



Drug and Alcohol Resources Regional Development Project

Curriculum Resources Training Pilot Report

December 2021



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the following report is to evaluate the feedback from youth workers and young people to determine the relevance of the pilot programme and highlight any areas for improvement and learning, while also establishing what was positive and worked well. The pilot programme consisted of three sessions with youth workers consisting of; an information session and two practical sessions where we provided them with all the material needed for delivering the five sessions to young people on drug and alcohol prevention. The five sessions were on Media, Health and Wellbeing, Dealing with Difficult Emotions, Risk Taking Behaviour and Communication.

It was found from the report that both the youth workers and young people's knowledge increased from the pilot delivery and also the delivery of the five sessions. The report highlighted a considerable positive reaction to the programme due to the fact that it was a new approach to drug and alcohol prevention. In spite of this, there is now an understanding that there is a need for more qualitative feedback from young people due to the lack of this to inform the feedback and a need to deliver to 9-13 year olds to gain a better understanding of whether the programme and resources are suited to this age group. It has also been brought to light through the feedback that there are elements of the information session which will need adapted to be more succinct as youth workers commented that it had felt 'heavy', while they also stated the need to add harm reduction, coping mechanisms, parental involvement in prevention and further drug awareness into the sessions.

In conclusion, the pilot programme was positively received with all participants (youth workers and young people) increasing their knowledge within the areas delivered to them in a manner which has been innovative in relation to drug and alcohol prevention.

Nonetheless, as a pilot programme there have been areas which have been established for improvement in relation to both the practitioners learning and education and also in the development of the programme.

EA Curriculum Resources Pilot Training Feedback

Once the curriculum was completed, there were 3 training sessions held with the Youth Workers consisting of; an information session and two practical sessions where we presented the youth workers with the different tools and activities for each of the five sessions on Media, Health and Wellbeing, Risk Taking and Decision Making, Communication and Dealing with Difficult Emotions.

Outlined below is both the aim and objectives set out for the pilot programme;

Aim

To present a drug and alcohol prevention pilot programme to youth organisations so as to increase their knowledge and skills for delivery to young people to gain an understanding of the relevance and value of the content and resources associated with the programme.

Objectives

1. Deliver the pilot programme to a minimum of 10 EA Local Registered Voluntary Youth Organisations.
2. Engage the Youth Organisations to deliver the pilot sessions to their Youth Organisations.
3. Acquire feedback from both the Youth Workers and Young People to structure an evaluation report and formulate recommendations.

There was a total of 18 youth workers who participated in the information session from 13 organisations, the two practical sessions had 12 and 10 participants from 15 and 13 organisations. The following organisations attended all sessions; Pennyburn Youth Club, 21 Training, Portadown YMCA, 10TH Bangor Boys Brigade, TWN, Craigavon Youth for Christ, Hillcrest Trust, Newry Street Unite, Youth Initiatives, Star Neighbourhood Centre, St Oliver Plunkett Youth Club. Both Ballybeen Peer Education Project and Holy Trinity Youth Centre attended the information session but did not attend the two practical sessions.

Feedback was provided by 13 individuals for the information sessions while 11 completed feedback for the practical components. Following this there was 4 sessions delivered by youth workers after completing the training, with a total of 24 teenagers taking part in the sessions. The delivery of sessions were completed by Star Neighbourhood Centre.

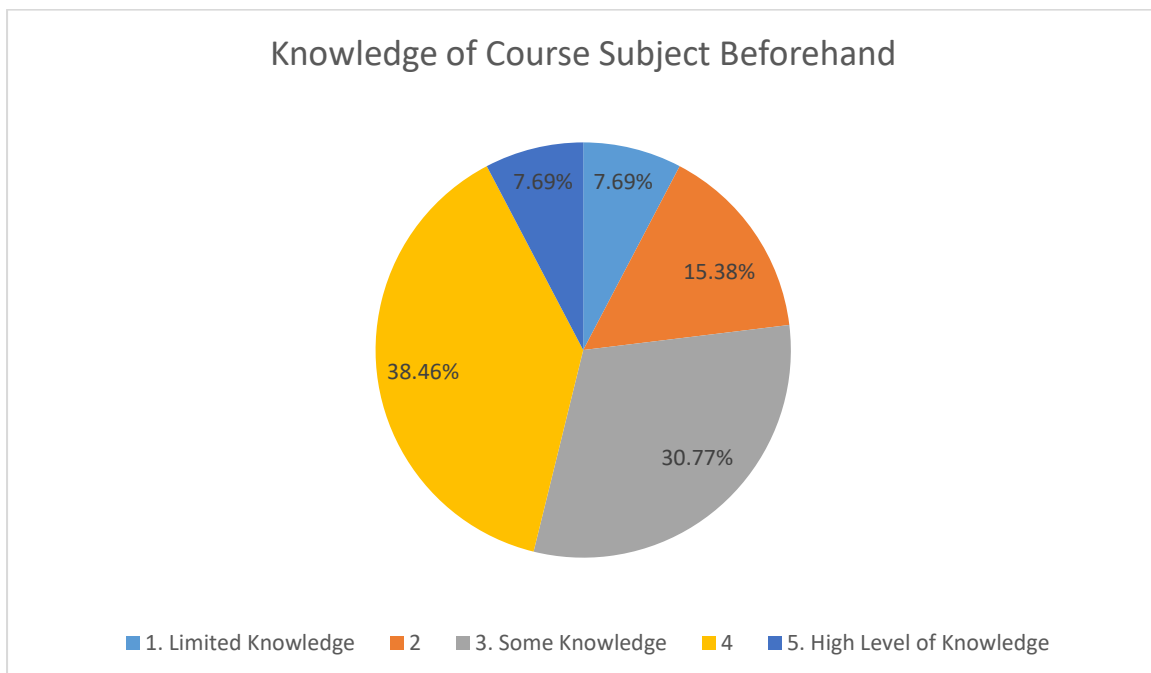
Each of the organisations were asked to deliver as many of the five sessions to their youth groups within a four week period. It was crucial to the project that the organisations delivered these sessions to their groups to understand how it would work with teenagers. To get the organisations to complete this part of the pilot, each of the organisations received the training pack prior to the training sessions, during the three training sessions we continually reiterated the importance of using the sessions with their groups to gain feedback on their opinions. Following each training session and each lesson for the young people, pre-designed feedback questionnaires were provided by both hardcopy and through a QR code for Survey Monkey. This evidence would then provide the data needed for any further modifications needed to the programme. Outlined in the appendices' is a record of the three training sessions and what was articulated to the participants to contribute and also to ensure they go on to deliver the sessions to their groups.

Here we will go through the feedback received from the youth workers on the sessions delivered to them along with their opinions on how their delivery of the sessions went. As well as this, we will go through the responses provided by the teenagers who participated in the sessions.

Information Session

Following the completion of the information session, 13 individuals who took part in the session completed the feedback survey. They were first asked about their level of knowledge on drugs and alcohol before they took part in the session. As highlighted in the chart below, only 7.69% felt they had a high level of knowledge, whereas, 30.77% indicated a knowledge rating of some knowledge. Conversely, 7.69% felt they had a high knowledge rating, with 38.46% of respondents felt they had a reasonably high level of knowledge of drugs and alcohol.

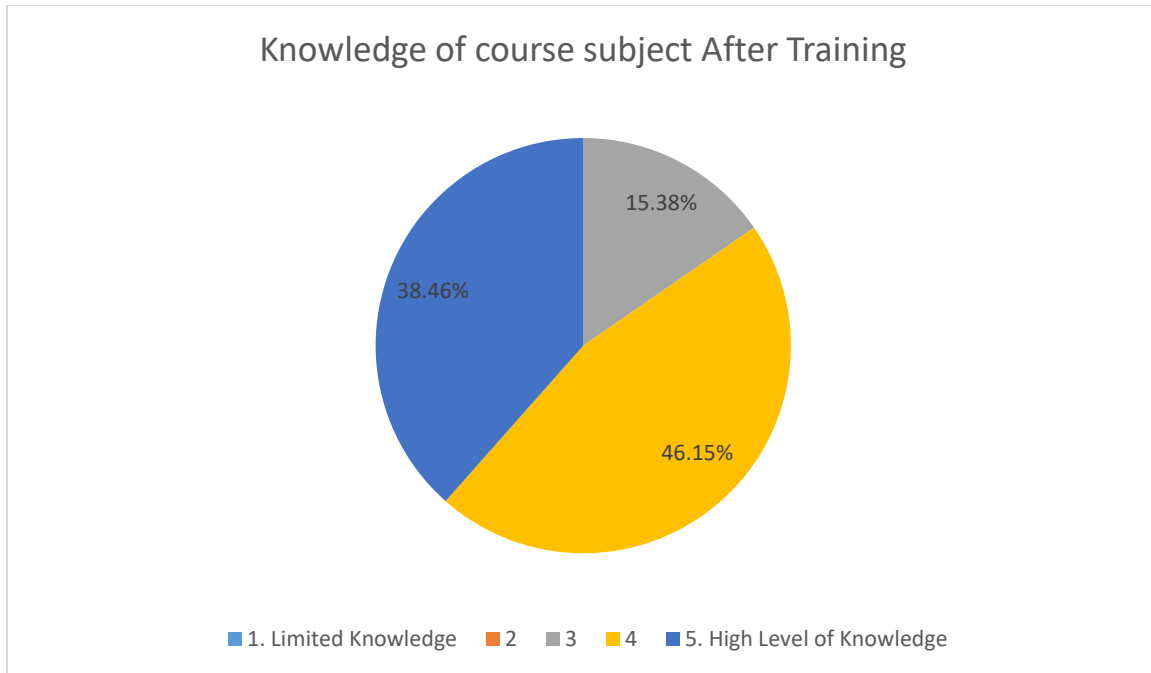
Graph 1. Pie chart showing respondents knowledge of drugs and alcohol before the information session.



The youth workers were then asked to indicate their knowledge rating of drugs and alcohol after finishing the information session, the pie chart below demonstrates the change in

knowledge. Those who felt they had a high level of knowledge increased to 46.15%, while 38.46% felt they now had a reasonably high level of knowledge and 15.38% had now some knowledge of drugs and alcohol.

Graph 2. Pie chart showing respondents knowledge of Drugs and Alcohol after the training.



Next the youth workers were asked about their opinions on the relevance and the quality of the training along with the training materials and the trainers themselves through a rating scale (1 – lowest rating and 5 – highest rating). In regards to the relevance of the training, 69% gave 5 rating while 31% rated it a 4. The quality of the training had 77% of individuals give a 5 and 23% rating 4. In regards to the training materials, 46% rated them a 5 and 54% gave a rating of 4. Finally, the trainers were rated 5 from 77% of respondents and rated 4 from 23%. These ratings indicate that all aspects of the training were positively received by those that took part in the training, with no one giving a rating below 4 for any of the aspects of the training.

Based on the answers given by respondents in relation to ‘What did they like most about the training experience?’ there were 2 main areas mentioned frequently which were;

1. Content was highly informative and varied

2. Use of breakout rooms were useful for further discussion and being able to hear others opinions and experiences

They were also asked to give their opinion on what they think liked least about the training and the consensus from the individuals was that the training was on zoom, however, due to Covid-19 restrictions this was the only feasible way to carry out the training. In the future, once restrictions change training will be held in person instead.

When asked for their feedback on any further suggestions on how the training could be improved, the main opinion was that the inclusion of the most prevalent drugs used by youths along with street names for drugs would be highly beneficial for the youth workers. However, street names for drugs are continually changing and it may be difficult for trainers to know the street names, instead as long as the trainers are educating the youth workers on the effects of the different drugs it will still help them in their roles.

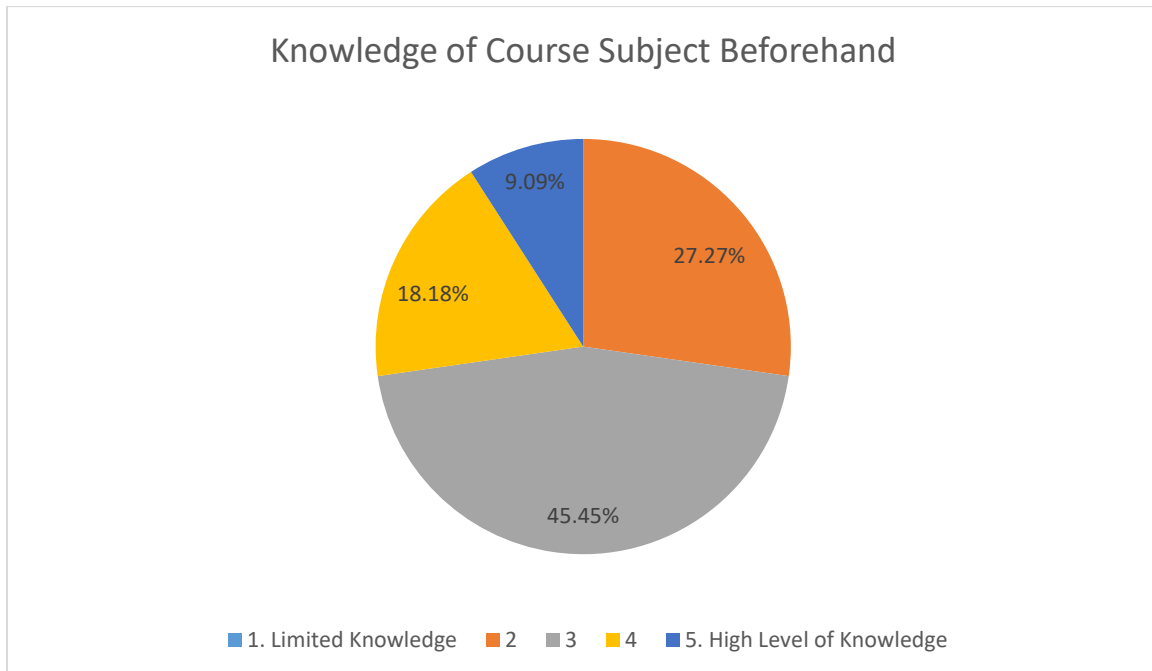
We also asked the youth workers if they felt there were any other areas of further training which they felt would be useful, there were 2 answers which came up frequently, these included;

1. Harm reduction methods
2. Engaging parents in prevention

Practical Sessions

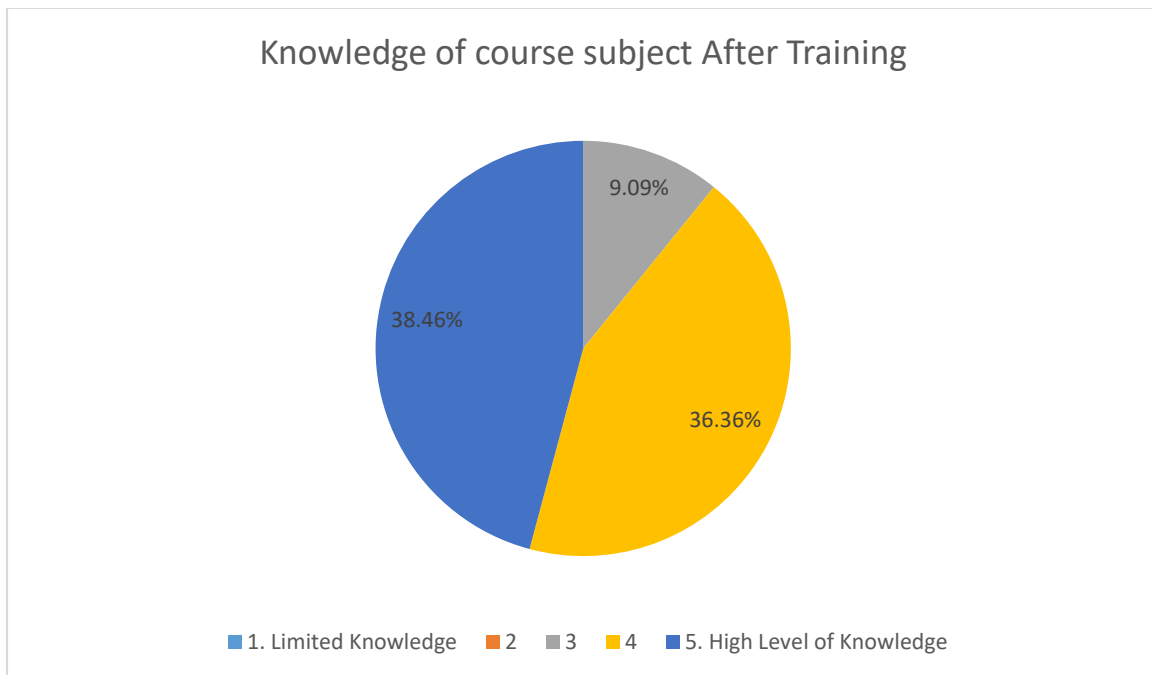
After the youth workers took part in the information session, they then completed two practical sessions where they were shown the different activities and resources for each section of the prevention programme they would be using with the youths. Similar to the information session, they were first asked about their knowledge before taking part. The individuals maintained that 0% had limited knowledge, where as 45.45% claimed they had some knowledge, whereas 9.09% had a high level of knowledge before completing the training.

Graph 3. Pie chart highlighting individual's knowledge before the practical sessions.



The youth workers were then asked after completion of the practical sessions, how they felt their knowledge had changed. Respondents increased their knowledge with 9.09% increasing to some knowledge, where as 38.46% grew to a high level of knowledge and 36.36% indicated a rating between some knowledge and a high level of knowledge.

Graph 4. Pie chart showing respondents knowledge after practical sessions.



The youth workers who took part in the training were then asked to rate the four elements of the training (relevance and quality of the training, training materials and the trainers) on a rating scale where 1 is the lowest rating and 5 was the highest. 91% of those who provided feedback on the relevance of training rated it at 5, with 9% rating a 2. Both the quality of the training and the trainers were awarded a 5 by 100% of participants. While the training materials were rated 4 by 27% and a 5 by 73% of individuals.

When asked what they enjoyed most about the practical sessions, the main points which came up included;

- It is a new approach when it comes to drug and alcohol training
- Variation of training and activities
- Constant link towards drug and alcohol
- Elements were adaptable to the needs of youth workers

They were then asked what the least enjoyable element of the training was with the main theme emerging of the use of zoom, but again due to Covid-19 restrictions it was unavoidable at this time. We then asked the individuals if they had any suggestions on how to improve the training, they expressed their opinion that some of the power points/electronic elements could be animated more to appeal to the age groups better.

Finally, they were asked whether there was any further areas of training they felt they needed and below is the ideas they mentioned;

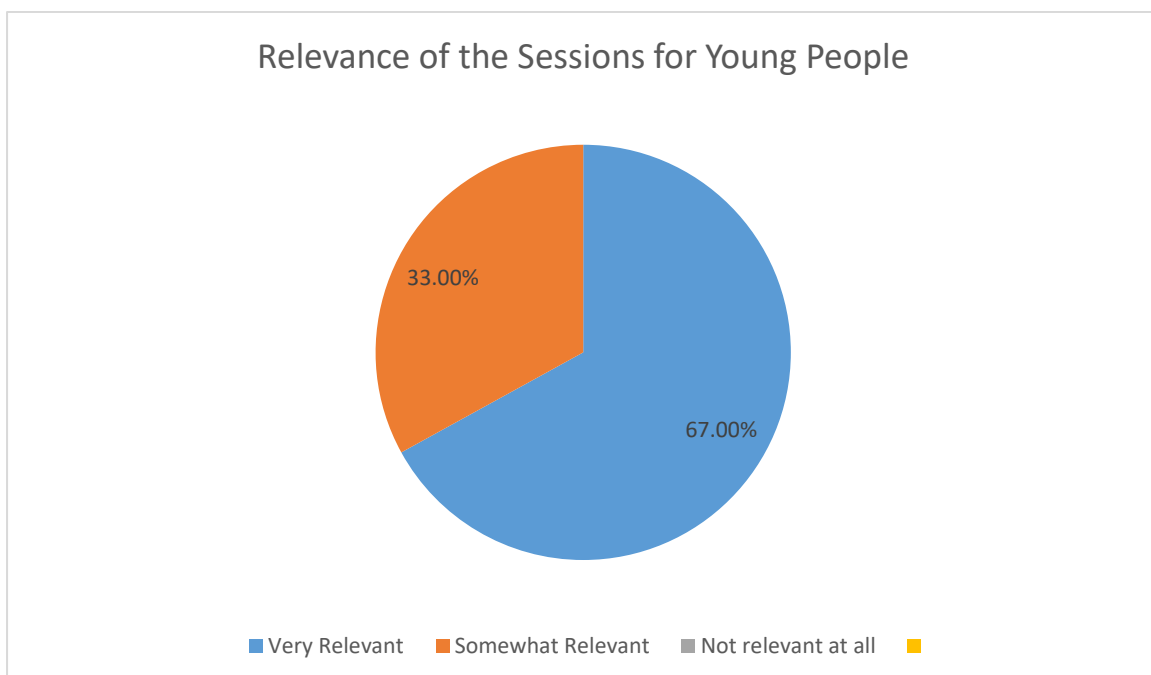
- Coping Mechanisms
- Self-Care Strategies
- Drug Awareness Courses
- Media Use

Pilot Sessions – Youth Worker Feedback

After both the information and the practical sessions were presented to the youth workers, they were then asked to deliver as many of the sessions to their youth groups as they could and then provide further feedback on how they believed the sessions went from a youth worker perspective.

Communication, Media, Feelings and Emotions and Risk Taking Behaviour sessions have all been completed by youth workers since the training was provided. They have indicated in the feedback that the sessions have been both very relevant (67%) and somewhat relevant (33%) when they used it with their youth groups as indicated in the graph below.

Graph 5. Pie chart showing how relevant the youth workers believed the sessions to be for the youth groups.



Based on the comments by the youth workers, the main points coming from the sessions included;

- Sessions were constructive
- Teenagers felt comfortable with familiarity and small group discussions and uncomfortable with new elements and large group discussions.
- Teenagers could relate to the topics and interacted with activities positively.

Young People's Feedback

Following completion of each of these sessions, youth workers asked the youth groups to complete feedback based on the sessions which they took part in.

The young people were asked to indicate their knowledge before the sessions, after the sessions, whether they would change their behaviours relating to each topic after completing the sessions and how they rated the session. Outlined below is the data from each of the completed sessions.

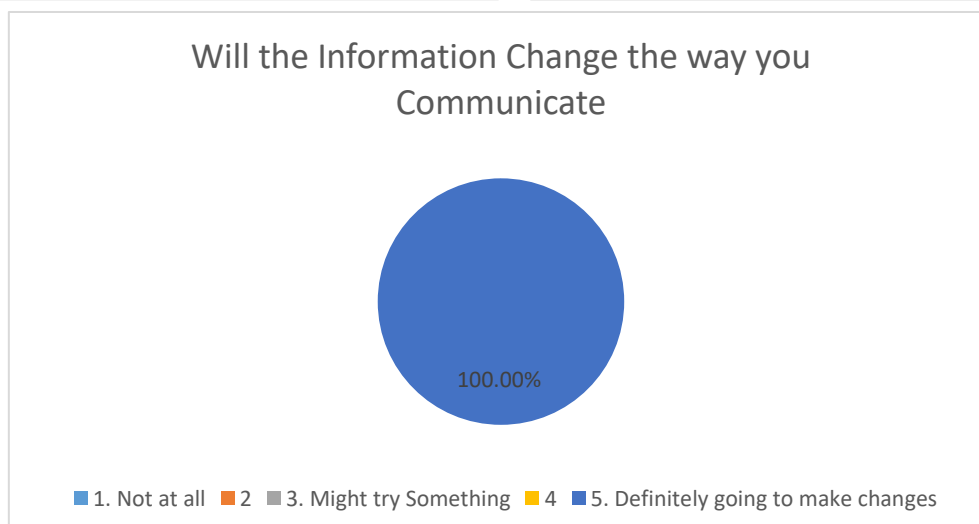
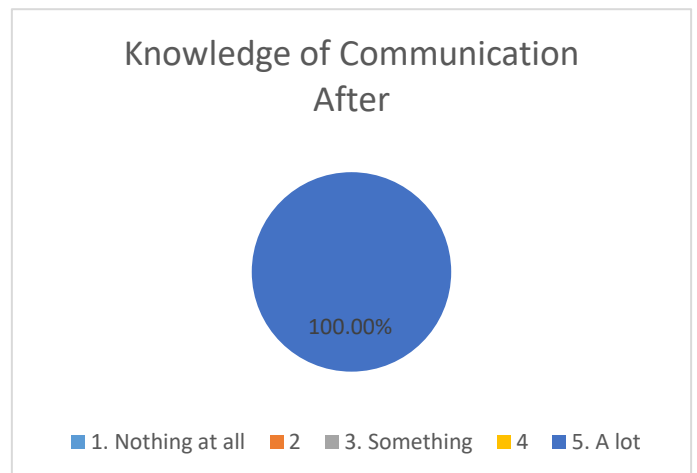
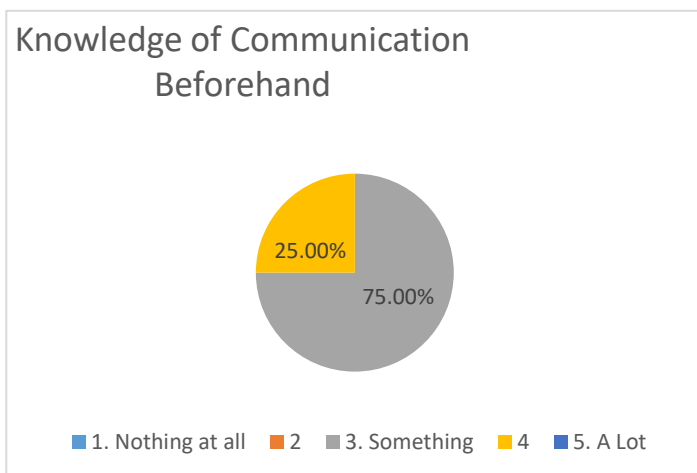
Communication

Knowledge beforehand – some knowledge (75%), a little knowledge (25%)

Knowledge after – a lot (100%)

Behaviour Change – definitely make changes (100%)

Session Rating – 100%



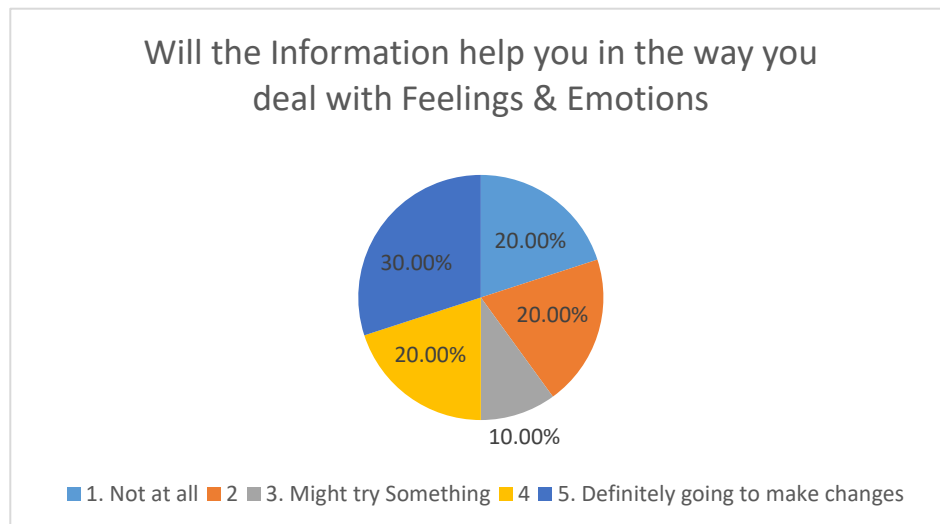
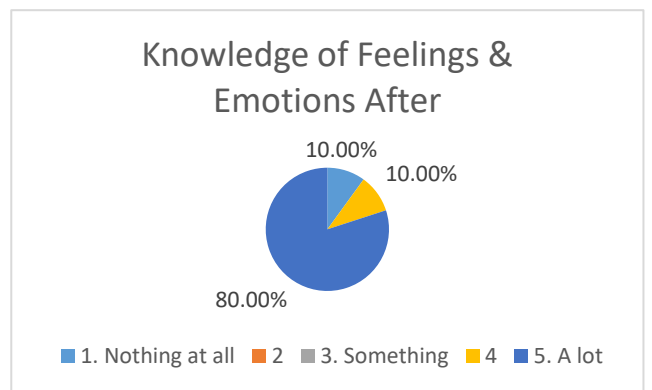
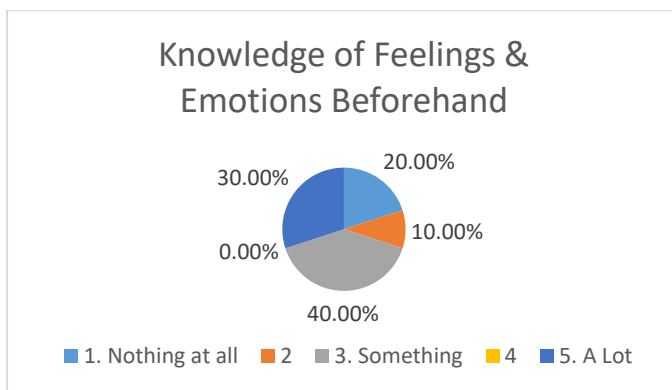
Feelings and Emotions

Knowledge beforehand – no knowledge (20%), slight knowledge (10%), some knowledge (40%), a lot (30%)

Knowledge after – no knowledge (10%), a little knowledge (10%), a lot (80%)

Behaviour Change – not at all (10%), will think about it (20%), might try something (10%), will try to make changes (20%), definitely make changes (30%)

Session Rating – 89%



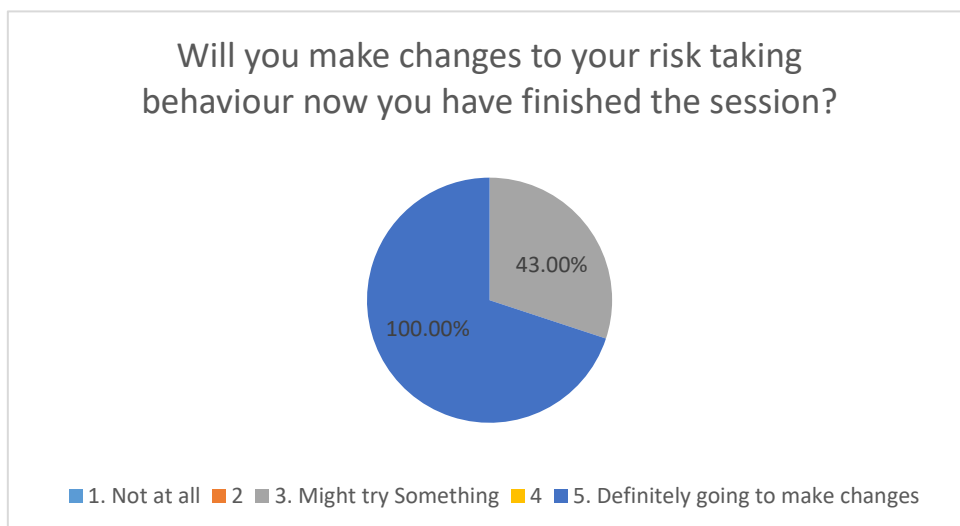
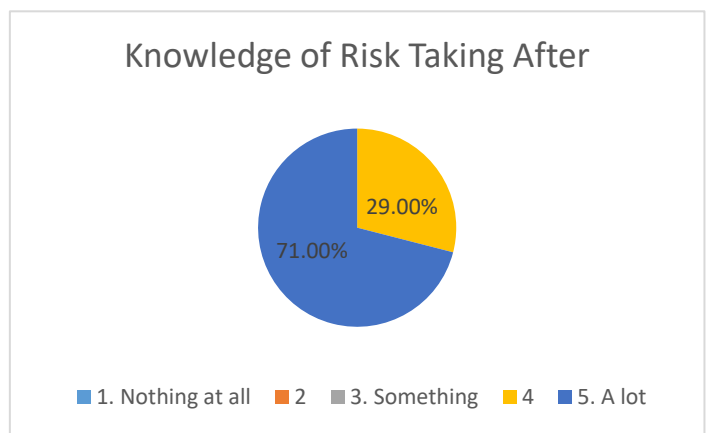
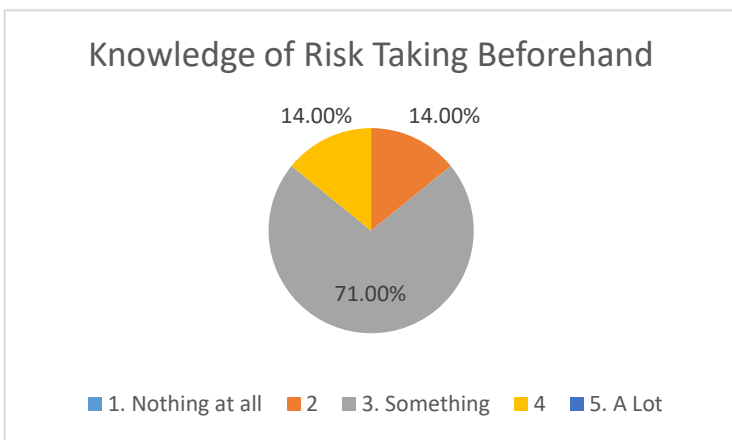
Risk Taking Behaviour

Knowledge beforehand – limited knowledge (14%), some knowledge (71%), a little knowledge (14%)

Knowledge after – some knowledge (29%), a lot (71%)

Behaviour Change – might try something (43%), definitely make changes (57%)

Session Rating – 89%



Media

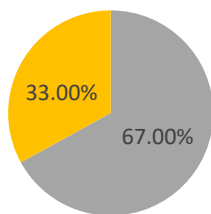
Knowledge beforehand – some knowledge (67%), a little knowledge (33%)

Knowledge after – some knowledge (33%), a lot (67%)

Behaviour Change – slight chance of change (33%), might try something (33%), will try to definitely make changes (33%)

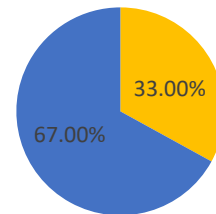
Session Rating – 89%

Knowledge of Media Beforehand



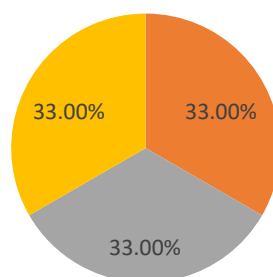
■ 1. Nothing at all ■ 2 ■ 3. Something ■ 4 ■ 5. A Lot

Knowledge of Media After



■ 1. Nothing at all ■ 2 ■ 3. Something ■ 4 ■ 5. A lot

Will you make changes to your media use now you have finished the session?



■ 1. Not at all ■ 2 ■ 3. Might try Something ■ 4 ■ 5. Definitely going to make changes

Each of the sessions required the youths to indicate how they felt about the session by picking words from a list provided by the survey monkey. After analysing the results of the feedback, there were recurring statements picked for each of the sessions. These statements were;

- Interesting
- Interactive
- Practical
- Fun
- Valuable
- Useful
- Insightful

Based on these declarations, the sessions have been positively received by those who took part in the activities, there were some opinions that the sessions were challenging and boring, however these were of a minority compared to the constructive feedback provided. Nonetheless, it would be beneficial for the next part of the pilot programme to include a qualitative aspect to the youth feedback survey so that we can gain individual opinions rather than from a particular set of words provided.

Findings & Recommendations

Through analysis of feedback from both the youth workers and youths who received sessions it has been apparent that there are many positives to take away from the pilot so far. Below we will go through the main areas of the pilot and any findings and recommendations for these areas.

Practitioner Training

Based on post training evaluation, as practitioners we felt that in line with the feedback from the youth workers there were areas that we can improve on in delivery. These elements include refining the information session so that it was not as 'lengthy' and 'overwhelming'. Therefore, going forward we will look at taking any segments out that both we and the youth workers felt were unnecessary while also making certain aspects more concise, such as; the teenage brain and development.

It is also recommended that as practitioners' further practice delivering the training will help to improve the flow and quality of the training, as it was established that the trainers themselves felt that their delivery could be more self-assured in their training despite positive feedback from the youth workers who participated in the sessions.

Curriculum Topics (Themes and Content)

Established from the views of the youth workers, the topics, themes and content of both the information session and the practical sessions were informative, varied and a progressive approach to drug and alcohol intervention with a sense of adaptability for the needs of those using it. As mentioned previously, while the information session was highly beneficial, for a first session it was 'heavy', therefore as a recommendation we will be improving the information session by condensing elements of the session so participants can take on board the information easier.

Based on the feedback from the participants, there were content elements which they believed would help both the training and their roles as youth workers working within drug and alcohol prevention. These included; harm reduction, coping mechanisms, parental

involvement in prevention and further drug awareness. Moving forward, we will aim to implement these parts in some capacity to help improve the overall aim of the training.

Resources

Throughout the information and practical sessions, the resources were well received and feedback from the youth workers and the young people were constructive. From the comments of participants, it was highlighted that the resources were able to open up further discussions surrounding drugs and alcohol which meant the youth workers could explore additional challenges young people are facing.

However, all sessions which were carried out by the youth workers were trialed on young people over the age of 13, therefore, the main recommendation here is that in the next set of delivery that sessions are delivered to children from 9-13. This is because we need more detailed responses on how the resources and sessions work with the younger age group to know whether the resources need changed to be more appropriate for a younger audience.

It is also important to recommend the inclusion of a question box to gather qualitative data from the young people in regards to the sessions and the resources, this is because all feedback from them have been based on quantitative scales rather than letting them express their own opinions. By doing this we will be able to highlight the areas which they enjoyed or which they believe need improved upon.

Format

With regards to the format of the pilot, the main aspect which was problematic for the youth workers based on their feedback was because it was held via zoom. While delivering training via zoom is not perfect, because of Covid-19 there was no other option at the time of delivery due to restrictions. Dependent on restrictions for the next set of training, the training would be delivered face-to-face as it allows the resources to be presented in a more valuable way to participants and allows them to experience it directly rather than virtually imagining them.