

Bridge



Department of Health

This Newsletter aims to promote communication between schools and the Student Health Service of the Department of Health

April 2010 Issue No. 46

Published by the Student Health Service, Department of Health

Editorial

The Student Health Service launched the “Junior Health Pioneer” Workshop in October 2007. The aim of the Workshop is to help our primary three students gain a better understanding about smoking, drinking and drug abuse, which are not trendy entertainment or something that make one bright. On the contrary, they cause addiction and harmful effects on health. Moreover, we also hope that students could learn the refusal skills and apply them in case they are lured. Starting from the planning process, the working group has devoted every effort in designing the content of the Workshop, taking into consideration our facilities and other resources in our centres. The special feature about the Workshop is its interactive element, which makes it more interesting and enhances students’ participation. We also specially designed souvenirs along the same theme to reward participating students. Everybody is very excited to receive these souvenirs.

We wish that our students could raise their health consciousness, stay away from smoking, drinking and drug abuse and have a healthy growth. Throughout the 2 years since we launched the Workshop, student’s active participation and parents’ and teachers’ satisfaction are very encouraging. In this issue of Bridge, we would like to share with you our experience and feeling about the “Junior Health Pioneer” Workshop. More information on anti-drug message could also be obtained from our website http://www.studenthealth.gov.hk/english/health/health_sdsa/health_sdsa_usa.html

From the Editor

Editorial Board Members: Dr. TONG Nga-wing, Ms. CHIU Wai-fong, Alice,
Ms. CHOI Choi-fung, Ms. FAN Sau-mun, Ms. CHAN Kin-pui
Tel : 2349 4212 / 2349 2772 Fax : 2348 3968
Website : <http://www.studenthealth.gov.hk>



Nursing Administration Section
Student Health Service

Introduction

"Children are just ignorant" is what we usually think about children. When we found that children did take drugs, we know that children are not "ignorant" at all. The Narcotics Bureau's "2008-09 Survey of Drug Use among Students" showed that 1.6% of primary 4 to 6 students, around 3,000 students, had ever taken drugs. This survey also revealed an increasing prevalence of youth drug abuse. People from all walks of life have high concern for the problem and make efforts to fight against it. The Student Health Service also regularly holds "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshops to promote anti-drug messages to students.

Aim and Meaning

The "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop has started since 2007. According to the Narcotics Bureau's information in 2006/2007, the number of adolescents under the age of 21 who took drugs had increased for 3 years. The Action Committee Against Narcotics called for collaborative efforts to combat the problem. The Student Health Service, in response, strengthened its health education and produced the "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop. We believed that a healthy lifestyle is ultimately important for health. Children should, starting from their young, be nurtured the consciousness towards health, in particular, the correct attitude about smoking, drinking and drug abuse. The purpose of the "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop is to deepen students' knowledge in adverse effects of smoking, drinking and drug abuse, thus preventing such habits; and to dispel wrong concepts about drug abuse (such as not addictive, feeling smart). It is also important to get them empowered to apply their refusal skills in case they are lured or trapped.

The "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop has started since 2007. According to the Narcotics Bureau's information in 2006/2007, the number of adolescents under the age of 21 who took drugs had increased for 3 years. The Action Committee Against Narcotics called for collaborative efforts to combat the problem. The Student Health Service, in response, strengthened its health



Here is the "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop, so wonderful!

Content and Delivery

The “Junior Health Pioneer” Workshops are conducted in the 12 Student Health Service Centres, targeting at primary three students, whose parents and teachers are also welcomed. The workshops are delivered in an interactive mode. Apart from brief talks, we add in various activities. Concerning the knowledge on adverse effects of smoking, drinking and drugs, learning is facilitated by a paper card game and a quiz game. Plastic folders with refusals skills printed on them would impress our students further. Students would try out the drunk buster impairment goggles, which simulates what one sees after drinking alcohol. Everyone then realizes why drunk driving is so dangerous. Through role play, students would practice how to apply the refusals skills: 1) directly say “NO”; 2) say “let me ask my parents”; 3) say “let me ask my doctor for advice first”; 4) say “don’t try it, this stuff will make us sick”. The climax comes when students sign their names to show their determination in refusing the temptation to smoke, drink and abuse drugs. Many students actually put down a signature for the first time in their life and this new experience means a lot to them. At the end, a Rap song gives an encouraging close to the Workshop, signifying a breakthrough in students’ growth, knowing that temptations are around, and at the same time, learning how they could face them bravely.



Hey! Our parents would also like to know what I learn from the workshop.



Nurse, let me answer, liquor shop could only sell alcohol to persons of 18 years old or above.



Woo! If my vision is so hazy like this, it’s really dangerous to drive!

Challenge and Reward

We meet much challenge during implementation of the "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop. Parents worry that children of primary three are just too young to learn anything about such a serious topic and children may not be able to comprehend the relatively difficult concepts. Our point is that nowadays, students of primary three at the age of about 9 years old are growing more mature and would face various temptations. In fact, youth taking drugs might have their first attempt at an age as young as 10 years old. As shown in the recent "2008-09 Survey of Drug Use among Students", drug taking did happen in primary school students and the youngest was only 8 years old. The most common reasons for drug taking in primary school students are curiosity, boredom/ escape from unhappiness and peer influence. Therefore, we consider that it is appropriate to have "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshops targeted at primary three students. Children have very high learning capacity and are exposed to various types of information everyday. Would the "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop impart a positive influence? It would depend on whether we could deliver the right and meaningful message appropriate to their stage of development.

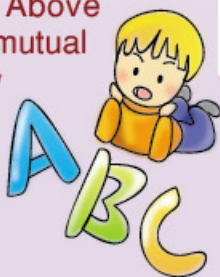


As health workers for children's growth and development, we are much delighted by students' enthusiastic participation in the Workshops. In the game that help students identify the harmful effects of drugs, students on the stage tried their best to act as if they were adversely affected by drugs, such as abdominal discomfort, heart attack and tremor. Students on the floor also made guesses eagerly. There was really lots of fun there. During role play, students demonstrated how they refused the temptation from the "evil". Although some of them were a bit quiet, but finally, said "NO" bravely and received hurray from fellow-students. We are sure that students not only enjoy playing in the Workshop, but also learn through participation, which is very important.

During conduction of the workshop, we have to maintain students' order, keep their attention, arrange activity rooms and control the time etc. Sometimes we have to handle situations when students become talkative and probably disturbing to others. In addition to professional knowledge, we have to get ourselves ready to manage various changes and unexpected situations. Nevertheless, we are devoted to making good use of resources and achieving the greatest benefits for our students. To conclude our experience in these two years, we ourselves actually get enriched in knowledge and skills through the opportunities to exchange ideas and learn from each other. Above all, we experienced the mutual support among fellow colleagues and the precious team spirit we build into our work.



I won't give in to your temptation, my answer is "NO"



Achievements and Conclusion

Many parents welcomed the “Junior Health Pioneer” Workshop very much. Although some parents initially queried about the usefulness of such Workshop, they changed their view and responded favorably afterwards. Parents’ smiles and affirmation are really rewarding to us.



See, we have learning, playing and attractive souvenirs.

In the 2008/09 school year, we conducted around 2,000 “Junior Health Pioneer” Workshops and around 48,000 students participated. “Children are just ignorant”, is it so? According to the results of our

evaluation questionnaire, students were not bad in their knowledge level. Around 95% of them learnt that “the symptoms of drug addiction is not very noticeable and many drug abusers do not know that they are addicted or harmed”, “drunk driving would affect clear vision and judgment”, “smoking could lead to lung cancer, stroke and heart diseases”. Our students, although young, are

“junior pioneers” in health. Of course, we expect our students could cultivate healthy lifestyle and positive value system. Such

long term effects are to be proven and witnessed by all of us. In the near future, we shall review and update the contents and the presentation style, so that the workshop suit students’ needs better. Second best is not good enough, we shall keep it improving.




Reference:

Narcotics Division, Security Bureau <http://www.nd.gov.hk/en/index.htm>

Answer: D
Change topic, directly say “NO” and run away are the ways to refuse smoking. Your friends should respect your decision.


The Student Health Service conducts the "Junior Health Pioneer" Workshop for primary three students. In addition to giving out knowledge, various interactive activities have been designed to facilitate learning. In this one-hour workshop, students participate actively, making the Workshop full of fun. Student not only join the activities happily, but also learn the harmful effects of smoking, drinking and drug abuse and the refusal skills that help to resist temptation. Here is some of the sharing or response from our students. Let's see what they learn and think. Join us, stand firm and refuse smoking, drinking and drug abuse.




I learn that I should not take drugs, smoke or drink. I shall also advise my brother to refuse them.




Taking drugs destroys our future.




I learn why we should not take drugs, which is such a silly thing to do.




If someone asks me to smoke, drink or take drugs, I would refuse.



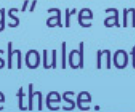
I should treasure my health.




I learn that "K", "E" and "Ice" are all dangerous drugs. They are bad for our health.




Health is very important. Please don't take drugs.



I learnt what "dangerous drugs" are and we should not take these.



I learn how to refuse forming those bad habits. Healthy living and no addiction, I can do it.



Love myself. I can do it.

Friends are our support, but friends can also have their influence on us. It is not always easy for us to reject our friends' request and say "NO". We need to consider the consequences and make a balance between the advantages and disadvantages before we make a decision to accept or reject. Below we share with you a letter to encourage each other.



Dear Yee-ching,

From your letter, I know that you are a health-conscious person and value your friends very much. Sometimes, it is difficult to refuse our friends and I understand your feelings and worries. You rejected the temptation of smoking. This was a right decision. It is very important that friends care for and communicate with each other. You may take the initiative to contact your friend and share with her how you are getting on. If you get a chance, try to understand her reasons of smoking as she may be influenced by someone else. If she is willing to talk further, you may advise her to quit. If her smoking is not yet an established habit, the chance of success in quitting is higher. I suggest you browse the following website to get more information about quit smoking: http://www.tco.gov.hk/tc_chi/quitting/quitting_sch.html.

I believe your friend will appreciate your thought about her and your concern for her health.

By the way, you are now attending a new school where you will have new friends. You may establish friendship with them and broaden your social life.

Good health to you

Health Box

Dear Newsletter,

Hello, I am a Form One student. I have a good friend and we studied in the same class from primary 2 to primary 6. We both liked painting, so we became good friends and talked about everything. However, since this year, we are studying in different secondary schools and we seem distant. Recently, when we went out, she smoked at the back staircase of a shopping mall and asked me to try. Of course I refused. She became very angry, after that, she did not call me anymore.

I worry about losing such a good friend, what can I do? I feel troubled, please reply.

Yee-ching



Interesting knowledge Q&A

Question:
If your friend ask,
"Hi, Do you want
a cigarette?"
What would you
say?

A) "Have you watched
the World Cup? Guess
which is the winning
team this year? I
guess... Brazil..."

B) "Someone as smart
as you should know
that smoking is
so expensive and
unhealthy, do you have
other suggestions?"

"C) "Hei, my friends don't
like smoking."

D) All of the above

(Answer: find it out from the
newsletter)

Health Tips

More than half of the cigarettes
sold in the market are "low tar".
Tobacco merchants often use
"light", "mild" and "low tar" as
their selling point. However,
according to World Health
Organization, all tobacco products
are fatal, regardless of any form
and taste.

For enquiries of student's health problem,
please write to "Health Box".

Please write
your name
& address,
contact tel. no.
in the letter.

Health Box
4/F, Lam Tin Polyclinic,
99 Kai Tin Road,
Kwun Tong,
Kowloon