

CONTROL CONDITION

Issuing the Alcohol Information Leaflet

Introduce the control condition:

'Thank you for coming to see me. You may remember answering some questions about alcohol in class recently. The answers you gave suggested that you may be drinking alcohol in a way which may be harmful to you. Whatever we talk about will stay between you and me unless you tell me something that may place you or someone else at serious risk of harm. Here is a leaflet explaining what taking part in the project will mean. Let's read it together and I will answer any questions. If you are happy to take part, we will read, sign and date a form together, which you can have a copy of to keep'

All young people need to be provided with this leaflet (see below).

It is important that, when providing the alcohol advice leaflet, you do not provide advice or education to the young person beyond what is delivered as part of the school curriculum. Remember, we will be comparing different ways of providing young people with advice about alcohol against those who are only receiving the alcohol advice leaflet.

Providing the alcohol information leaflet needs to be a very short interaction, such as the following:

'Thank you for taking part in the project. These leaflets will provide you with some advice about alcohol and risks. Please take time to read the leaflet. We are also giving you some contact details if you would like any further help or advice'.

At the end of the appointment, young people should be informed that (i) their class will be asked to fill in a similar questionnaire in 6 and 12 months time; (ii) they will be asked to attend a session with a learning mentor in 12 months time to fill out an additional questionnaire, which should take no longer than 20 minutes; and (iii) they may be invited to take part in an interview with a member of the research team exploring their views on the research project.

No further information needs to be discussed and the young person should be thanked again and the session completed.

INTERVENTION

1

Principles of Brief Intervention

Express Empathy

- An important part of brief intervention is that it is provided in a non-judgemental manner. You need to appear understanding of the participants. This allows the participant to feel comfortable to explore ideas and beliefs towards their drinking and behaviour change.
- Part of this is avoiding 'labelling language' such as good, bad, alcohol dependant.

Build a strong rapport

- Effective ways of building a rapport with your participant are through empathy, supportive listening and open body language. Remember your body language can give away a lot; keep it calm and open and relaxed.
- Ensure the room and environment (privacy, presentation, etc.) promotes engagement.
- Good rapport is essential to understanding and constructive discussion. A positive relationship can be the biggest indicator of a successful outcome.
- Understand that both you and the participant will have preconceptions/ expectations about this process. This can work against you if they see you as an authority figure... but it could also be used to your benefit because of your skills and position in the school, your opinion is more likely to be valued.

Respect is essential

- A participant's own belief and confidence that they can change is an important motivator to success. You need to be supportive of the participant's ability to change.
- Respect that a participant's decision not to change is normal and that they are an expert in their own life.

If you push you will get resistance

- This process aims to be non-threatening and non-confrontational – we are not telling the participant they should change or they have to change we are giving them information so they can make better decisions.
- Don't challenge resistance or try and direct the participant in a particular direction. Use non-confrontational language to motivate them.
- Studies have shown that the more confrontational a practitioner is the less positive the outcomes of the session. By being confrontational you are causing the participant to voice and further identify with their justifications for their current behaviour.

Actively encourage the person to voice the benefits of behaviour change

- Giving the participant opportunities to make behaviour change statements and reinforcing these through summarising and reflective listening is a crucial aspect of the Brief Intervention process.

People must decide for themselves to change

- It is most beneficial to assist the participant to come to a decision to make a change using the above methods. Decisions to change through coercion or advice are not as successful as decisions that come directly from the participant.

You or the intervention has not failed if the participant does not agree to change

- Raising doubt in a person is a positive outcome: they may go away and make a decision on their own.

INTERVENTION 1

Delivering the Brief Intervention and Providing the Alcohol Advice Leaflet

Delivering the Brief Intervention and the Alcohol Information Leaflet will take up to 30 minutes. **The start and end time of the session should be recorded in the box provided on the intervention tool.** The aim of the session is to give young people an opportunity to consider their drinking, and recognise their own motivations for reducing their alcohol consumption and the associated risks.

The session will be structured around a 6-step tool (overleaf). This A3-sized, interactive document is designed to promote a conversation between yourself and the young person about alcohol.

Introduce the 30-minute Brief Intervention:

'Thank you for coming to see me. You may remember answering some questions about alcohol in class recently. The answers you gave suggested that you may be drinking alcohol in a way which may be harmful to you. The aim of us talking today is to give you the chance to think about your drinking. Whatever we talk about will stay between you and me unless you tell me something that may place you or someone else at serious risk of harm. Here is a leaflet explaining what taking part in the project will mean. Let's read it together and I will answer any questions. If you are happy to take part, we will read, sign and date a form together, which you can have a copy of to keep'

Show the young person the Brief Intervention sheet and explain that you'll go through it with them. Young people should be encouraged to write their own answers to the questions onto the A3 sheet but its okay for you to as well.