

Youth Drug and Alcohol Best Practice Models

By
Andrea Elliott-Hohepa
Jodie Robertson

Research & Development Unit & Whai Marama/Youth Connex
Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa Trust Inc

July 2004

Introduction

Whai Marama – Youth Connex, requested this booklet to assist with informing current best practice. The original concept for the project was to conduct a literature review of Best Practice models for Youth Drug and Alcohol Treatment. However, after initial discussions it was decided that a booklet, which presented these best practice models, would be helpful to the Drug and Alcohol sector.

Therefore this booklet aims to provide a snapshot collection of ‘best practice’ models in the field of Youth Drug and Alcohol. The models included in this resource range from prevention, education, treatment, and assessment. Other models included in the booklet offer a worldview from which to view drug and alcohol issues, with an alternative process to providing intervention.

Many of the models in this booklet will be known to practitioners in the drug and alcohol field, through their experiences in practice. However, this booklet is a reference guide on current practice models. Within the booklet, sources are provided to gain further information on the models presented.

The information in the booklet has been arranged into a particular order. The order illustrates ‘the big picture’ by starting with the National overview of the drug and alcohol sector. Following this, various worldviews are provided from which to view drug and alcohol issues. General theories and models that apply to the sector are then displayed followed by more specific treatment interventions. This order was chosen to illustrate a flow from ‘big picture’ through to more specific drug and alcohol information.

The information presented in the booklet is intended for a New Zealand context. Many of the models presented have been developed within New Zealand. While some of the models have been developed internationally, they are currently being used within New Zealand and therefore are presented in the booklet also. The majority of the information in the booklet has derived from the ALAC resource, *Alcohol, other drugs and young people: A training resource for youth worker educator*. (2002). The ALAC resource was used extensively as it outlines current best practice models in the drug and alcohol sector. Therefore, this booklet provides an easy reference, quick access guide that builds on the ALAC resource.

Context

Young people are an exciting, dynamic group of people to work with. Their enthusiasm for living and their ability to adapt to change is remarkable. However, to maintain their enthusiasm a young person needs to remain healthy. All too often we see young people consuming substances and in some cases this leads to harm or dependency.

Due to the unique composition of our young people, inventive measures are required to assist with the ongoing support, care and treatment of our young people. This booklet aims to provide an overview or a snapshot of the current measures that are in place for working with youth drug and alcohol issues. This booklet does not aim to provide any solutions to any problems. It aims only to provide information, quick access, and relevant sources (to guide development) in the drug and alcohol field.

While the booklet aims to outline best practice models in the field of youth drug and alcohol, it is also important to keep pushing the boundaries of best practice. Often we become complacent with the models we have learnt and tested. In acknowledging the need to push boundaries it is also important not to forget those traditional practices of which have endured throughout time.

In order to move forward we need to address drug and alcohol issues holistically, remembering to address the individual, the whanau, physical health, mental health, spiritual health, the environment, and culture. We need to keep addressing service effectiveness, our own practice, and working collaboratively. Most of all we need to remember what it was like to be young, in order to better support youth. For more information regarding this booklet please contact one of the following:

Research and Development Unit
Te Runanga O Kirikiriroa
Ph: (07) 846 1042
Email: marsha@terunanga.org.nz
Email: andrea@terunanga.org.nz

Whai Marama – Youth Connex
236a Anglesea Street, Hamilton
Ph: (07) 838 2558
Email: info@whaimarama.co.nz
Web: www.youthconnex.co.nz