

The Pompidou Group Prevention Platform Extended Meeting

The PG Lifeskills Programme in Russia and Ukraine



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Prevention key focus: Lifeskills

We developed lifeskills work in the Serdlovsk region of Russia in the 1990s in the juvenile justice system and in schools.

We adapted the programme for Ukraine, Lithuania, and Romania.

Key elements of the programme

- | ***Training for professionals (teachers ++)***
- | ***Participation of young people –***
 - ***in the training***
 - ***in the classroom***
- | ***Work with parents and families***
- | ***Whole-school approach***
- | ***Local adaptation***
- | ***Sustainability***
 - ***Skilling local trainers***
 - ***Engaging local decision-makers***
 - ***Demonstrating national value through local activity***
- | ***Evidence-based, but with experimentation***

Tell them not to do it?



knowledge, skills & attitudes

- | Knowledge about drugs***
- | Skills for dealing with drug-related situations***
- | Attitudes towards drugs, towards themselves, and towards others***

Example: skills for dealing with situations

Situation 3

A group of you are at a friend's house. Her parents are not at home. Someone says: "Hey, look in this cupboard! Your Dad has some alcohol. Let's drink some."

Your friend says (very reluctantly): "OK, but only a little, or Dad will notice."

A bottle is passed around. Two people have taken a sip. Now it is your turn. Everybody is looking at you to see what you will do.

What would you do?

Training the professionals

A key requirement of an effective programme

- ***Active***
- ***Fun***
- ***Long enough***
- ***Follow-up***
- ***Cascading***



Young people

Involving young people throughout

- ***as participants***
- ***as co-trainers***
- ***as testers and developers***
- ***as information sources***



Involving parents

Adds value to the programme

- ***helps professionals to understand parents' concerns***
- ***dispels fears and builds support for the programme***
- ***good practice***



The whole-school approach

Drug education across the curriculum and a 'healthy school'

- ***drugs education included across the curriculum***
- ***'drugs' included in the school's approach to health | healthy lifestyles***



Adaptation

Different countries face different issues and have different structures and approaches

- Language and idiom (stories)
- Drugs issues (compendium of Ukrainian legislation)
- School structures & timetabling ('class hours' or lessons within special subjects: « Basics of life safety» or «Basics of health» courses)
- School curriculum issues (additional materials: workbooks with a component for parents)
- Bureaucracy

Sustainability

Unless it is sustainable, is it worth doing?

Engage local decision-makers

- ***contact from start***
- ***involve at all stages of planning and implementation***
- ***present results & build support***

Demonstrate national value

- ***showcase local activity***
- ***describe benefits***
- ***tackle resistance***

***Develop the skills of local trainers
(including young people)***



Experimentation

As pioneers of this approach, and with very limited funds, it has not been possible to undertake full evaluations.

But:

- | the programme is solidly evidence-informed
- | it has been well-received by the participants
- | it has evolved and developed from our learning during implementation.

We do not claim this is 'the only' or 'the best' programme – but we think it is an important contribution

Thanks for listening!



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The impact of lifeskills education

Teachers reconsider their pedagogy and take a new approach to teaching:

- ***more inclusive***
- ***more open, dynamic, adaptable***
- ***more participative.***

Pupils respond well to this – especially if this approach becomes embedded in the school culture.

That is why the lifeskills approach is enhanced when it is part of a whole-school strategy involving all staff and pupils.

Evaluation

- | ***as part of the project design, from planning to follow-up – process evaluation***
- | ***evaluations assess knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers and students***
- | ***evaluations should be***
 - ***practical***
 - ***adaptable (local conditions)***
 - ***include practitioner knowledge and understanding.***

Let's not forget the legal drugs

Alcohol and tobacco – more important in most countries and at this age, Greater health consequences than illegal drugs

'Prevention' & 'education'

- | Prevention is not only about education..***
- | ... but education is a big part of prevention.***
- | Education about drugs is not always preventive.***
- | Education about drugs aims to provide knowledge, improve skills, & develop attitudes***

Pervasive drug education and information

- | In informal educational settings***
- | In the mass media***
- | In a form appropriate to children***
- | In the context of other substance misuse***

