

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

**Life Skills Training Guide for  
Young People:  
HIV/AIDS and  
Substance Use Prevention**



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This publication has been prepared by the Health and Development Section, Emerging Social Issues Division, ESCAP secretariat. It has been issued without formal editing.

## PREFACE

ESCAP developed this training guide to support the efforts of government and civil society institutions and youth work personnel that are engaged in training young people on development issues. Its purpose is to provide them with training material for guiding young people to be peer educators on two interrelated and critical health issues that young people face in the ESCAP region, namely, HIV/AIDS and substance use.

In this edition, the training guide is composed of 11 modules, with an annex on training needs assessment.

*Module 0* provides basic inputs on what training is, what it means to be a good trainer, learning theory and how to begin a training programme. It includes games designed to integrate participants into a group.

*Module 1* deals with the basics of peer education, including the application of peer education and its relevance for young people in the context of HIV/AIDS. There are indicators on the skills that are central to the development of a peer educator and skills for undertaking peer education.

*Module 2*, on communication, is particularly useful for peer educators who deal with sensitive subjects, such as substance use, HIV/AIDS and sexual behaviour. *Module 2*, therefore, provides a critical training component on modes of communication, types of communication, effective communication, listening, seeing, observing and key messages for the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

*Module 3* is designed to help the facilitator communicate an understanding of the basics of adolescence, including cognitive and emotional change, physical change and nutritional needs. The focus is on developing an understanding of adolescence from a holistic perspective.

*Modules 4 and 5* are intended to provide the facilitator with techniques and methods related to the core issues of teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. It includes a section on frequently asked questions.

*Module 6* relates to drugs and substance use in the context of youth and HIV/AIDS. There is a section on critical reflection. Included here are several technical terms that are explained in the context of the training guide.

Overall life skills are dealt with in *Module 7*. Learning and practising core life skills are the focus of *Module 8*. Both modules, taken together, would enable the facilitator to help young people avoid risk behaviour and protect

themselves better from HIV/AIDS. *Module 8* introduces a range of important life skills topics, such as gender, decision making, goal setting and differentiating between “wants” and “needs.”

*Module 9* is designed to help facilitators train peer educators on how to care for and support people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs).

Finally, in *Module 10* on action planning, participants learn to develop basic planning skills.

Each module is designed to stand alone.

Preparation of the training guide considered the need to equip facilitators with methods and techniques, as well as information on relevant conceptual issues. The guiding pedagogy is participatory. Participatory tools have been drawn from literature on participatory learning and action. Pictures, games, exercises, lectures, case studies, general reading and diagrams have been included. Inherent in the design is flexibility for innovation and adaptation to suit local contexts.

If facilitators feel that a target group needs inputs covered in all the modules, they may choose to include all of the modules in a training programme. In certain cases, especially in refresher courses, for which specific topics need to be more thoroughly covered, facilitators may use only specific modules. Facilitators of a variety of training programmes directed at young people are also encouraged to consider the possibility of integrating into their respective training, with suitable adaptation as may be required, material from this training guide.

Direct users of the guide are encouraged to approach local health and development experts, should they need further support on technical issues, especially regarding locally relevant data and information to facilitate adaptation of material in the guide for training in a local context.

It is hoped that the more this training guide is used, the more feedback can be shared with ESCAP. This will enable ESCAP to further enhance the relevance of the guide for larger numbers of users in the ESCAP region so that more effective approaches become widely available on strengthening young people’s competencies in dealing with the problems and high-risk situations that they face in everyday life, especially related to the spread of HIV/AIDS and substance use.

As with this edition, the revised one will also be uploaded on to the ESCAP website for health and development issues <http://www.unescap-healthdev.org>. This is to facilitate its e-access by youth workers and trainers, and programme personnel concerned with training young people. It is also available in the

public domain for easy access by intermediary agencies and organizations that are in a position to support the translation of the training guide into national and local languages and its adaptation and use in the countries and areas of the Asian and Pacific region.

The next revision will be undertaken in March-April 2004. For this purpose, feedback and comments are welcome and may be forwarded to the following:

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ESCAP will issue a limited number of hard copies of the next (revised) edition of the training guide for dissemination to institutions in the Asian and Pacific region concerned with training young people on youth work, leadership and on related development issues.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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In the preparation of the training guide, ESCAP drew from experiences in the implementation of the project. The secretariat is appreciative of insights gained from interactions with its project partners, the national counterpart organizations, in the above-mentioned countries.

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Mr Amitava Mukherjee, currently Chief Technical Advisor, Private-Public Sector Partnership, ESCAP, initiated the preparation of the guide, including its design, when he was with the Health and Development Section (HDS), Emerging Social Issues Division (ESID), ESCAP. Mr Mukherjee co-authored the original manuscript with Ms Sheeba Chowdhry, HDS consultant, who benefited from his overall technical guidance for the assignment. Dr Arun Mallick reviewed the content pertaining to reproductive and sexual health for factual accuracy and comprehensiveness when he was with HDS and prior to his current assignment with UNESCO on school health.

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