

Guidelines for Programme Design for Programmes with Youth at Risk

General Principles

1. Start from the young people that are referred to you, and develop a careful and detailed understanding of the risk and protective factors that relate to them. Focus on the individual in his/her social ecology. This means understanding risk and protective factors at the individual, family, school and community level.
 2. Involve only those organisations and departments that are necessary for the achievement of programme objectives.
 3. Information is central to the process. This includes: (1) information about the young people who are the programme beneficiaries (risk and protective factors, in the ecological perspective), (2) information about other successful programmes relating to these risk factors, (3) information about the best methods to utilise, etc.
 4. Apply the 6 'best practice' design principles.
 5. The programme needs to be planned systematically using a project planning and evaluation matrix (refer to the Intervention Integrity principle).
 6. All programme activities (e.g. group work, individual work, etc.) need to be planned carefully and aimed at achieving the desired outcomes.
 7. The programme facilitators need to be appropriately skilled to undertake the programme (refer to the Responsivity principle)
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Guidelines for Programme Design and Planning

Step 1: Understand the programme beneficiaries

- Gather information relating to the risk and protective factors, using the ecological perspective
- Utilise information from assessments
- Apply the risk and need principles

Step 2: Do research into programme content

- Develop an understanding of how the risk factors that relate to your target group have been addressed by other successful intervention programmes. Examine evidence-based interventions for information about what approaches have worked.

Step 3: Bring together relevant parties

- Based on step 2, decide on what range of skills will be needed to design and implement the intervention
- Invite relevant service-providers (government and civil society) to work with you

Step 4: Design programme content using project planning matrix

- Ensure that all those who will be responsible for the design of the programme understand and agree to all the design principles
- Based on step 1, establish a goal for the programme (e.g. to reduce aggressive behaviour amongst the programme beneficiaries)
- Based on step 2, decide on the central elements of the programme – remember the design principle relating to multi-modal interventions. These should be stated as the key objectives of the project in the matrix
- Define the central activities that must be undertaken in order to achieve each of the objectives
- Define the results of these activities in terms of outputs and outcomes
- Define indicators for each output and outcome
- Develop monitoring tools
- Establish baseline information
- Design specific content for each activity e.g. group work, etc. Utilise experiential learning cycle for all work in groups.

Step 5: Gather Resources for Programme Implementation

- Define what resources will be needed to implement the programme. Consider: (1) human resource requirements in terms of the skills needed to implement the programme, (2) consider what material resources will be needed (workshop materials, catering, etc.), (3) resources for monitoring and evaluation, etc.

Step 6: Implement the Intervention

- Implement the intervention in a structured process, guided by the project planning and evaluation matrix

Step 7: Monitor Progress and Evaluate Impact

- Apply the monitoring tools as planned
- Utilise monitoring data for the purposes of undertaking the evaluation