

ANNEX 1

REVISED GUIDELINES

Guidelines for the implementation of peer education, care and support

To harmonise the different approaches of peer education programs implemented in different provinces and schools and to integrate peer education with the various HIV-intervention strategies implemented in the Department of Education, it is necessary to develop standards and guidelines for the implementation of peer education programmes in schools through the input of all the stakeholders. The standards and guidelines for the implementation of peer education presented in this report which are applicable, relevant and can potentially be effective in South African schools were developed using the following processes:

- A participative workshop of 48 representatives of the various education departments, national and provincial, service providers implementing existing peer education programmes and labour unions was held in August 2007. All participants contributed to the development of the standards and guidelines for peer education and provided a specific frame of reference.
- The experience and lessons learned from the implementation of the pilot Peer Education Care and Support programme in 88 schools in 4 provinces involving 173 peer educators and their mentors in schools.
- A literature study of all available literature on peer education used as part of the prevention, care and support for HIV affected school going young people.

The guidelines will be outlined in terms of:

- I. The definition and roles of peer educators,
- II. The content and implementation of the programmes
- III. The requirements for effective implementation in the school context.

Definition of peer education

Peer education is an approach, communication channel, methodology, philosophy and/or intervention strategy that typically involves training and support of members of a given group to effect change among members of the same group. The aim is often to modify a person's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours or to effect change at the group or societal level (Horizons). Deutsch and Swartz (2002) gives a working definition which focuses on the roles of the peer educator in an educational setting: Peer education is a process whereby trained supervisors assist a group of suitable learners to 1) give information to their peers; 2) to

informally role-model healthy behaviour patterns; 3) recognise youth in need of additional help and refer them for assistance and 4) advocate for resources and services needed by young people. Peer-led interventions are based on the assumption that behaviour is socially influenced and that behavioural norms that influence behaviour, are developed through interaction.

Why peer education is potentially effective

Peer interventions among adolescents can be effective because:

- Adolescents are more likely to listen to and openly discuss sexual matters with their peers than with adults who they often perceive to be in an authoritarian position.
- Adolescents identify with one another and influence one another through the development of group norms. They follow peer group norms to be accepted in the peer group.
- Peer educators can be models of healthy behaviour; they can influence the development of peer group norms from within the group of learners and can build relationships with learners to openly discuss issues.
- In peer education young people are recognised as partners in solving problems which increase their participation in decision making and taking ownership of their own health.
- By using peers as resources, information, skills and caring can be extended in an exponential way influencing the social climate in a school.
- There is evidence from previous research that peer education in school settings can be effective to contribute to higher levels of HIV-knowledge, changed attitudes and self-efficacy and changed sexual behaviour patterns regarding condom use and delay of sexual activity based on changed sexual norms.

Aim of HIV and AIDS peer education

The main aims of peer education programmes in an HIV context are usually the following:

To prevent of the spread of HIV among young people

To provide care and support for learners infected and affected by HIV

To promote positive health behaviour among young people

To promote leadership in schools by building capacity.

Roles and responsibilities of the peer educator

The possible roles of peer educators as part of an HIV prevention and care programme which are common to various programmes can be summarised as follows:

- Educator: Provide basic information about healthy living in a youth-friendly way
- Role-model: Provide positive role models for learners at school and reinforce positive values and attitudes
- Supporter: Build trusting relationships with peers and provide support regarding psycho-social problems placing learners at risk of contracting HIV or related to being HIV affected. (Need to specify the range of psycho-social issues relevant in the programme to determine programme boundaries. For example, peer educators need to address poverty issues, but need not focus on disciplinary matters of the school).
- Referral agent: Identify learners with psycho-social problems, support them and, if necessary, refer them to appropriate community agencies such as clinics and social workers.
- Advocate: To raise awareness of issues and services available; making members of school management aware of the needs of learners (Deutsch & Swartz, 2002; Ward et al., 2008).

Depending on the aim of the project, some or all of these roles can be emphasized or other roles can be added.

The peer education model: content and messages

The aim of the programme should be on promoting healthy behaviour to prevent HIV. To accomplish this, most peer education programmes focus on the dissemination of HIV-information. Some programmes add learning of interpersonal skills such as communication, negotiation and decision making skills. These programmes focus on the individual factors of behaviour but this may not be enough to accomplish behaviour change. The focus in HIV prevention programmes should also be on the social context of sexuality and gender dynamics among adolescents (Campbell & Mac Phail, 2002). The programme should therefore focus on **specific high risk behaviours** of the learners in the target group and the **motivations** behind these behaviours, which should be identified during a situation analysis of behaviours, risk and protective factors in the context. This will enable the programme to focus on the specific needs of the learners in the local context. From previous research (Eaton, Flisher & Aaro, 2003), various

factors were identified promoting and perpetuating unsafe sexual behaviour in the context of the South African school-going youth. These factors include personal contributions (perception of risk, knowledge, self-esteem), interpersonal relationships (negotiating condom use, male dominated relationships, peer pressure, adult examples) and cultural and structural factors (lack of recreational facilities, living conditions, poverty, lack of discussion of sexual behaviour). The underlying reasons for high-risk behaviour among South African young people that need to be addressed as part of peer education are peer group norms, perceptions of gender roles and goals for the future.

The model should have specific focus on goals and implement specific strategies to address the target behaviour, based on a sound theoretical framework that explains how the intervention contributes to behaviour change. It should focus on change in specific risk and protective factors, such as knowledge, values, perception of peer norms, skills and self-efficacy and strategies to avoid situations that can encourage high-risk behaviour.

The messages of a peer education programme (abstinence or condom promotion) should be directed at the behavioural needs of the target community. Due to educational goals, most school programmes focus on abstinence-only programmes to delay sexual involvement of learners. In such programmes special attention should also be given to the sexual risk behaviour of the target learners. Abstinence-only programmes are often effective to discourage learners from becoming sexually involved, but not for young people who are already sexually experienced – those that are at the highest risk of contracting HIV. These learners may find the abstinence programme alienating and may not get the necessary information to keep themselves safe. The needs of these learners need to be taken into account. There should be respect and acceptance of honesty and special attention should be given to promote secondary abstinence.

Implementation of peer education in schools

Swartz (2003) concludes that poor results in peer education programmes often result from poor implementation. Implementation is therefore the crux of the programme.

Currently, peer education in schools is being implemented as an additional programme to the formal school activities by NGO's or organisations contracted to do so as part of the conditional grant of the Department of Education to promote life skills training and to prevent HIV and AIDS

among the school-going population. From the desk review of school life skills and peer education programmes (Academy of Educational Development, 2007; Attachment 1), it can be seen that peer education programmes are being implemented in a fragmented way, without clear guidelines regarding roles and standards. This means that peer education is not part of the school system, not part of the educators' or learners' assignments, and it is not provided for in the formal education budget. There are therefore no incentives included for the educators as mentors or the peer educators. There is no money available for implementing peer education activities. At school-level the peer education programme is thus an add-on programme with no allocated resources for implementation, but it uses the school infrastructure to function. The sustainability of the programme is also questionable because it depends on outside agencies and the good will of learners as peer educators and the educators that supervise them who are motivated to make a difference in the lives of learners.

Model for implementing peer education in schools

If peer education is to be implemented successfully, it needs to form part of the formal structure of the school system and be planned accordingly.

There are various models of peer education implementation in schools that can be used:

- One model is to formally implement peer education as part of the school curriculum on Life Orientation and provide peer educators with time on the time table to convey their messages to peers;
- Another model is to implement the programme as part of the LO curriculum but give them additional time outside of the formal school time to educate peers on healthy behaviour.
- Another strategy is to include peer education as part of the learner leadership development programme by institutionalising it as part of or as sub-committee of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL). The representative on the RCL can be the leader of a group of peer educators functioning with the support of the RCL and an educator assigned to the project. With RCL support the learners can implement activities in the school on group and/or individual level.
- Another strategy can be to promote an informal peer education system where the focus is on informal individual discussions out of the formal school context. This approach may be included in all of the preceding models as well. The challenge in implementing peer education in this model, is that it is difficult to monitor and support because it is done

informally and in one-to-one relationships. It also does not ensure how many learners can be reached in an informal way.

In all of these models the peer educators need to convey information, share experiences and help with skills development individually or in groups. They will need programme material to use to make sure that the programme goes beyond factual information and that standardized materials are being shared with peers. The catchy youth-friendly lesson plans of the RADS programme are probably the reason why this model is so popular, because it provides youth-friendly material for the peer educator to use when having contact with their peers.

In the pilot project discussed in this report, the peer educators that were accommodated as part of the life orientation programme had the most opportunity to have contact with their peers. It was the opinion of most of the educators that the peer education programme worked best when integrated into the LO learning area and when peer educators had a specific time scheduled as part of LO class activities. This would give the peer educator opportunity to share their messages with their peers, without extra time and money necessary for scheduling extra sessions. In this way they will also have more support and acceptance as part of the school structure. The peer education programme will then be formally part of the educators' workload and not a programme additional to their normal work load. The LO educators also commented how the peer educators contributed to the subject content of the LO class, since the content areas of the two programmes were aligned.

In some of the schools a members of the RCL was trained as peer educators. This model also worked well because the peer educator obtained the support of the RCL who supported the mobilization of learners for the implementation of the programme. The inclusion of the peer education programme as part of the RCL contributes to the sustainability of the programme and the learners' ownership of the programme.

To enhance the successful implementation of the programme in schools there are a few processes that need to be followed to develop the peer educators and to fit the programme into the structures of the school, because the programme cannot function in isolation.

Needs assessment and development of capacity and infrastructure

Peer education programmes should be based on the identified needs of young people in the target schools and be age appropriate. The needs assessment should also take into account the needs in the community, whether the programme should focus on prevention and/or care and support for the HIV infected. The values in the community should also indicate the focus of the programme. Additionally, the needs assessment should focus on the existing infrastructure in schools and available resources in the community. The capacity of the school to host the programme should be addressed prior to programme implementation (Deutsch & Swartz, 2002; Ward et al., 2008). Schools that are already over-burdened should not be expected to carry another load. If a programme is to be implemented in such a school, the programme should develop a strategy to build in sufficient support so that the programme can run in the school without an extra burden to the school (Ward et al., 2008), since the success of the programme relies on the capacity of the school to support it. This involves the provision of a budget, a physical space to meet, teacher training and support to enable them to manage the implementation of the programme.

The implication is that the implementation of the peer education programme should rather be slow in a few schools where the programme can be effectively supported, than to promote large-scale implementation where the programme does not really make a difference (that is not cost-effective). It is unfair towards all stakeholders to implement peer education in schools that do not have the capacity to support the learners in the implementation of the programme. The programme is then a burden and not effective.

Training for peer mentors

Much of the success of a peer education programme lies with the educator taking responsibility for the peer educators. This educator (often the LO educator) should be briefed about the goals of the programme, how to select and support peer educators and assisted in the development of supervision skills. They need to develop capacity in counselling skills, referral skills, motivating and supporting peer educators and how to promote the programme by being the communication channel between the peer educators and the school management.

The selection of peer educators

Criteria for peer educator selection should be negotiated with the educators and SGB in each school, though general guidelines can be set about the process of selection as well as the desired qualities of peer educators.

How many?

There should preferably be a group of peer educators. A ratio of 1:50 learners in the school was suggested. This ensures that they can have an influence on the learners in their schools and that the peer educators can support each other. Equal numbers of males and females should be selected and one gender should not be promoted over the other.

What age group?

Learners from each grade group can then be selected to assist their own grade group and younger learners. It was found that older learners (Grade 10 and 11) could be more effective because they could deal with a large group of younger learners and could be available to the programme for more than one year. In the pilot programme it was found that Grade 7 and 8 peer educators in Junior Secondary schools sometimes had difficulty to implement the programme: they were young children, felt uncomfortable to deal with sexual themes, were not confident enough to assert themselves and felt overwhelmed by the expectations. It should also be kept in mind that real empathy is only possible in the later stages of the formal operational phase of cognitive development. These children may still be so involved in their own understanding of the world that it cannot be expected of them to take the responsibilities of peer education. It can therefore be suggested that learners from Grade 10 onwards be chosen as peer educators.

Who should be selected?

The ideal is to select a natural leader from the target group who is similar in age group and socio-economic background to the target group; an individual that learners respect and can talk to; that influences the behaviour of his/her peers. The peer educator should have good interpersonal skills, be involved with his/her peers and be in a position to influence the behaviour of their peers.

Specific qualities to look for when selecting peer educators include but is not limited to the following:

- Ability to communicate clearly and persuasively with peers;
- Good interpersonal skills, including listening skills;

- A socio-cultural (gender, age, social class) background similar to that of the target audience;
- Accepted and respected by peers;
- Have a non-judgemental attitude and can interact with people from different backgrounds;
- Strong motivation to work towards HIV risk reduction;
- Care, compassion, and respect for all people, including people affected by HIV&AIDS;
- Self confidence and potential for leadership;
- Time and energy to devote to this work;
- Potential to be a safe sex role model for their peers;
- Demonstrate reliability, trustworthiness and able to keep confidentiality
- Be a good public speaker.
- Having previous experience as a leader or helper can be an advantage.
(Family Health International Prevention Project, cited in Campbell, 2005; United Nations, 2003; Visser, 2005).

Learners with experience of risk behaviour, who have changed their behaviour to be in line with health messages, can be good role models for other learners and more approachable than learners who are the “perfect” role models (Ward et al., 2008). Though, in this research we found that when selecting those learners with risk behaviour for the training, they did not model preventive behaviour and these inconsistencies troubled the targeted learners. Most of these peer educators dropped out from the programme. It is therefore more effective to select and train recognised leaders in the school.

Process of selection

Learners in the school should have some input in the selection of the peer educators. Learners could be asked to nominate members in their grade group whom they thought would be good peer educators. Teachers and existing peer educators (if any) can interview the nominated students and select the ones fitting the set criteria. Another possibility is that the teachers and existing peer educators nominate potential peer educators and learners’ vote will select the peer educators.

Training of peer educators

Peer educators should be trained to have the knowledge and skills for each of their roles. They need to understand the context of HIV AND AIDS and the world of the young person.

They need presentation skills in group sessions and communication and counselling skills in individual sessions. They should be trained to build a trusting environment and follow ethical principles. No training workshop can fully prepare peer educators for all the tasks involved. Training should therefore be continuous and integrated with support on how to deal with specific situations.

Suggestions for themes to include in the initial training programme:

- Self-development
- HIV AND AIDS knowledge: transmission and protection
- Basic communication and counselling skills
- Presentation skills: how to impart HIV AND AIDS information
- Participatory techniques to engage peers in problem-solving dialogue about behaviour change
- Underlying gender and socio-cultural/socio-economic barriers to behaviour change
- The psychosocial impact of HIV, stigma, human rights
- Care and support for vulnerable children, how to refer to available treatment and support facilities.
- Project management skills and action planning.
- How to be ethically responsible.

Training of peer educators should be age appropriate. Younger peer educators (10 – 14 years) could be trained separately from older peer educators since they have different life experiences. We observed that the younger learners felt uncomfortable to discuss sexuality in the presence of older learners.

Training and training materials should be available in the vernacular of the learners to enable them to engage with the materials and to communicate with their peers. The peer educators' level of competency in English was sometimes found to be low. Then they did not benefit from training in English. Peer education deals with very personal information that is dealt with easier in the mother tongue.

Refresher training, after the peer educators have experience in implementing the programme, is important to assist them to refine their skills, learn new skills and to discuss real life situations they experienced. Peer educators need continuous support and supervision to deal with new issues and to develop appropriate new skills.

Innovative teaching strategies that encourage learner participation should be incorporated in training programmes to reach learners in a way they can identify with. Examples of teaching strategies to be used are discussions, games, skills building exercises, role play, drama, story telling, scenarios, surveys, real life case studies, problem-solving activities, home work assignments, dance and sport. This may enable them to personalise the information and create an atmosphere where they could discuss sexuality issues openly.

Supervision and support

One of the most important components of effective peer education is having ongoing supervision and support to deal with specific cases and issues in implementation (Visser, 2005). Being a peer educator can put young people in situations where they have to deal with emotional issues that they cannot manage on their own. They may not have the coping skills to deal with these emotional traumas and need close supervision and support. If they do not have support they may become over-burdened, traumatised and drop out of the programme. These regular sessions with peer educators can also be used to determine which strategies are effective and how the programme implementation should change to be more effective in reaching the desired results. The intensity of support needed in an effective peer education programme, requires that educators are skilled and committed. Service providers or trainers should also be available for assistance. Large-scale implementation of peer education (such as 100 schools per service provider) is therefore unrealistic, because they will not be able to provide the support the programme needs to be effective.

Support should be given by more than one educator. There should preferably be a support committee within the school advised and supervised by the service providers responsible for the training of peer educators. The peer mentor(s) (often the LO educator) should be “offering on-going advice and support, but in a non-directive way” (Campbell & Mac Phail, 2002, 336). Educators as peer mentors need to be involved in the programme in a balanced way to support young people to develop and implement their activities and open communication channels for peer educators in schools. They should not be too rigid or controlling since that would undermine any sense of “youth ownership” of the programme (Campbell, 2004). The aim of the programme is to involve peer educators and to empower them to take initiative in health programmes. This should be encouraged and supported.

Incentive to motivate peer educators

It is essential to motivate peer educators through different forms of incentives, recognition or compensation (United Nations, 2003). Programmes which include some form of compensation for the time and effort and expenses of the peer educators tend to build accountability amongst peer educators, especially if they come from low income families. This is also a way of winning parental support of peer education programmes (United Nations, 2003). Peer educators need recognition and encouragement from their parents and local community to help them to discuss issues with their parents and to reinforce a healthy lifestyle.

Notwithstanding that helping others is a motivation in itself contributing to feeling proud, respected by others and acknowledged, incentives such as T-shirts and badges, social and recreational activities, contribute to building identity and strengthen the social support network amongst peer educators. Attention to the personal development of peer educators and opportunities for advancement, to take leadership in the programme, such as to be a co-trainer or to recruit new peer educators, also contribute to the motivation and commitment to the programme. The programme can also contribute to skills development, be a corridor to leadership courses, bursaries and exchange programmes that can influence their career paths (Ward et al., 2008).

Support structures necessary for an effective programme

Peer education does not function in isolation, but need the support of all stakeholders in the school community and linkages to other service providers to be effective. The stakeholders are the school governing body, parents, principal, teachers and learners in the school. All these stakeholders should participate in the development of the programme to address their specific needs.

Peer education is implemented in schools on a large-scale with the aim of affecting learner behaviour. This pilot project showed that peer education can have an impact in schools when the necessary support and infrastructure is available. Peer education programmes did not succeed in dysfunctional schools where learner discipline and teaching quality was very poor, thus creating an environment that is not conducive to change. Peer education can be effective if implemented

as part of the school system with the necessary resources to make a difference, such as support, training, support from school management, time to contact peers, learner acknowledgement, referral agencies to help vulnerable learners and incentives and support for peer educators to stay motivated to help their peers. In a well-functioning system peer educators can enhance the functioning of the system, but they cannot function as a substitute for good practices in schools.

The roles of some of the stakeholders will be outlined briefly.

Peer mentors

The peer mentors (often the LO educator) supervise the work of the peer educator and form the communication channel between the peer educators and the school management. There should be at least two educators available to help and support the peer educators. These educators should be interested and committed to young people's development, have effective contact with learners and comfortable to discuss sexuality. Preferably there should be a committee representing all the stakeholders that support and manage the activities of the peer educators.

If educators feel overburdened with teaching and administrative responsibilities, they will be unable to mentor the peer educators effectively. If this project was planned as part of their workload they will not experience it as an add-on role or a burden.

School management team

There should be orientation workshops for school principals on the goals and implementation of peer education in their schools. The principal and school management team needs to be informed about all activities of the peer educators since they have the authority to approve or disapprove all activities of the peer educators. They also control the resources of the school such as time, venues, human and financial resources. It was found that when the school management team did not support the programme, it was very difficult if not impossible for the peer educators to implement the programme.

Learners

Learner participation in each stage of development will enhance the value of the programme and enhance ownership of the programme. Learners should have a voice in the selection of peer educators, in what is being addressed, in how it is being done and in development of action plans. They should be able to take the lead in this programme. A management committee including learners will also contribute to their ownership of the programme. The role of the adults should be to provide appropriate support, information and training to facilitate youth participation. The success stories cited about peer education is of projects where young people were taking the lead and made a difference (Ward et al., 2008).

The peer education programme is directed towards the needs of the learners of the school. The learners need to accept the programme and acknowledge the role of the peer educator. In implementing the pilot project one of the largest obstacles the peer educators experienced was that the learners did not take them seriously, did not respect them and did not discuss their problems with the peer educators. This is often the first resistance in response to implementing such an intervention. It takes time to build trusting relationships and to gain the support of other learners who have to get use to the new roles of their peers. Once this relationship is being built peer educators can have a valuable influence on the behaviour of their peers.

Other educators

All educators should be aware of the peer educators' roles and should support them and make them aware of learners who may need their help.

Parents

Parental involvement is needed during the needs assessment stage, but also in the implementation of the programme. They should know what their children's involvement in the programme is to support them and to open communication channels between parents and children. Parents can become involved in the day-to-day functioning of the programme as part of a committee helping with resources, guidelines and referral sources. Such a committee can assure that the needs of the community are addressed in the programme.

Linkages and referrals

Partnerships with community networks of support are needed for the programme to be effective. Without the support of agencies or professionals to assist the vulnerable children identified in the programme, the peer educators cannot function effectively. Building networks with local health and social protection services enable peer educators to be trusted by other learners to make reliable and confidential referrals to these services. Their involvement in community structures such as conversations with health clinic staff, can benefit the community structures to enable a more accepting relationship towards youth asking for help at these agencies. In an effective peer education programme, the need for youth-friendly services will increase because more learners will be made aware of their needs to use these services (Campbell, 2004; United Nations, 2003). Community support structures therefore need to be informed about the programme and its ethos to keep them from undermining the work of the programme. To build these links is an ambitious project and cannot be the responsibility of the peer educators themselves. They need support from school-level and education authority-levels.

Network of peer educators

Peer educators in and between schools can support one another through a network of communication to share ideas and form an advocacy group to communicate the needs of learners.

Campbell (2004) is realistic when she warns about possible over-optimism that peer education in resource-poor and marginalised communities can impact on behaviour in the absence of appropriate resources and partnerships. She states that “programme success is unlikely without parallel efforts to create supportive social environments, through building alliances between peer educators and more influential groups.” Peer educators need supportive contexts which will enable health-enhancing behaviour change. Without this context “the best-intentioned peer education programmes are doomed to have less than optimal results.”

Peer education is thus no quick fix in a resource-poor environment. It will take intensive planning and a reorganisation of various stakeholder systems to assure effective implementation.

Evaluation of the programme

It is difficult to develop evaluations to identify the impact of a specific programme because programmes do not exist in a vacuum. There are many other influences on behaviour as well. Monitoring and evaluation plans therefore need to be developed carefully.

Monitoring of programmes should include field visits, activity reports, regular meetings and interviews with learners, the peer educators and the peer mentors. The extent of implementation, in terms of number of peer educators trained, their activities and roles in the schools and the number of learners involved, should be monitored.

A randomised control trial is needed to evaluate the outcome of peer education programmes. This includes a pre- and post-assessments and a control group that does not participate in programme activities. High-risk behaviour such as being sexually active, having multiple sexual partners, using condoms, using excessive alcohol, teenage pregnancies and indications of STD's or HIV should be used as indicators of successful implementation. Evaluations of peer education programmes in schools are scarce and should be commissioned to provide data that can inform future decisions about peer education.

Sustainability

To sustain the peer education programme, the programme should form part of the school structure. The *role* of peer educator is then not attached to a person, but to a *position* that needs to be filled. Annually there should be selection of new candidates for the positions and regular training for new peer educators and updating of the existing peer educators. There should be advancement options for experienced peer educators and regular feedback on the successes of the programme to keep the peer educators motivated (Pentz, 2000).

While some consider peer education as an inexpensive programme strategy because it uses volunteers, the implementation costs of peer education can be high, due to the ongoing need for training, support and supervision of peer educators. The provision of a budget for the implementation of the programmes also becomes a necessity to assure the sustainability of the programme.

In planning and evaluating the implementation of peer education programmes the collaborative guidelines for effective implementation of peer education programmes developed as part of the Rutanang programme (Deutsch & Swartz, 2002) can be used as evaluation criteria. The following questions need to be answered:

- 1) Planning: Do you have a detailed plan of action based on actual needs, with clear, measurable goals?
- 2) Mobilising: Are there commitment, understanding and support from school leadership?
- 3) Supervisor infrastructure: Have supervisors been carefully selected and trained?
- 4) Linkages: Are partners and support structures included in the programme?
- 5) Training programme: Is the training programme effective?
- 6) Peer educator infrastructure: have peer educators been carefully selected and trained with carefully defined roles and performance standards.
- 7) Management: Is the project well managed?
- 8) Recognition: Are there recognition and reward for peer educators their mentors.
- 9) Monitoring and evaluation: Is there a realistic monitoring and evaluation plan that includes documentation and information management?
- 10) Sustainability: Is there a practical and operative sustainability plan dealing with the necessary resources?

Suggested process of implementation on school-level

Pre-implementation phase:

- 1) Selection of peer educators
- 2) Conduct focus groups with learners in selected schools to determine their needs and behaviour that need to be addressed. Get information on: what behaviours are common to the population, what barriers exist to their behaving responsibly, what myths are commonly held, what motivates them to take protective action.
- 3) Conduct workshops with members of SGB to determine expectations, what they think should be addressed, establish community values and norms that should be included in the programme.
- 4) Identify teachers in the school that can take responsibility for supporting the peer educators. Identify their skills and resources that can be used in the programme. Identify their training needs and prepare them for the task.
- 5) Do survey or baseline to determine level of high-risk behaviour.
- 6) Develop the programme content. Programmes based on a theoretical approach, setting clear goals, describe how activities or programme aspects will accomplish these goals, have a higher chance of success than generally focused programmes.

Implementation phase:

- 1) Training of peer educators
- 2) Training of teachers to support and supervise peer educators
- 3) Support the peer educators and teachers to mobilize resources and implement activities in schools
- 4) Support peer educators to build trusting relationships with their peers and deal with personal issues of learners.
- 5) Form a school-based committee representing all the stakeholders (especially learners) to support the implementation of the programme.
- 6) Improve consultation and communication between all stakeholders in the project, from educational authorities to community supportive teams and referral agencies. Establish a provincial/ district reference or working group appointed for the life of the programme in a target area to ensure that there is internal efficiency and effective rollout. Curriculum design, ownership, participation, monitoring and evaluation and improved delivery must be a collaborative effort. Regular dissemination meetings with stakeholders and project

partners will ensure that all gaps in communication are closed and that improvements in delivery are informed at all levels of implementation.

For the effective implementation of peer education, the programme should be formalised and incorporated into the School Development Plan and considered as part of the Life Orientation learning area or a school structure. This will provide the necessary support and resources for the programme to be effectively implemented. The DoE could consider allocating financial resources to peer education activities at participating schools where each school is given a small grant to implement its programme. The DoE should consider how peer education can be linked to accredited youth leadership programmes which may involve exchange visits between schools and participation at youth leadership forms. Incentives and a reward system should be part of any peer education programme in schools. Affirmation of their efforts and recognition by their peers is not enough to sustain them. Peer mentors also need recognition for the work they do. It can perhaps be linked to the CPD system for educators.

The formalisation of the peer education programme as part of the activities of the Department of Education, involves a strategic decision based on the theoretical evidence that the programme can potentially be effective and the scarce research evidence that good results are possible if the programme is implemented with the support of various stakeholders in and out of school structures (Reddy, James & McCauley, 2005; Visser, 2007). In an assessment of cost-effectiveness it need to be kept in mind that new peer educators need to be trained continuously as the existing ones leave the school system and that continuous support is needed. The real impact of peer education is also difficult to quantify since most changes in behaviour and personal growth is not measurable or quantifiable but live on in the hearts and life attitudes of young people.

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