

Evidence Based Public Health Practice

Teenage Pregnancy

Hampshire



Sex and Relationship Education Training Improve Young Peoples Sexual Health Outcomes

Introduction

Evidence from areas with the largest reductions has identified a range of factors that need to be in place to successfully reduce teenage pregnancy rates. These key factors include the availability and consistent take-up of training on sex and relationships education (SRE) for professionals in partner organisations who work with the most vulnerable young people, such as personal advisers, targeted youth support professionals, housing support workers, youth offending team workers, foster carers and social workers.

The Hampshire workforce training programme described here is commended as an example of this key factor of a successful approach to reducing teenage pregnancy.

Background

Since 2004, Hampshire has delivered a multi-agency Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) programme aimed at all practitioners working with young people. The core training team comprises practitioners from Local Authority Children's Services, Health and voluntary organisations, all of whom play an active role in the development and delivery of the SRE programme.

The model incorporates universal and targeted approaches which are under-pinned by agency SRE policies, shortly to be replaced by a Children's Trust SRE Policy. The training comprises:

- two universal modules, which cover the fundamentals of SRE – attitudes, values, the law, tools to use to help with 'delaying' sexual activity, contraception and sexual health, the creation of lesson plans and an action plan for future SRE work
- a range of specialist modules that include condom use and condom distribution, pregnancy testing, sexuality, working with young men and young fathers and a module to facilitate delivery in youth settings of a five-week programme called "*Girl Talk Boy Talk*" by practitioners.

Aims and Objectives

Aim:

To equip all practitioners working with young people, (including those in the voluntary sector) with the skills, knowledge and confidence to discuss relationships and sexual health and to signpost to services effectively.

Objectives:

- Implement a Workforce Training Strategy with clear elements of SRE multi-agency delivery.
- Develop an SRE policy to direct and guide agencies.
- Establish a core multi-agency team for training delivery.
- Ensure a choice of universal and specialist modules.
- Tailor programmes to be locally responsive in their delivery.

Appropriateness

Hampshire developed an SRE training strategy for their workforce, which details:

- training opportunities available
- recommended pathways for training
- links to national and local delivery priorities
- links with the SRE policy
- why every adult working with a young person should attend training.

To ensure appropriateness, the courses are delivered by local practitioners with local knowledge of the area and the services that are available there. This helps to ensure that learners are well aware of the support mechanisms within their geographical area of work, as well as being aware of the right people to contact in a variety of situations in relation to SRE. It also helps to build positive working relationships and encourages partnership working. The universal modules ('Universal 1 and 2') are always delivered at a local level, to ensure that the information being delivered is both relevant and up to date. Learners are encouraged to attend training in their local areas to facilitate networking with other agencies in their work areas. They support each other in their delivery of SRE, as well as learn and share good local practice examples of SRE work.

Accessibility and Acceptability

In order to increase accessibility, training is delivered in a variety of settings that include children's centres, church halls, agency training venues and community halls. All venues are easy to access and have parking, either on-site or very nearby.

The standard format of universal training is one full day for each of the two levels (9.30-4.30pm). To improve accessibility and engage the whole workforce, targeted evening courses are also being provided. Due to their success, Hampshire is also in the process of developing a new offer of weekend training opportunities and following learner feedback,

courses are now being organised during school holidays, enabling more school staff to attend.

The Universal 1 and 2 courses are held in each of the four local training areas at least twice a year, with extra courses supplied to meet demand. The specialist modules are offered in one central location on at least one occasion per year with additional specialist modules delivered as appropriate if required.

The training calendar is planned, usually in the winter of the preceding year. This helps to ensure that dates can reach learners in a timely manner, and ensures that dates are secured in the diaries of all partnership trainers. The main barrier to offering a comprehensive training programme is the diary commitments of partners, so it is essential to plan ahead as far as possible.

All of the SRE courses offer a variety of learning styles. On the booking form, learners are asked if they have any additional learning needs and changes are made to suit those needs, should they arise.

Learning Styles

The courses include opportunities to do individual work, pair work, small and large group work, debate, creative work such as storytelling, as well as the opportunity to practise activities and tools that can be used with young people.

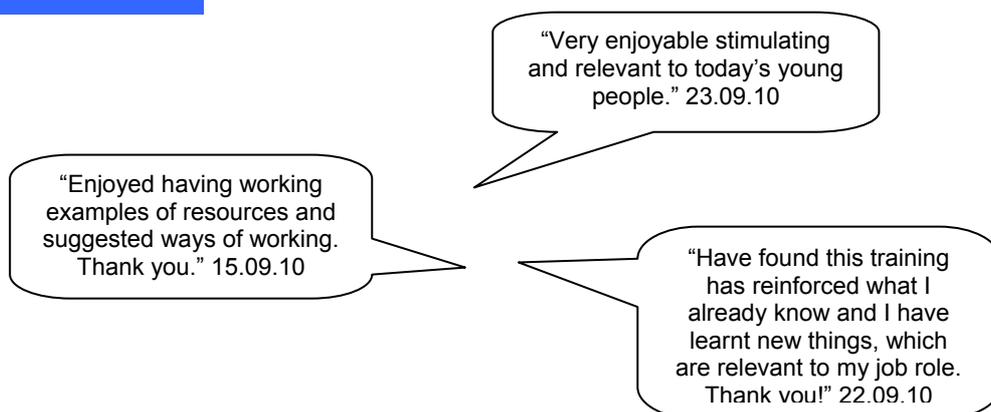
Equality and diversity is important, so language is used that is appropriate to the learning, and provides an inclusive feel. Learners often comment on how comfortable they feel in sessions, some comments are listed below.

Publicity

The courses are publicised through the well-known and popular key rings in the shape of sperm that promote www.getiton.nhs.uk - the 'one-stop shop' site for support on sexual health in Hampshire. This site is kept up to date through partnership working.

A variety of campaign materials are made available and on offer through the courses and can also be ordered free of charge. The courses also demonstrate other local resources that are useful when working to deliver SRE with young people.

Service User Feedback



Partnership Working

Without the commitment and dedication of the partners in the programme, it would not be possible to run the training so successfully. Partners come from a variety of statutory and voluntary organisations that include:

- Health
- Youth services
- Pregnancy Counselling services
- Healthy Schools practitioners
- Contraception and Sexual Health services

Close working with commissioners and provider managers is essential. Key to the success is having commissioners who hold SRE training as a top priority. They ensure that the Sex and Relationships Education training programme is written into service delivery plans of the training teams. This helps to ensure continuation of the programme, as well as ensuring that the 'right' professionals are delivering the specialist segments of the courses. Managers of provider services are also very important in driving this work forward.

Funding

£10,000 has been allocated to the training programme per annum for all training materials, venues and resources. However for the past 2 years (largely due to the free venues offered by partners and the removal of offer of free lunches) only 60% of this funding has been needed. The majority of multi agency trainers deliver training at no cost as it is recognised as part of their core work, with only minimal costs coming from some services that require backfill for the time practitioners are delivering training.

The SRE training coordination and course administration now sit within the wider Children's Workforce Development team's responsibilities.

Effectiveness, Efficiency and Equity

Effectiveness

Since 2004, 1,917 practitioners have been trained in SRE.

In the first half of 2010, over 200 practitioners were trained, with numbers growing each year, there is a high demand for courses, and at times the need for extra courses.

Evaluation is taken very seriously and undertaken in a variety of ways. The training team meet regularly to discuss successes and areas for improvement within the training programme. Listening to learners is a key focus, and takes into account the variety of learning styles that are present within a group of individuals. Trainers constantly assess and evaluate learners, whilst teaching the courses (formative), which enables fast adjustments to teaching styles and content of courses depending on learners needs, throughout the course itself.

Every learner fills out a post-course questionnaire, which amongst other things enables us to see how line managers were involved in the pre-course process. At about 6-8 weeks post-course learners are contacted via an online questionnaire to find out how they have integrated the learning into their work, and whether they have made any changes in their work as a result of attending the courses. They are also asked how learning has been supported by management.

Outcomes for young people

Practitioners who have undertaken this training often support schools and other education settings in their approach and delivery of SRE, however teachers and other school staff also attend full training wherever possible. As a result of this, staff are better equipped to cope with SRE issues that may arise with the young people with whom they work, as well as better skilled to signpost to services that can offer more specialist support.

Equity

Training courses are targeted in areas with high teenage pregnancy rates to ensure staff working in these areas, have the greatest levels of support and encouragement.

The areas with the highest rates have also been using the national SRE “*Are you getting it right?*” evaluation toolkit with young people, which enables professionals working in that locality to know what their young people feel about SRE delivery in their schools.

Efficiency

The multi-agency approach to training reduces costs in the following ways:

- free, easily accessible venues to deliver training
- reductions in practitioner travel times and petrol costs to venues
- centrally co-ordinated administration rather than each agency bearing their own costs separately
- electronic packs for participants to help reduce printing costs
- “E-certificates” are being piloted, in a bid to save money.

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Effective Commissioning and Delivery of SRE Training

1. SRE must be an essential part of workforce business.
2. Have a robust SRE policy that requires training of staff in SRE is available and should be utilised.
3. Create a training pathway that is supported by the wider Children’s Workforce Development team.
4. Ensure the training content meets the needs of the learners and the goals of the SRE policy and workforce training strategies.
5. Test out the training, the outcomes and ensure ongoing needs analysis to inform delivery.

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