   expanded opportunities for real participation in the decisions which govern their lives.

YOUTH FOCUSED SYSTEMS APPROACH

Risk & Protective Factors

Local Community Factors

Societal & Political Issues

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

School & Peer Factors

Family Factors

Individual Characteristics

Alcohol and other drug work

Harm minimisation is the most appropriate approach for working with alcohol and illicit drug issues. The goal of harm minimisation is to reduce the harmful effects of drugs on individuals and on society. Harm minimisation assumes that while we cannot stop drug use in society, we can aim to reduce the harm related to using drugs. Harm minimisation has three components: harm reduction, supply reduction and demand reduction.

A variety of drugs, both legal and illegal, are used in society. There are different patterns of use for drugs and not all drug use is problematical.

Large proportions of young people try alcohol or other drugs, including illicit drugs, without becoming regular or problem drug users.

Drug use is a complex behaviour. Interventions that try to deal with single-risk factors or single-risk behaviours are ineffective.

Drug use represents functional behaviour for both young people and adults. This means that drug use can best be understood in the broader context of the lives of the young people using them. Any interventions need to take the broader context into account.

Training approach

These training resources are based on the following principles:

- Training is consistent, supports a national qualification and provides a pathway to a qualification.

- Training is based on adult learning principles. It should:
    - build on learners' existing knowledge, skills and experience
    - utilise problem-based learning and skills practice, and
    - develop critical thinking and reflection.

- Training is to be flexible and available through a variety of methods. Examples include workshops, self-directed learning, distance learning supported by a mentor/ facilitator and work-based learning.

- Work-based learning provides participants with the opportunity to reflect on current work practices, apply their learning to the work situation and to identify opportunities for organisational change and development in their workplaces.

- A key learning strategy of the resources, supported by individual, group and work-based activities, is reflection: alone and with peers and supervision. To reflect upon and evaluate one's own work, the types of intervention used and the assumptions they are based on is crucial to working more effectively.

Project resources

The **Young People, Alcohol and Other Drugs** program aims to provide the core skills and knowledge that frontline workers need to respond to the needs of young people with alcohol and drug issues, particularly illicit drugs.

This training resource, which comprises 12 modules, has been developed to provide a qualification and/or specific units of competence. The resource can also be used as a test or reference document to support the development of a specific knowledge or skill.

Each module (except Module 1) comprises a Learner Workbook and a Facilitator Guide. Each Learner Workbook is a self-contained resource that can be used for both distance and work-based learning or to support face-to-face learning (including workshops).

Relationship to the Community Services Training Package (CHC02)

The training modules were initially developed to support four units of competence from the Community Services Training Package (CHC99). These were:

CHCYTH1A	Work effectively with young people
CHCAOD2A	Orientation to the alcohol and other drugs sector
CHCAOD5A	Provide support services to clients with alcohol and other drugs issues
CHCAOD6A	Work with clients who are intoxicated.

Following the release of the revised Community Services Training Package (CHC02) in April 2003, the modules were revised to support the following units of competence from the revised Training Package:

Unit of Competence	Module
CHCYTH1C Work effectively with young people	• Perspectives on Working with Young People • Young People, Risk and Resilience • Working with Young People
CHCAOD2B Orientation to the alcohol and other drugs sector	• Young People, Society and AOD • How Drugs Work • Frameworks for AOD Work
CHCCS9A Provide support services to clients	• Helping Young People Identify their Needs • Working with Young People on AOD Issues • Working with Families, Peers and Communities • Young People and Drugs – Issues for Workers
CHCAOD6B Work with clients who are intoxicated	• Working with Intoxicated Young People

The twelfth module **Planning for Learning at Work** is designed to support participants in their learning.

The four units of competence listed above contribute to national qualifications in both Youth Work and Alcohol and Other Drug Work and are electives in a range of other qualifications. Since these units by themselves will not deliver a qualification, the additional units listed in the Community Services Training Package Qualification Framework would need to be completed.

To achieve any of the above units a learner must complete all the modules comprising that unit and be assessed by a qualified assessor from a registered Training Organisation. While it is possible to complete individual modules, this will not enable you to achieve a unit of competence. Individual modules will contribute towards gaining the unit of competence and over a period of time all modules needed for the unit could be completed.

Each of the units of competence has a different focus and has been customised within national guidelines to meet the needs of frontline workers in working with young people with illicit drug issues. The modules each provide a learning pathway with stated learning outcomes to help achieve each particular unit of competence.

Since the modules associated with each unit of competence progressively build on each other, they can be delivered and assessed in an integrated manner. This provides learners with a 'total view' of the essential theory and required skills for their work roles.

CHCYTH1C **Work effectively with young people**	CHCAOD2B **Orientation to the alcohol and other drug sector**	CHCCS5A **Provide support services to clients**	CHCAOD6B **Work with clients who are intoxicated**
Elements: 1. Develop a professional rapport with young people 2. Address issues associated with the culture of young people 3. Recognise that youth culture is distinct	**Elements:** 1. Work within the context of the alcohol and other drugs sector 2. Develop knowledge of the alcohol and other drugs sector 3. Demonstrate commitment to the central philosophies of the alcohol and other drugs sector	**Elements:** 1. Assist clients to identify their needs 2. Support clients to meet their needs 3. Review work with clients	**Elements:** 1. Provide a service to intoxicated clients 2. Assist clients with longer-term needs 3. Apply strategies to reduce harm or injury
Focus: • models and approaches of working with a young person • principles underpinning this work • basic skills in working with young people.	**Focus:** • understanding AOD use in society • approaches to AOD work factors.	**Focus:** • helping young people to identify needs in relation to AOD issues • responding to these needs • skills in working with young people on AOD issues, at an individual and a community level.	**Focus:** • assessing, monitoring and responding to the needs of young people who are intoxicated.
Module Sequence 1. Perspectives on Working with Young People 2. Young People, Risk and Resilience 3. Working with Young People	**Module Sequence** 1. Young People, Society and AOD 2. How Drugs Work 3. Frameworks	**Module Sequence*** 1. Helping Young People Identify their Needs 2. Working with Young People on AOD Issues 3. Working with Families, Peers and Communities 4. Young People and Drugs - Issues for Workers	**Module Sequence*** 1. Working with Intoxicated Young People

*In addition to the modules listed learners will need a current First Aid Certificate in order to achieve the unit of competence.**

Developing your learning pathway

Depending on your learning needs you may choose to do one, several or all of the units listed below. The following guide will help you decide which units to undertake.

If you want information about young people and ways of working with young people. **UNIT CHCYTH1C**	If you want information about the alcohol and other drug sector and a greater understanding of drug use in society. **UNIT CHCAOD2B**	If you want skills in identifying AOD drug impacts on young people to develop responses to alcohol and drug issues for the young people you work with. **UNIT CHCS9A**	If you want skills and information to work with young people who are intoxicated. **UNIT CHCAOD6B**
Perspectives on Working with Young People Explores the stage of adolescence and a range of factors that impact on the development of young people **Young People, Risk and Resilience** Provides a framework for understanding and working with young people **Working with Young People** Provides a broad framework for understanding and working with young people, explores goals of working with young people and the development of specific skills.	**Young People, Society and AOD** Looks at ways of understanding drug use in society and by young people in particular and presents an overview of patterns and trends of AOD use by young people. Broad societal factors that influence work on AOD issues are also explored. **How Drugs Work** Provides information about drugs and how they act on the body. **Frameworks for AOD Work** Provides an overview of the range of AOD interventions, from prevention through to treatment and explores their relevance to work with young people on AOD issues.	**Helping Young People Identify their Needs** Develops skills in identifying alcohol and other drug issues for young people at an individual, group and community level. **Working with Young People on AOD Issues** Provides skills in working with young people with AOD issues on a one-to-one basis. The emphasis is on young people who are experiencing problems because of their AOD use. **Working with Families, Peers and Communities** Provides a framework and skills for working with young people on AOD issues at a community and family level. **Young People and Drugs - Issues for Workers** Explores a range of issues that workers may encounter when working with young people on AOD issues. These include personal values, ethical issues and issues surrounding confidentiality and accountability.	**Working with Intoxicated Young People** Provides information and skills in working with intoxicated young people. **If you want advice about planning learning and how to learn** **Planning for Learning at Work**

Many learners will want to develop knowledge and skills in a number of these areas. Overlapping content across the units has been identified in the individual modules.
NOTE: CHCAOD2B provides key underpinning knowledge on AOD work and reflection on personal values and attitudes to alcohol and other drugs. It is recommended that this unit be completed before undertaking the other units in alcohol and other drug work. In particular, the module **How Drugs Work** provides underpinning knowledge about drug actions on the individual. It is recommended that learners completing CHCCS9A and CHCAOD6B also complete this module.

Developing your learning plan

Before developing your learning plan you will need to have a clear idea of what your learning needs are. A learning need is the gap between what you know and *can* do to what you *want* to know and do. Once you have clarified your learning needs you can develop a plan to help you achieve your learning goals. Your plan should have details about what will be learned, how it will be learned, by when, what criteria will be used to evaluate the learning and how the learning will be validated. It is recommended that learners develop their plan with a mentor or facilitator.

Goals	What do I want to learn?
Strategies	How am I going to learn?
Resources	What resources will I use?
Evidence guide	What will I show to confirm I have learned it (e.g. case notes, references, supervisor feedback)?
Review date	
Review comments	

The module **Planning for Learning at Work** provides detailed information on identifying your learning needs, developing a learning plan and strategies that will assist you to learn.

Once you have identified your needs you can match them up with the units of competence and the resources available.

Assessment

If part of your learning plan is to achieve particular units of competence you will need to clarify how you will be assessed and by whom. Your facilitator will provide you with information on assessment activities and requirements.

Recognition

If you think that you already have skills and knowledge that are contained in a particular module, you may be eligible to apply for recognition of prior learning. You will need to discuss this with your facilitator who will inform you of the necessary requirements.

Using the Learner Workbook

The Learner Workbook is a comprehensive, workbook-style document. It can be used for distance and work-based learning modes as well as supporting face-to-face learning.

The Learner Workbook provides an overview of the module and the learning outcomes which will help you to plan and guide your learning. The content is divided into topic areas providing information for you to read, topics for research, activities that can be completed alone, in groups or in your workplace. A glossary and a list of references and resources are also provided in each module.

Information for distance and work-based learners – your facilitator's role

It is recommended that these resources be used in *supported* distance mode. This means that learning occurs outside of a classroom workshop setting with the support and guidance of a qualified facilitator. If you are a distance learner it is important for you to clarify your learning needs and what you hope to achieve with your facilitator. This person will help you identify your needs, develop goals, match your needs to the units of competence and the relevant modules and develop your learning plan. Your facilitator will clarify how you will be assessed and by whom and will contact you at prearranged times to assist and support you as you complete the Workbook.

As a distance learner much of your learning is self-directed. This means that you are responsible for setting your own learning goals and organising your learning so that you achieve these goals. The module **Planning for Learning at Work** is a good resource for distance learners. As well as helping you to develop a learning plan, it provides a range of strategies to assist you with self-directed and work-based learning as well as helping you to identify how you learn best.

Managing your learning

Your Workbook contains a range of learning activities. These activities involve self-assessment and will assist you in your learning and your preparation for formal assessment.

The following study links will assist you in managing your learning:

- **Managing time** – You will need to plan time to undertake your learning. This may be a regular time each week or you may prefer to do blocks of learning.

- **Managing activities** – The Workbook contains a range of activities some of which will require you to have access to a phone and a computer and sources of data in the workplace.

- **Managing your learning materials** – Organise your materials so that you can easily keep track of the resources you need.

- **People who can help you learn** – Remember that a range of people can help you with your learning including your facilitator, your supervisor, work colleagues and your peers. These people can provide support, assistance and information and assist you in completing activities such as role plays.

Icons

A range of icons is used in the Learner Guide to assist you in using the resources. The following icons are used:

FAC	Facilitator direction
WPL	Workplace learning activity
Case Study	Case study
Task	Task
	Writing exercise
	Group activity
	Links to other modules
www	Web resources
	Video
Q	Question
A	Answer
✓	A good point for student to contact facilitator
	Brainstorm
	Suggested time
OHT	Overhead transparency