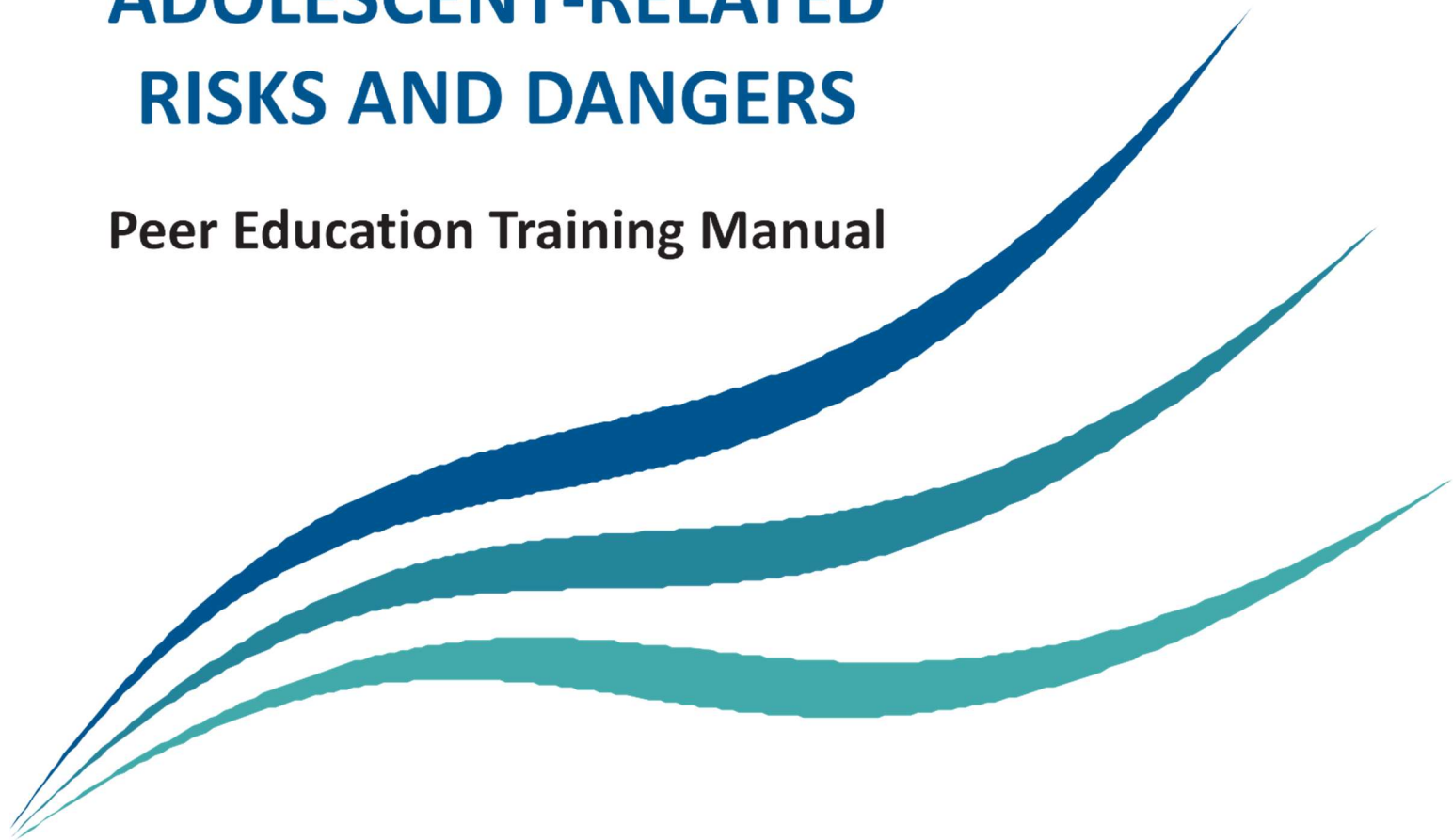


ADOLESCENT-RELATED RISKS AND DANGERS

Peer Education Training Manual



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This Peer Education Training Manual has been developed within the framework of the third phase of Child Trafficking Response Programme implemented by Save the Children. The programme goal is the development of effective models for prevention and support to children at risk and children victims of trafficking in human beings.

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INTRODUCTION

This Manual provides training guidelines incorporating the peer education method. It has been developed within the third phase of the regional Child Trafficking Response Programme with the participation of volunteers from Partners Bulgaria Foundation Resource Centre in the town of Kjustendil. This Manual aims at complementing adolescent activities within a programme for prevention of some of the risks encountered by adolescents nowadays. Its objective is twofold – on one hand, this Manual offers relevant information on each of the themes, and on the other hand, it enables young people to develop skills for independent living in order to protect themselves in risk situations.

The themes in this Manual are suitable for peer educators in high schools (8th through 12th grade) and appropriate as part of the education programme or independently. Each theme can be addressed in one or more school hours depending on the age and background knowledge of the participants and the time allocated for applying the method.

This Manual also makes use of other information sources from publications of Partners Bulgaria Foundation and Save the Children.

1. GOAL, TASKS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The goal of this Manual is to enable adolescents to develop skills to protect themselves in potential risk situations.

The main tasks are to:

- Encourage critical and analytical thinking, as well as creativity
- Create an atmosphere of partnership by overcoming negative emotions and conflict situations
- Develop an adequate evaluation of personal capabilities
- Develop an active citizenship position
- Develop aspiration for joint decision making in matters related to adolescent life on all levels of society

The expected results through this method are:

- Increased knowledge by adolescents on relevant themes (e.g. sexual behaviour, aggression, career development, leadership skills, etc.)
- Skills for risk management in everyday life acquired through practical exercises and simulations.

2. METHODOLOGY

How and when did we develop this Manual?

This Peer Education Training Manual has been developed by Partners Bulgaria Foundation within the framework of the third phase of the regional Child Trafficking Response Programme (2009-2011). The main activities of the project run by PBF have been implemented at the Resource Centre in Kjustendil, where the local team has been working with two groups of adolescents between the ages 15 and 18 years:

- 1) Adolescents at risk
- 2) Volunteers (peer leaders)

Throughout the third phase of the project, there have been more than 150 volunteers in addition to a group of 18 peer leaders, participating in and contributing to the activities at the Resource Centre. During the second year, the volunteers took part in a series of trainings, seminars and discussions in order to facilitate the development of this Manual.

The initial stage introduced the peer leaders to the methods of developing the content of such a manual. The next step presented to them the opportunity to identify the themes and methods to be included in this Manual. The selection criteria included relevance and applicability of the themes, as well as their nature being interesting and up-to-date for young people.

From all suggested issue-based themes, the peer leaders chose nine, corresponding to the duration of the school year. The aim for peer educators is to organise one theme discussion each month during the regular class meetings, thus engaging high school students between the ages of 14 and 18 years. The nine themes presented in this Manual are:

- Risky Sexual Behaviours
- Substance Abuse: Prevention of Addictions
- Conflict Resolution
- Safe Migration
- Safe Internet Use
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Career Development
- Leadership Skills
- Leisure Activities

The methods to be used during peer-to-peer sessions include, but are not limited to, introductory and conclusive discussions, brainstorming, role play, debates, presentations, group work, various arts methods, etc.

Each of the themes offers several different options for conducting peer-to-peer sessions, depending on the age and preparedness of the target group. Each exercise gives details about the duration and age appropriateness. This enables the peer educators to choose the stages they would like to develop during one academic hour.

What is the structure of each theme?

The tasks of this Manual are accomplished through interactive methods of participation and engagement of all adolescents in the target group.

The following elements are present in each theme:

- Goal – What goals and tasks should the peer educator set prior to conducting the peer-to-peer session?
- Discussion Topics – What should the main topics be during the peer-to-peer session?
- Requirements – What materials/equipment should the peer educator prepare and provide for the peer-to-peer session?
- Expected Results – What set of skills should the peer educator expect to notice in the peers after the session?
- Overview of Exercises – presents the stages of a peer-to-peer session:

Stages	Conflict Resolution	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion		8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Debates (20-30 minutes)	Debates	
	Chairs (20 minutes)	Structured exercise, discussion	
	Alphabet of aggression (30 minutes)	Group work	
	Most common manifestations of aggression (30 minutes)	Group work, lecture	
	With eyes towards the darkness of life (30 minutes)	Group work, case study, lecture	
Stage 3:	Summary and reflexion		5-7 minutes

- Session Development – detailed description of the session stages, duration, age appropriateness, background information for peer educators.

Each of the themes must be tailored in a way that ensures coverage of two main components:

- 1) Acquisition of knowledge on the respective topic.
- 2) Development of resilience skills towards the respective risk and encouragement of an active social position.

3. PEER EDUCATION METHOD

Peer education is a strategy, tool or communication channel used by people who share similar age, backgrounds and interests to communicate messages . While it can be used for a variety of age groups and populations for various goals, peer education has been widely used as one approach in prevention programmes and raising the awareness on certain problems. The overall objective is to help adolescents develop the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and skills required to engage in healthy behaviours.

Research demonstrates excellent results through well-developed and implemented peer education programmes. However, both advantages and disadvantages should be kept in consideration.

Advantages:

- Peer educators can access hard-to-reach groups if they have a similar profile.
- The adolescent development theory confirms that peer groups are highly influential and young people are more likely to accept information from peers rather than from adults.
- Peer educators themselves experience positive benefits by attaining knowledge and leadership skills for their own professional development.
- Peer education programmes are community-based interventions, which can link adolescents to other community services.
- Peer education is flexible and complementary. Programmes of this kind are rarely implemented independently and are often part of a bigger initiative, which cuts across different organisations, sectors and/or state institutions. As part of a wider system, the management and monitoring of a peer education programme is usually conducted by a specific organisation or agency such as a school or a university, youth organisation or club, public actor, health-related institution, etc.

Disadvantages/challenges:

- Institutionalising peer education programmes is a challenge because peer educators often leave the programme as they age and constant recruitment and re-training is needed.
- Programme evaluation can be difficult because some programmes are done in conjunction with other activities or have limited budgets for monitoring and evaluation.
- Programmes that are not based on a curriculum or lack a clear structure for disseminating information can result in misinformation and unprofessional advice.
- When not appropriately targeted, peer educators become channels of outreach to the larger community, rather than just their peers, thus diluting their impact.

The following are key recommendations to improve the quality of peer education programmes:

1. Training. Provide high quality training to peer educators, which includes building self-confidence and skills and instilling clear programme objectives to keep peer educators motivated and focused.
2. Curriculum and structure. Base programmes on a curriculum of topics or a structure that includes dosing of messages.
3. Retention. Reduce attrition by prioritising close supervision, which also promotes quality assurance; harmonise peer educators' personal values and beliefs with those of the organisation; develop creative compensation approaches and foster career development opportunities.

4. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Ensure monitoring and evaluation by specialists and create systems for data collection, analysis and dissemination.
5. Youth involvement. Include meaningful youth participation in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes.
6. Gender perspective. Ensure equal number of boys and girls participating in the peer education method.

Examples of activities suitable for peer educators:

- Prevention campaigns in high schools (as co-trainers or guest lecturers)
- Theatre performances or role plays
- Group discussions
- Awareness raising about specialists who are in position to offer education and social support
- Work with children at risk

Young people respect wisdom, especially regarding people like them who have gone through difficult situations and have learned from other people in a similar situation. People are generally more inclined to listen to and process information when it is presented by someone who is easy to identify with, someone who is recognised as a role model.

Peer education is effective mainly because peer educators are granted trust among other adolescents. This is why, peer education is a working strategy for building skills for an independent living. Nonetheless, the complex social context needs to be taken into serious consideration in order for the peer education method to be deemed effective. It has to include a learning process to help children understand risks and opportunities and let them become channels of positive action and change. This requires an active participation and inclusion of adolescents' knowledge, experience and interests in all programme phases, i.e. from planning through implementation to evaluation.

The education process, sensitive to individual characteristics and needs, can increase self-confidence and effectiveness. It can also encourage young people to take greater responsibility in life and to contribute to an active social consciousness.

Learning is a social process and it is only meaningful when there is a possibility for observation, communication, interaction and learning from one another. This underlines the necessity to engage interactive approaches, which foster utmost participation in the learning process. Schools, however, cannot be effective without the support of the local community. Family and communal values, social norms and conditions grossly influence children's perception and behaviour. Adolescents find it difficult to acquire and internalise skills, which do not correspond to their surrounding or do not find support by people with influence in their life. Therefore, it is a requirement for family and community members to be acquainted with the benefits from this type of education and be encouraged to take part in it.

4. FACILITATION SKILLS AND METHODS

FACILITATION SKILLS FOR PEER LEADERS

Listening skills

- Maintain eye contact with the participants, who are presenting/talking/sharing.
- Summarise participants' comments (50% of the time).

Use of equipment/materials

- Place the equipment and materials in the room so that everybody can see them. (Consider the size and location of printouts.)
- Transfer information through questions and answers.

Group facilitation

- When you pose a question, look at all the participants before you choose who would answer.
- Provide only accurate information.
- When you talk, make sure that you make eye contact with all participants.
- Change your position during the session (at least 50% of the time).

Body language

- Smile.
- Move your head/hands.
- Take a natural pose.

Time management

- Start on time.
- Introduction should be between 8 and 12 minutes.
- Finish on time.

What is the role of the peer educator?

- As a moderator, the peer educator is responsible for creating partnership relations, circle of trust and openness among the participants.
- The peer educator has to define the structure of the training, including the time schedule; open and close the sessions; observe the programme; prepare the materials and arrange the venue.
- The peer educator is not part of the group. He/she can suggest ideas and opinions, but should never make decisions on behalf of the group.
- The goal of the peer educator is to assist the participants to acquire practical experience through different methods and approaches.
- The peer educator assumes different roles during the different stages of the training depending on the needs and composition of the target group. His/her responsibility is to organise the logistics and the group dynamics, ask questions, observe and lead the learning process.
- The participants must be encouraged to discuss the topics, solve cases, analyse and apply their own experience in the process of learning. The peer educator must facilitate this process.
- During the session, the learning process is more important than merely completing a task.

The result to be achieved by the end of each session is a change of the attitude and behaviour of the participants.

The peer education method is an effective way of sharing knowledge between adolescents from a similar age group and status. Young people are more inclined to listen to their peers, rather than to adults. Peer educators are able to access hard-to-reach groups and present factual information in an interesting way because they understand better the social context of their peers. In addition, sharing information alone is beneficial to both the peer educators and the peers because each side can extract valuable lessons from the shared stories and experience.

Communication between the two groups can also be described by high level of proximity to natural style of interaction. The same piece of information can be presented differently depending on the target group and the peer educators themselves. For example, a discussion on the prevention of drug addictions can include a personal recollection of the peer educator about local conditions and history, successful prevention campaigns or less effective endeavours, underlying circumstances, etc. In many ways, peer education is a completely natural and traditional way for transfer of knowledge and information. The target group not only acquires new skills and information, but also disseminates these further to others so that everybody learns something new.

Main principles of peer education:

- 1. Culturally appropriate.** Adolescents, no matter what their ethnic background, have a unique culture that is appropriate to their particular peer group. This is an important factor to consider when designing a peer education programme, especially around culturally sensitive subjects.
- 2. Developmentally appropriate.** The same topic should be presented differently to children in primary school and adolescents in middle or high school due to the characteristics of the respective age and development.
- 3. Accuracy of the information provided.** When it comes to addressing sensitive issues (e.g. risky sexual behaviours or drug addictions), adolescents are often cynical about the information provided by authorities. They often feel as if the government or other authority figures are trying to manipulate them by providing them with propaganda instead of accurate and balanced information. A better approach is to present a factual and neutral view and information.
- 4. Based on experiential learning,** including modelling and practising communication, negotiation and refusal skills. Another important principle to consider is the importance of providing peers with an environment that actually facilitates true learning. Most of us learn new things by watching how other people do it and then trying it out for ourselves and practising it until we get it right. Reading or listening to a lecture is only effective for providing someone with information. A young person must still learn how to deal with these situations in real life. People learn best when they can imitate others who are good at what they are trying to learn and talk about their shared experience afterwards to make sense of it all. Using this principle, peer education can engage adolescents in a way, which shows them how to deal with risk situations that correlate closely to real life encounters that they are likely to experience.
- 5. Professionalism.** Often peer education is so focused on addressing the needs of the adolescents attending the programme that the peer educators, whose role is to deliver the programme, are forgotten. It is important to maintain professionalism in the programme. This means scheduling training, supervision, debriefing, regular planning and quality assurance activities.
- 6. Peer management.** Young people should be consulted and involved as partners all along the way. They should be involved in designing the programme, have leadership roles in running it, be involved in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the programme and even redesigning it as needed.

-
- 7. Public support.** It is relevant to raise the awareness of the general public to children at risk and their situation in order to gain support for preventive initiatives, led by peer educators.
- 8. Fun and creative learning process.** Programmes for and by adolescents should be flexible in their design and delivery. Fun, creative and interactive programmes that use a number of delivery methods, including theatre, sport, the Internet, dance, drama, etc, can be effective ways of involving adolescents in the programme.
- 9. Provision of adequate time span for young people to achieve their goals.** Some of the best and most successful programmes have taken a long time to develop to their full potential. Expectation of big results in the first six to 12 months is unrealistic.
- 10. Adolescent-friendly space.** Peer education should be located at an adolescent-friendly location. This type of flexibility will enable more young people to feel a greater sense of ownership in the programme and improve participation in the programme. Personal space and confidentiality should also be closely observed.
- 11. Supervised environment.** Peer educators also require supervision. Adolescent years are characterised by an exploration of boundaries – physical, social and psychological. This testing of boundaries is an essential part of the socialisation process and how we learn to function as human beings in a civilised society. It is important though to make the boundaries clear and enforce them in a transparent way. Supervision is the process in which the boundaries of appropriate vs. inappropriate behaviour are explained and enforced where necessary. It would be even more effective if adolescents themselves were involved in the development of the rules and the consequences of breaking them.
- 12. Recognition of supportive institutions.** Peer educators present sensitive topics to their peers and in doing so, they should be acquainted with the social services and institutions in order to refer their peers to the most helpful service provider in case of need.
- 13. Professional support for the peer educators.** Peer educators can sometimes be involved in difficult projects, especially if they find themselves having to counsel or support a peer through a difficult and/or dangerous situation. It is therefore important for their supervisors to analyse carefully each training session and debrief the peer educator. A debrief allows peer educators not only to learn from their own experience, but also to address any negative feelings they might have had during the session so as to put it in its proper professional perspective and start afresh for their next peer education activity.
- 14. Clear and realistic goals.** A successful peer education programme is based on clear and realistic goals that are timely and measurable. It is important that adolescents participating in the programme have opportunities to provide input while developing the programme goals. This will assist in the framing of clear and realistic goals, as adolescents will be able to filter out any goals that are not achievable.
- 15. Long-term planning.** Peer education is effective only when there is a long-term strategy defined. The more supporters and partnerships a programme can gain, the greater its sustainability will be.

Methods used in peer education

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Interactive activities | • Lectures, information sharing |
| • Role plays and simulations | • Sports competitions |
| • Individual and group reflexion | • Video and audio materials |
| • Frontal and small group discussions | • Mapping |
| • Critical analysis | • Drawing |
| • Debates | • Solving puzzles and crosswords |
| • Case study | • Story telling/sharing |
| • Consulting | • Brainstorming |
| • Theatre | |

5. ISSUE-BASED THEMES

5.1. RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS

Discussion Topics:

- Sexuality
- Sex identity
- Love
- Intimate hygiene
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Methods of contraception
- Sexual relations and sexual violence

Goals:

- Rationalise personal perceptions, ideas and values related to sexuality
- Develop skills for an open discussion of questions related to sexuality
- Differentiate the concepts of love, sexual attraction, sexual desire and sex
- Develop skills for a responsible sexual behaviour
- Develop skills for rationalisation of personal behaviour and that of others
- Raise the responsibility towards self and others
- Develop skills to identify dangerous relationships

Expected Results:

- Adolescents are able to rationalise and analyse their perception of sexuality.
- Adolescents demonstrate skills for an open discussion of questions related to sexuality.
- Adolescents are able to differentiate between the concepts of love, sexual attraction, sexual desire and sex.
- Adolescents have extended knowledge on responsible sexual behaviour.
- Adolescents are able to rationalise their behaviour and that of others.
- Adolescents demonstrate increased responsibility towards themselves and others.
- Adolescents recognise dangerous situations and relationships.

Stage	Risky Sexual Behaviours	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Reversed roles (20-30 minutes)	Role play	
	Difficult questions (20–30 minutes)	Individual work, lecture	
	Love/sex – associations (20–30 minutes)	Brainstorming, lecture	
	Love triangle (20–30 minutes)	Group work, case study	
	Difficult decision (20–30 minutes)	Group work, case study	
	Let's talk about dangers – AIDS (30 minutes)	Discussion	
	Values and sexual contact (20 minutes)	Lecture	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Sexuality and sexual identity

Sexuality is an integral part of every person throughout one's entire life. It encompasses one's values, beliefs and attitude towards himself or herself, their relation to other people (friendship, love, affection, intimacy, and sex), self-evaluation and perception of their own body, sexual and reproductive health. Part of sexuality is presented through behaviour – the decisions one makes and the attitude one shows towards their sexual choice. Sexual behaviour in humans is a learning process.

Self-determination of the child as a boy or a girl is one of the first steps in becoming aware of one's sexuality and sexual identity. During puberty the emerging interest towards oneself as a representative of a particular sex can be seen as a powerful engine associated with the process of self-perception. People cultivate their attitude towards sexuality mainly through existing social and cultural models set by others (parents, teachers, friends, influential adults, the media, Internet, books, movies, etc). Meanwhile, one can recognise different attitudes related to discussing sexuality-related issues. Some consider the topic "embarrassing" and discuss it with reservation and hints. Others view sexuality as "dirty and vulgar", using "cynical and street" language to talk about it. Yet others believe that these issues must be discussed openly and honestly because they are part of the human being and are related to the perception of self-identity. Avoiding discussions of sexuality-related issues contradict normal human development and self-perception.

Sexual identity is based on knowledge of the respective sex-related characteristics and the emotional acceptance of the belonging to either one of them. It is also an integral part of becoming aware and accepting oneself and others. Children between the ages of 11/2 and 2 years learn to recognise their own sex and that of others. Before reaching 5 years of age, they associate sexual identity with external characteristics – hair, beard, clothes, etc. After that age, children begin to associate sexual identity also with different social models. In early school years, children become familiar with social expectations towards the two sexes. During puberty, differentiation between strictly male and female characteristics becomes even clearer.

Moreover, as social experience increases, adolescents realise that there is an interweaving of social models and men and women do share many common characteristics.

Love

Puberty also places adolescents in the midst of an unexplored territory of desires, drives and sensuality – the territory of sex and sexuality. Sexual maturing is a very important stage in human life; it is more than just a set of biochemical changes, it is the result of the interaction of different factors. Sexual behaviour is a form of communication rather than merely a procreation drive.

In general, love relationships develop as follows:

- Attraction – It is the beginning of a love relation; manifests itself in courting and may have different duration.
- Emotional intimacy – building trust, sharing personal thoughts and feelings.

- Sexual intimacy
- Misperception of the beloved's traits – An interesting manifestation of love is the so called "telescope effect", i.e. strong magnification of the partner's positive traits and diminution of (even disregard) their negative characteristics. This can cause a wrongful perception of the subject of one's affection, i.e. it becomes unclear whether one is in love with a real person or with the "glamorised" image of that person.

Intimate hygiene

It is important to follow simple rules of intimate hygiene not only to prevent infections, but also to keep oneself clean. Smegma (a combination of exfoliated epithelial cells, skin oils and moisture) accumulates naturally in the creases of the genitals and should be removed regularly. This is why, daily hygienic routine is obligatory in order to avoid inflammations and other undesired consequences.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)

Only a specialist should diagnose each of the following diseases.

1. Gonorrhoea – Symptoms appear three to five days after infection. Signs include white, yellow or green discharge and a burning sensation when urinating. In women, gonorrhoea can cause fallopian tubes' inflammation and in men – a painful condition of the ducts attached to the testicles.

2. Chlamydia – Symptoms appear five to 12 days after infection. Signs include abnormal vaginal discharge or a burning sensation when urinating. If left untreated, Chlamydia causes fallopian tubes' inflammation, which might lead to irreversible damage, including infertility.

3. Genital herpes – Symptoms appear two to 20 days after infection and heal for approximately three weeks. Signs include small blisters on the genitals, accompanied by a burning sensation and itching; blisters can soon open to form ulcers.

4. Genital warts – The disease manifests itself two to eight months after infection. They often occur in clusters and can be very tiny or spread into large masses on the genital area.

5. Bacterial vaginosis – Vaginal condition that can produce unpleasant odour and vaginal discharge and results from an overgrowth of normal bacteria in the vagina. The condition is rarely diagnosed in men but they can be carriers.

6. Candidiasis – Symptoms include redness, itching, white discharge, burning and soreness. Sexual transmission is common, but not an exclusive mode of infection.

7. Trichomoniasis – Symptoms appear four days to three weeks after infection. Some women have signs, which include a yellow-green vaginal discharge with a strong odour, discomfort during intercourse and urination, as well as irritation and itching of the female genital area. Most men do not have signs or symptoms; however, some may temporarily have an irritation inside the penis, mild discharge or slight burning after urination or ejaculation.

8. Syphilis – Early stage signs are the formation of a little skin lesion on the genitals and lymph node enlargement. In few months, a non-itchy skin rash appears; symptoms can disappear instantaneously. If left untreated, syphilis develops in further stages. Serious brain and heart complication may arise.

9. Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C – The illness develops after a latent period of one/three to six months. Symptoms include digestive system disturbance, overall weakness, skin rashes and joint pain. Infection can occur not only through a sexual intercourse, but also through

transfusion of infected blood.

10. AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It is not a single illness, but a sum of illnesses and infections. Symptoms include swollen glands, dry persistent cough, weakness and fatigue, diarrhoea, sweats (particularly at night), loss of appetite, quick loss of weight. The time between the infection and a fully blown disease can differ – from six months to 12 years. The consequences are opportunistic infections with lethal end.

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) causes AIDS by destroying vital cells of the immune system. HIV attacks white blood cells responsible for activating the immune system. The higher the number of infected or dead white blood cells, the greater the incapacity of the immune system to counteract illnesses.

The three major routes of transmission are unprotected sexual relations (vaginal, oral or anal intercourse), contaminated needles (during blood transfusion) and mother-to-child (during pregnancy, at childbirth or via breast feeding). Of all contraceptive products, the consistent use of condoms is the only way to protect oneself from sexually transmitted diseases. Some of the sexually transmitted diseases show almost no symptoms in the beginning. This means that the infected person might transmit the disease further without even knowing that they themselves are infected. If left untreated, these diseases might cause serious health complications.

Contraception

Different contraceptive methods can be divided in three groups:

1. Physiological:

- Interrupted sexual intercourse – unreliable contraceptive method (approximately 10% effectiveness)
- Safe days (several days before and after a menstrual cycle) – unreliable contraceptive method
- Fertility awareness – increase in basal body temperature, for example, indicates ovulation, which requires the use of a reliable contraceptive method

2. Chemical:

- Contraceptive creams and gels – unreliable contraceptive method
- Oral contraceptive pills blocking ovulation; there are two types – preventive and emergency. Contraceptive pills must be taken upon medical recommendation and consultation.

3. Mechanical

- Spiral – intra-uterine device, which should be prescribed and inserted by a gynaecologist
- Diaphragm – thin rubber dome with a flexible rim, inserted into the vagina few hours before the intercourse and left in place for six-eight hours after it
- Condoms – prevent STDs and unwanted pregnancy
- Sterilisation – permanent method, performed in a hospital setting by a specialist

Sexual relations and sexual violence

Sexual violence is any form of coercion, aggression (verbal or physical), manipulation or creating dependence related to sexuality. Sexual relations can be generally characterised as multi-level; therefore, sexual violence may have many different dimensions. It can include ambiguous and vulgar expressions and hints, molestation and rape. Molestation includes different forms of sexual coercion without the presence of an actual sexual intercourse. Different forms of physical violence can also accompany rape.

Myths about sexual violence

- The majority of offenders are strangers. – In many of the cases, they tend to be acquaintances, friends or relatives of the victim.
- Victims of violence are responsible for what happened to them. – Most of the aggressors choose their victims randomly.
- Rape occurs mainly in an isolated setting (ex. parks or dark alleys). – Almost half of the number of rape cases take place in the victim's home or a familiar venue.

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Requirements: Flip chart, white board, markers
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic of sexual risk behaviour by initiating a discussion on the following questions:

- How is sexual behaviour formed?
- When does a person become aware of being either a man or a woman?
- What is the attitude of adults around you towards sexuality – do they treat it as embarrassing, vulgar or normal? What about your peers?
- What is the difference between love and sex?
- Which sexually transmitted diseases do you know? How can you protect yourself?
- What is your perception of sexual violence?

Activities:

Write down the main ideas on the board in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options:

Exercise 1: Reversed roles

Duration: 20-30 minutes
Methods: Role play
Requirements: For the participants – note cards with role characteristics
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Introduce the exercise by explaining briefly the main characteristics of a role play. Invite three boys and three

girls to take part in the game. The role of the rest of the group is to observe the process and comment. Give the following instruction to the group: “The three boys will play the role of three female friends and the three girls – the role of three male friends. Each one of them will receive his or her role characteristics. After the role play is over, it is your task to comment on what happened in each group, whether the participants have reacted adequately and give them a piece of advice.”

Role characteristics for the three girls:

You are a 16-year old boy who is about to have sex for the first time with an older girl, whom you met recently. Before the “big day” you meet two of your “experienced” friends to brag about the coming event and talk about it.

You are a 17-year old boy who has already had sex. Your friend is about to experience this for the first time and he would like to discuss it with you. You should provide advice and information as a person with experience.

You are a 16-year old boy who has never had sex, but always brags about an extensive experience in this area. Your friend is about to have sex for the first time and wants to discuss it with you. You, yourself, are curious about it, but you have to offer a piece of advice as a person with experience.

Role characteristics for the three boys:

You are a 16-year old girl who is about to have sex for the first time with an older boy, whom you met recently. Before the “big day”, you meet two of your “experienced” friends to talk about the coming event and ask for advice.

You are a 17-year old girl who has already had sex. Your friend is about to experience this for the first time and she would like to discuss it with you. You should provide advice and information as a person with experience.

You are a 16-year old girl who has never had sex, but always brags about an extensive experience in this area. Your friend is about to have sex for the first time and wants to discuss it with you. You, yourself, are curious about it, but you have to offer a piece of advice as a person with experience.

Each group of three has five-seven minutes to play the situation. After the role play is over, the peer educator should initiate a discussion on the questions set before the role play. Talk about the pieces of advice that each “friend” has given, important information that has not been mentioned (ex. contraception, trust issues, etc). Discuss possible negative consequences for the girl/boy in case they do not take precautionary measures.

Exercise 2: Difficult questions

Duration: 20-30 minutes
Methods: Individual work, lecture

Requirements: For the peer educator – a box of questions
For the participants – coloured note cards, pens
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare the questions, which should be written on the coloured note cards. Examples of “difficult” topics may include intimate hygiene, masturbation, defloration, virginity, incest, homosexuality, heterosexuality, etc. In case some of the questions arise twice during the discussion, they should be discussed only once. If not enough questions are raised, the peer educator’s prior preparedness can help overcome challenges and provide more factual information, but this should not impede in any way the active participation of the participants.

Activities:

1. Introduce the topic by emphasising the idea that young people need different information about sexuality and make clear that this information can be obtained from different sources – literature, the Internet, friends, family, etc. Suggest using the group resources and ask for active participation.
 2. Give each participant a coloured note card and ask everyone to write down a question related to sexuality, which they would like to receive an answer to. All the cards are then placed in a box. Take out one card at a time and read aloud the question. The task for the group is to try to find a relevant answer to that question. The game goes on until the last question in the box has been answered.
- Discussing “difficult” questions helps overcome embarrassment and fosters open dialogue on questions related to sexuality. The focus should be on the need for more information in order to raise the awareness, bring intimacy out of the sphere of vulgarity and shed more light to it.

Exercise 3: Love/sex – associations

Duration: 20-30 minutes
Methods: Brainstorming, lecture
Requirements: For the peer educator – flip chart, markers
For the participants – white note cards, coloured pens
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by underlining that many people, both youngsters and adults, can sometimes find it difficult to make a clear-cut difference between feelings. Often it is not easy to differentiate between love, sexual attraction and sexual desire. In order to make this difference clear, one should rationalise and analyse.

Activities:

1. Divide the flip chart vertically. On the left side, write down “love” and on the right one – “sex”. Suggest to the participants to name the first word that comes to their mind when they hear “love”. In no more than seven minutes, the peer educator writes down all the associations without starting a discussion. Active participation should be encouraged.
2. After all ideas have been noted, ask the participants to think about the associations, which come to mind when “sex” is mentioned. In no more than seven minutes, the peer educator should write down all the

participants' associations. The two sides of the flip chart can then be compared and discussed. Ask participants to share their opinion, summarise and talk about their perceptions.

3. At the end of the exercise, the focus must be placed on the similarities and differences in understanding, perception and rationalisation. The summary of the exercise must demonstrate a link between perceptive and rationalising skills towards human behaviour.

Exercise 4: Love triangle

Duration: 20-30 minutes
Methods: Group work, case study
Requirements: For the peer educator – case study, flip chart, markers
For the participants – sheets of paper
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise with the statement that love and relationships are complex and people often find themselves in front of serious moral dilemmas. Their behaviour depends on their attitude and values regarding what is acceptable and what is not.

Activities:

Kristi and Endri are both 17 years old. They study in the same class. They have been practicing Football for several years. Kristi and Endri often go together to sport competitions and summercamps. This has brought them close and they spend their free time together.

During a visit with his parents, Kristi meets Ema. She is 16 years old and studies in the neighbouring school. The two of them like each other and start meeting. Kristi shares with Endri that he feels happy and considers Ema a very special girl, discovering new things about her every day. Ema likes dancing and together they go to clubs every Saturday. Sometimes they invite Endri with them. During weekdays, Ema goes to the courts to watch the matches and encourage them.

Endri loves watching movies. It turns out that Ema likes the same movies and actors like him. They start exchanging comments on movies; their conversations are so absorbing that they often forget that there is another person in the room. Kristi accepts their friendship and is happy that Ema has found somebody to talk to about things of interest to her. He is content that his closest friends get on well.

At one occasion, the three of them decide to watch a famous movie together. However, in the last minute, Kristi turns sick with high temperature and calls Ema to let her know that he will not be able to join them. Ema and Endri go to the movies together. In the dark hall, Endri suddenly confronts a strong desire to kiss Ema. She responds positively to his kiss. After they go out of the movie theatre, Endri feels like a traitor and shares that with Ema. She says that

1. Read the following love story to the participants:

she has been waiting for this moment and they should be grateful for the opportunity. She also says that she likes Endri and that she would like to start going out with him.

Endri feels divided. He realizes that he likes Ema very much and that he even starts falling in love with her, but he also values his friendship with Kriti and does not want to lose him as a friend. The next day Kristi shares with Endri that Ema appears different – distant and reserved.

2. After the story has been read, divide the participants in three groups. Each group receives the task to identify itself with one of the protagonists. Then the three groups should read the story again from the perspective of their protagonist. They should then decide on the two most important facts and the two most important feelings. Each group receives a copy of the story and the task:

Instructions: You have 15 minutes. Make sure you understand the point of view of the protagonist that you represent. Read the case again. Discuss it with the other peers. Circle the name and complete the task.

You are Krisi Write down two of the most important facts:

Indicate two feelings:

You are Ema Write down two of the most important facts:

Indicate two feelings:

You are Endri

Write down two of the most important facts:

Indicate two feelings:

3. Each group has 10 minutes to complete the task. After time runs out, divide the flip chart in three columns and write down all the suggestions by each of the groups respectively. Encourage discussion by asking questions. The discussion should focus on the experience of each protagonist, the differences in perceiving the same situation. Focus must also be placed on the values that determine the decision-making process. Summary should be drawn with the help of the participants.

Exercise 5: Difficult decision

Duration:	20-30 minutes
Methods:	Group work, case study
Requirements:	For the peer educator – case study, “Decisions I make” table For the participants – “Decisions – Arguments/Consequences” work sheet
Age group:	14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise by underlining that sexual relations are important for people. Life situations, which people face sometimes, can make it difficult to make a decision. Decisions related to sexual behaviour can sometimes be crucial for the future of a person. Each decision is the result of a series of arguments. In this regard, important are the right evaluation and a decision adequate to the situation. In the process of communication, people channel different messages.

Activities:

1. Read the following case:

Alba is 14 years old. She is a pretty, clever and cheerful girl. Alba is believed to be the “life and soul” of the group. She is a trustworthy friend and one can count on her. Alba attends dance classes, where she meets Klajdi. They soon find out that dancing is not the only shared interest. The two of them are inseparable and spend every free minute together.

Klajdi wants to bring their relation further and have sex. He claims that this is the next logical stage of their relationship. He also argues that he is 17 years old and cannot have a long-term platonic relationship.

Alba claims that she is not ready and does not want to “rush things”. Klajdi insists and shares that if she really loves him, there should be no hesitation on her part. Alba is very confused. For a few consecutive nights she cannot sleep but it does not appear that she is close to reaching a decision.

She turns to her brother, cousin and female friend for advice. Each one of them tells her:

- Brother: “Do not allow this intimacy!”
- Cousin: “If you wish, you can take the risk!”
- Female friend: “Do it without hesitation!”

2. Etien the participants in three groups and instruct them that each group represents one of the protagonists in the case (brother, cousin, friend). Depending on the position defined in the case study, each group should list several reasons/arguments regarding the suggestion offered by the three protagonists.
3. After the three groups complete the list with arguments, each group should discuss possible consequences of the decision and compile a new list:

Decision – Arguments/Consequences

Decision	Arguments	Possible consequences (+) and (-)

The focus should be on the understanding and personal responsibility for the choice of behaviour model, as well as the skills necessary to make responsible decisions.

Exercise 6: Let's talk about dangers – AIDS

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Discussion
Requirements:	For the peer educator – newspaper articles, Internet information materials related to the topic For the participants – coloured note cards
Age group:	15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare information materials on AIDS (modes of infection, symptoms, HIV, tree of sexual contacts). You can also engage one of the participants to collect additional information on the topic. Begin with the topic of trust and openness in discussing questions related to sex. Remind that sexual behaviour requires responsibility shared between the two partners because potential dangers are also shared. Sometimes intimate partners underestimate the situation (ex. casual relationship, one night sexual contact with an unknown partner, numerous partners, over trusting the partner, lack of protection measures, alcohol use, etc).

This can lead to grave consequences.

To make the introduction more powerful, the peer educator can include a simulation through a conversation between the participants in order to be able to demonstrate the chain of events that might lead to infection.

Activities:

1. Give each participant a coloured note card. On the back of two of the cards there should be a small heart drawn in the upper right hand side corner. When the peer educator delivers the cards, they should do it by extending the face side of the card and not the backside. Instruct them to write down one AIDS-related question of interest on the card (three minutes). After they are ready with their questions, each participant must go to another group member and talk about the questions they have at hand (three minutes). If someone has a special sign on the backside of their card, they have to draw the same sign on the backside of their interlocutor's card. Once time is over, the pairs separate and each participant goes to another group member in order to discuss the questions at hand (three minutes). The participant that has a sign on their card should draw the same sign on the card of their current interlocutor.
2. After the discussion in pairs, suggest to the participants to make a small demonstration: "I would like to ask the participants who received a special sign from me to stand up. Go to your first interlocutor and bring him/her to the middle of the circle. Now approach your next interlocutor and bring them to the circle. (The call is repeated as many times as interlocutors have been changed.) Now get hand in hand in the order in which you talked to each other." When the participants form the chain of contacts, the peer educator explains that this demonstration can serve the purpose of showing how one can be infected with HIV or other STD. He/she can continue with a discussion of the questions on the note cards. Try to give an explicit answer to all questions by including all participants in the discussion.
3. After the questions have been raised and answered, summarise and add final information (if key issues have not been previously addressed) and emphasise several important points: difference between AIDS and HIV, HIV transmission channels, main symptoms, protection methods, terminology, statistical data,

responsibility. The end of the session should focus on the idea that protection from AIDS is a shared responsibility of everybody.

Exercise 7: Values and sexual contact

Duration: 20 minutes
Methods: Lecture
Requirements: For the peer educator – sheets of paper with statements
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Write down several statements on A4 sheets of paper:

- The important thing in sex is one's own pleasure.
- People who have explicit information about sex are better positioned to make sound decisions.
- If you refuse to have sex, you will lose your boyfriend.
- If you love somebody, you will have sex with him/her even if you do not feel inclined to at a particular instance.
- When you want to have sex, you can force your partner to participate.
- Sex is a responsibility towards yourself and the others.
- If you are not sexually active, then you will appear lagging behind in the eyes of your peers.

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by underlining the fact that people regard sexual relationships differently due to diverse beliefs and attitudes. They are fundamental elements of people's behaviour and determine their sexual relations. Being aware of attitudes can lead to change. Talk with the participants about different attitudes.

Activities:

1. All participants should stand up. The peer educator announces that he/she will read different statements. Those of the participants who agree to a statement should go to the left corner of the room; those who disagree – to the right corner. The hesitant ones should remain in the middle of the room. This model should be repeated for each statement.
2. Read the statements. After each statement and movement, ask the participants what made them chose a particular direction and how they felt. Encourage the participation of each group member.
3. With the help of the participants, analyse the responses by emphasising that coercion is not an option. The conclusion seeks the link between perception of sexual relations, understanding of violence and rationalisation of one's own behaviour.

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes, summarise the main topics that have been discussed and the participants' opinion.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.2. SUBSTANCE ABUSE: PREVENTION OF ADDICTIONS

Discussion Topics:

- Psychoactive substances
- Risk groups
- Reasons for substance use
- Drug types
- Signs and symptoms of drug use
- Risks and diseases

Goals:

- Discuss information related to risks and consequences from the use of and addiction to psychoactive substances
- Develop skills and behaviour models for dealing with risks in a setting, instigating drug use
- Increase self-confidence and belief in one's capacity and skills

Expected Results:

- Adolescents are informed about the symptoms, harm and consequences of drug and alcohol use.
- Adolescents understand the link between their own behaviour, addiction risks and failure in their personal, school and professional life.
- Adolescents are confident about and responsible for their own life.
- Adolescents realise the value of life free of addiction to psychoactive substances.

Overview of Exercises:

Stage	Substance Abuse: Prevention of Addictions	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory topic discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Self-pleasing Ego and Real Ego (30 minutes)	Individual work	
	From peers to peers (30 minutes)	Case study, discussion	
	Action plan (30 minutes)	Group work, discussion	
	Feel free to say “No” (30 minutes)	Brainstorming, work in pairs	
Stage 3:	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Psychoactive substances

- Psychoactive substances – tobacco, alcohol, drug substances
- “Entry door” theory – use of a lighter drug ultimately leads to use of a stronger drug
- Introductory drugs – alcohol, tobacco, marijuana

There are more than 500 known drug substances. Together with alcohol and tobacco, they form the so-called group of psychoactive substances. The link between the use of different psychoactive drugs has been scientifically proven. For example, the risk that somebody starts using marijuana is 65 times higher by those who smoke or drink alcohol. The risk to start using cocaine and heroin is 104 times higher by those who smoke marijuana.

Young people at potential risk

According to research some groups are more susceptible to drug abuse:

- 11-12-year old boys with a low self-appraisal and dissatisfaction with social status in comparison to peers.
- Girls with low self-appraisal and dissatisfaction with social status in comparison to peers.
- Children and young people already exposed to psychoactive substances at an earlier age.

Reasons for primary use:

The two main reasons for reaching out to drugs are curiosity (¾ of cases) and desire for a short-term pleasure. Other reasons are related to social environment.

Drug types:

1. Narcotic analgesics – opium, codeine, morphine, heroin, methadone, etc.
2. Cannabis derivatives – marijuana, hashish, etc.
3. Substances used for relaxation – alcohol, inhalants
4. Hallucinogens – LSD, phencyclidine, etc.
5. Stimulants – amphetamines and its derivatives, cocaine, caffeine, etc.
6. Tranquillisers – diazepam, oxazepam, etc.

Alcohol is the first drug known to people since antiquity. Its short-term impact is linked to a feeling of relaxation, elevated mood and alleviated pain. According public health institutions “ in Albania, the nearly half of adolescents (47.9%) and more than half of young adults (51.0%) used to drink once a week¹.

Heroin can be found in the form of powder or granules (colour varies from pink-white to dark brown). The effect of heroin becomes evident when the substance enters the blood flow and reaches the brain. Heroin can be taken through:

- snorting
- smoking

¹ <http://www.ishp.gov.al/>

- injecting

Right after it has been administered, one experiences a feeling of pleasure. It can last only 60 seconds but that time is enough for some people to try again. Later, a feeling of tranquillity and relaxation sets in. Heroin users may appear calm and amiable; when high dose is administered, they appear “frozen” and rigid. High dose leads to a loss of consciousness and/or death. People react differently to one and the same dose. If heroin is taken in high doses followed by a complete halt for one month, the human organism becomes hypersensitive to the substance. If heroin use is then re-initiated in the old dosage, it can turn out to be an overdose for the body. Each year toxicological clinics admit at least 150 people with overdose. People who regularly use heroin develop specific disturbances, which may appear frightening to others around them. They can suddenly display a tantrum, easily become aggressive or appear to go through a grief stage that can lead to a suicide.

Heroin is one of the most widespread drugs, which leads to drug addiction. After only two weeks of use, one can develop addiction to heroin. Physiological addiction is characterised by the fact that the intake of one and the same dose each time leads to a decrease in the effect of the drug, i.e. the so called tolerance increase. The pleasant sensation does not last long and the user becomes physically addicted to the drug. If the process is terminated, the organism reacts with pain and unpleasant feeling. Psychological addiction to heroin may even occur prior to the physiological one. The user is convinced that they cannot spend even a day without the drug. In case they terminate heroin use, they are still inclined to make up reasons for using the drug – bad day, visit to their parents or search for money. Those who realise the dangers of heroin use set their own rules – for example, taking the drug three consecutive days followed by two days of rest. However, they often find excuses to abandon these rules. Life without heroin appears to most users pointless and dull.

When a user suddenly stops taking heroin, their body and psychic react dramatically. Few hours after the last heroin dose, the user experiences spasms, anxiety and restlessness; they can also become frightened. They may often try to slow down abstinence by taking other drugs – some try to soothe their feelings with diazepam or lexotan; however, this practice comes at the cost of tremor, sweating and sneezing. Skin feels cold and goosy; the nose and eyes are running. Some may experience pain in the limbs and stomach. The process can last between 24 hours and several days.

Frequent heroin users might realise their addiction too late. Often they waste more time to reach the decision for treatment. Those, who use heroin once a day for several weeks, have the capacity to stop. During this period, they need personal and professional support – from their parents, a doctor or a specialist. A specific treatment programme in specialised centres for rehabilitation and psychotherapy should accompany the process.

In Albania teenagers at the age between 14 and 16 years try psychoactive substances for the first time. They combine, for example, alcohol with diazepam in order to intensify the effect or to experience a more ambiguous feeling. Nightclubs are usually the venue for ecstasy use; marijuana becomes more and more accessible.

Signs of drug use

Single use of drugs does not cause permanent change in the user's behaviour and social relations. Usually only physical symptoms are detectable – nausea, vomiting, tremor in the lower extremities, stomach pain, red eyes, papillary constriction or dilation. Long-term or frequent use adds up increased drowsiness, apathy, unreasonable irritability or aggression, loss of appetite or the opposite – extreme hunger (especially for sweets). Drug use influences the physiological condition and the cognitive ability and might lead to memory weakening, depression, irritability and uncustomary behaviour.

Long-term drug use leads also to changes in social behaviour – loss of interest to school and hobbies; the user exhibits secrecy, introversion, sudden change of friend circles, negligence towards appearance, school absence, avoidance of house chores and a very distinctive trait – disappearance of valuable household goods and money. We can easily recognise signs of drug use, if we observe carefully the young person and his/her behaviour and devote enough time to them.

Risks and illnesses

Alcohol has a toxic effect, which leads to irreversible changes in the nervous system (brain cell damage followed by brain swelling). The most common symptoms are:

- neurological (tremor and damaged fingers' movement)
- vegetative (sweating, nausea, unsettled stomach, diarrhoea)
- physical (weakness, insomnia, loss of appetite)
- mental (change of character, dementia, psychosis, etc)

The female organism is more vulnerable to alcohol impact and this is why, women may develop alcohol addiction in three years of consumption. In men, this period can reach up to several decades. Addiction in women can progress faster and they usually seek professional help after seven years of alcohol use. A risk age for men to develop alcohol addiction is 23 years and for women – 27 years.

There are four main phases of alcohol use:

1. Symptomatic phase, which is characterised by alcohol use to decrease stress levels, improve the mood, etc. In six months, addiction to alcohol grows further.
2. Amnesia phase. Although there might not be an increase of quantity, the person might experience periods of amnesia due to poor oxygen acquisition by the intoxicated organism. Alcohol is no more pleasure, rather a "medication". This period might last between six months and four-five years.
3. Critical phase or phase of losing control. Even the smallest amount of alcohol triggers a drinking spree up to a complete intoxication. The person isolates themselves from family and friends, becomes dysfunctional at a professional level.
4. Chronic phase, which is characterised by the so-called personality breakdown with all the typical neurological and physical signs of the illness.

Heroin use might cause lethal or serious disabilities of the body and mind, among which loss of

appetite, weight loss and weakening of the immune system. Other risks related to heroin use are inflammations and abscess, destruction of the venous integrity, sepsis, hepatitis B and C, HIV infection, which is transferred by the use of injection needles. Fertility and reproductive problems might also occur in women – disruption of menstrual cycle, uterine infections and sterility. Pregnant women, who use heroin, cause early damages to the development of their unborn child. Regular use during pregnancy makes the baby already addicted to the drug upon its birth.

Cocaine provokes strong agitation reactions of the central nervous system, high blood pressure, tremor, insomnia and death. Some of the accompanying symptoms are skin itching, nasal ulcers, epileptic fits and paranoid feelings.

Marijuana is the most commonly used drug. Consequences of its use include:

- Short-term memory disturbances
- Coordination and balance disturbances
- Increased risk of chronic cough, bronchitis and emphysema
- Regular respiratory infections
- Decreased memory capacity
- Increased heart rhythm, anxiety (fear), panic
- Tolerance and addiction

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic of prevention of addictions by initiating a discussion on the following questions:

- What are psychoactive substances?
- Do you know what “Entry door” theory is and which are the introductory drugs?
- Which group of people, in your opinion, is more susceptible to drug use?
- Which age group is at a higher risk?
- What types of psychoactive substances do you know?
- What are the effects of marijuana/heroin use?
- What types of addictions are there?
- How can you recognise if somebody uses drugs?
- How can you fight drug addictions?

Activities:

Write down the main ideas on the board in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options :

Exercise 1: Self-pleasing Ego and Real Ego

- Duration:** 30 minutes
Methods: Individual work
Requirements: For the peer educator – flip chart, markers
For the participants – Self-pleasing Ego and Real Ego
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by presenting one of the most famous principles of mental activity, i.e. the so-called “pleasure principle”. According to Sigmund Freud, people strive and constantly seek sources of pleasure (through dreaming or daydreaming, avoiding unpleasant feelings and experiences) and avoid suffering. Meanwhile, in order to be functional in the real setting, people also need a second principle – the “reality principle”. The latter appears later in the child’s life and helps them distinguish between activities that bring pleasure (food, closeness, warmth, games, fantasies, dreams) and activities that are unpleasant in nature. The replacement of the “pleasure principle” by the “reality principle” is not a single and simultaneous process for every person.

Activities:

1. Present the exercise by explaining that in the next 10 minutes each of the participants should list a maximum number of things that bring pleasure and satisfaction. This will be the list of the “Self-pleasing Ego”. After the first list is ready, each participant should make a second list of the things that can realistically happen to him/her. This will be the list of the “Real Ego”.

Self-pleasing Ego and Real Ego

Self-pleasing Ego	Real Ego
I want ... immediately:	I can achieve:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3. ...	3. ...

2. Participants should work individually without being interrupted or provided with guidelines. After the end of the individual work, introduce the rule of sharing and analysis: those who would like to read their lists should do so and comment on their results:

- How big is the “Self-pleasing Ego”?
- What kind of pleasures does it seek?
- Is the “Real Ego” too small?

Encourage passive participants to answer more neutral questions:

- Which one of the two lists is longer?
- Which list was more difficult to compose?

3. Summarise the results underlining that the more mature and independent a person becomes, the more realistic their dreams and goals become. Make the link between the two principles and the use of psychoactive drugs. Indicate that drugs might be a manifestation of the Self-pleasing Ego and discuss the need of an active Real Ego who is able to make a responsible decision for the future of the person. This metaphor will encourage the participants to share and analyse their behaviour with more openness, spontaneity and creativity.

Exercise 2: From peers to peers

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Case study, discussion
Requirements:	For the participants – copies of the letters
Age group:	14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic of the different forms of support among peers (children help children, peer consulting, peer-to-peer education, etc).

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in two groups and give each group one of the two letters below

Letter 1

You do not want to talk to me! You turn off your cell phone! You avoid me ... And I walk towards you – as before! Do you remember? When we were kids, we used to walk hand in hand; we used to say that we are sisters. I, dark-eyed and dark-haired, like the night. You – sunny and golden like the sunflower, looking towards the light. We had the same clothes, the same toys, same shoes, same dreams and hopes ...

Then something wrong happened to you. Your parents separated, your father became more dedicated to his new family ... We were together again but pain was also there with us ... You lit your first cigarette! I ... remained silent. You had your first glass of alcohol! I remained silent again. I knew that you are in pain but I hoped that you will overcome it ... while I was silent you were with me; but once I tried to stop you, you left me!

You found new friends and devoted your days and nights to them! You did not want me to call; you did not want to see me. And I was standing there alone, “uptight” and “dumb” as your new

friends called me. Then you fell in love with one of them and he introduced you to drug use ... You turned into a shadow, even your shadow faded away ...

I wanted to stop you, I wanted to call you, I wanted to save you! I read books, became a Red Cross volunteer, wrote letter, fought. Then my father died and you ... came! You hugged me and told me that you will come back to me, you will stop my pain. I was happy! I was glad for you but ... the white powder was stronger than our friendship. And now I am alone. Sad and vulnerable. Poor and miserable, but I am not going to sell my soul! Not that I cannot, but I should not! I do not need illusions to make my day even darker! I do not want fake friends who misuse my trust and feelings! I want to hold you by the hand, as before, and find the light path ... Are you going to trust me? I trust you!

Letter 2

I know that you do not want to listen to me ... You believe that we are too much apart now – on the two sides of the line: me – the “go-getter” accepted by society and you – the fading loser. But we are friends even though you try to forget that. Even though you do not open your door, even though you do not answer when you hear my voice ... We are friends and this means that I CARE ABOUT YOU ... despite the bitter words I said once, full of despair and anger that drugs appear stronger than our friendship. And like a mother, I will always be there for you when you look for me ...

Yes, I do have my own life and cannot be next to you all the time; I cannot protect you from your own outbursts. I can just say that you will never be a stranger to me and if you find the strength and courage one day to stand against the drugs, I will be with you ... Hey, do you remember ... Do you remember our precious moments, our jokes, the laughter, our thoughts ... I remember them too ... Do not ever think that the life you had before is gone! A big part of it still lives, through our friendship. If you look for it or let it live again ...

I know how difficult it is for you. But please do not forget that it is also difficult for me to watch you like this or not to see you at all. Because I still believe that we have a future together, that we can have many of the things we have dreamt about ... Yes, we have wasted time, but we can still have many of these things, much more than what we have already lost!!! You are my best friend, did you forget? I do not believe it. I think that you are running away from me because you think that I do not understand you, that I do not want to understand you. Look, maybe you are right a little bit – it is not that I do not want to, it is just that I cannot understand you all the time. But I want to understand you – help me!

Do you not understand that you are part of my life, an important part, big part that I do not want to lose, that I cannot lose? Your eyes hide our childhood memories and many other new things. Neither one of us can see this in the other. Neither one of us can have another childhood friend. Do you remember when we were young and swore that nothing will set us apart ... Do not leave me! I know that it is difficult for you, but try to find time to see each other, whenever you wish and whenever I can, without thinking that any one of us is neglecting or underestimating the other.

Do you understand me, I am also at a dead end – I am searching for the right path to you and I

am scared that it takes me so long to find it. Let us help each other and be together again! I miss you and I do not want to lose you – I believe that you do not want that, too. Call me or pick up the phone, open the door and come to me one day when you need to be with someone. We have to start from somewhere. I am waiting for you and I will not stop looking for you ...

2. Each group reads the letter and discusses it for about 20 minutes. Ask the participants to name all the feelings and hopes shared in the letter. After that, they can list their own feelings that arise from reading the letters. After time is up, a “spokesperson” presents the findings of their group.

3. Summarise the results underlining the variety of feelings that arise by the connection between addiction and friendship. Emphasise all the hopes we have for the beloved people. Usually the positive feelings and hopes of relatives and friends help the young person to gather courage and plan their life without drugs. These feelings and hopes are even more important conditions for preventing drug use in the first place. Emphasise that an analysis of one’s feelings and dreams can help in case of a situation of pressure or desire to try drug substances.

Exercise 3: Action plan

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Group work, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – “Action plan” work sheet
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic of life-long friendships and discuss their influence over one’s life. Link the topic of drug use as a cause for loss of friends (psychological or literal) or as a precondition for starting a new “friendship” with the goal of attracting new drug victims.

Activities:

1. Instruct the participants to imagine the following situation: “Accidentally you find out that a close friend of yours uses drugs. You are surprised and scared. You wonder whether you should tell somebody or that might harm your friend ... After all, you decide to take an action.” Using the “Action plan” work sheet, discuss in three groups specific steps and risks of your decision. After the discussion, each group has 15 minutes to present their risks and measures.
2. Give each participant the following work sheet in order to make suggestions and keep it as a reference material after the session :

Action plan ... or what to do if a close friend uses drugs?

1. Get informed about the type of addiction, symptoms, risks and perspectives.
2. Talk to an adult (doctor, teacher, psychologist, social worker), whom you trust.
3. Find out where you can get help.
4. Discuss confidentiality of information, as well as the cost of silence and the risks for your friend if their personal information is inappropriately disseminated.
5. Talk to your friend at a carefully chosen moment – when your friend is “clean”, before school, in private.

6. Ensure your friend that you are worried about him/her.
7. Ensure your friend that you do not judge him/her but you are very well aware of the future prospects for drug addicts.
8. Describe in detail your friend's behaviour under the influence of drugs. Let him/her understand that their behaviour can be seen as repulsive and frightening. Also explain that you want to help.
9. Do not torment him/her.
10. Talk calmly, as usual.
11. Do not be surprised if he/she gets angry. Many of the users do that.
12. Tell your friend where he/she can find professional help and offer to accompany them. Convince your friend that there is nothing worrying in a consultation with a specialist.
13. Do not try drugs in order to show your friend how he/she behaves under their influence or to demonstrate that you can stop. This is one of the ways to get "hooked up".
14. Make it clear to yourself that despite your desire to help your friend, he/she makes the decision and assumes control over their life.
15. Offer help but do not feel guilty if your help is not accepted.

3. Participants divide themselves in groups and participate voluntarily. Assist the group only in case they request help. After the group work, each group presents the risks of such a support and the necessary measures to be taken in order to help the friend in need. The other groups add up suggestions from their lists. The process should last no more than 15 minutes.

4. Close the exercise with conclusions about the power of friendship, personal responsibility, the need of support by others (family, specialists, friends, community leaders, influential people, etc.)

Exercise 4: Feel free to say "No"

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Brainstorming, work in pairs
Requirements:	For the participants – flip chart, markers
Age group:	15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic of communication skills, which help us find friends and state/defend personal positions and values. Research the participants' attitude towards their own skills – positive, negative or such that might not be fully rationalised. Remind them that everybody has several personality traits, which are valued by his/her friends. Ask the participants to give examples of such traits. However, at least once everybody has found themselves in a position to be asked/requested to do something risky, dangerous or even against the law. What should we do in this case? How shall we say "No" without insulting our friend or without feeling awkward?

Activities:

1. Announce that in the following 10 minutes, each participant should suggest as many specific refusal-related statements and actions as possible. Write down all the suggestions without discussing or rephrasing them. Further, in another 10 minutes the participants work in pairs and try to apply the suggested refusal statements.

2. Initiate a discussion by asking some of the following questions:

- What method for refusal did you use?
- Was it successful?
- How did you feel in the role of the refusing party?
- How would you conduct a real-life refusal situation?

The underlying notion is the importance of personal responsibility, skills for effective management of different situations and the belief in one's personal capabilities.

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.3. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Discussion Topics:

- Aggressive behaviour
- Conflict resolution
- Value system

Goals:

- Acquire knowledge on the nature of conflict as a social phenomenon
- Develop skills for conflict analysis and planning a strategy for individual approach to conflict resolution
- Develop skills for managing emotional reactions and increasing self-esteem through the newly acquired competences
- Develop skills for anticipating the consequences of one's own reactions
- Develop skills for self-control and positive attitude towards anger management
- Rationalise the link between emotions and behaviour
- Understand the mechanisms of emerging aggression and personal feelings towards it
- Develop zero-tolerance attitude towards violence

Expected Results:

- Adolescents are able to understand better conflict as part of life and as a factor of change;
- Adolescents demonstrate increased sensitivity to personal responsibility and resources for conflict management;
- Adolescents have developed skills for protection from and management of stress through self-preserving methods;
- Adolescents have developed skills for anticipating the consequences of their own actions.
- Adolescents have developed skills for self-control and positive attitude towards anger management.
- Adolescents are able to rationalise the link between emotions and behaviour.
- Adolescents understand the mechanisms of emerging aggression and are aware of their own feelings towards it.
- Adolescents demonstrate zero tolerance to violence.

Overview of Exercises:

Stage	Conflict Resolution	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Debates (20-30 minutes)	Debate	
	Chairs (20 minutes)	Structured exercise, discussion	
	Alphabet of anger (30 minutes)	Group work	
	The most common acts of aggression (30 minutes)	Group work, lecture	
	With eyes towards the darkness of life (30 minutes)	Group work, case study, lecture	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Aggression

Aggression is a destructive behaviour, which causes harm or pain. Often conditions like disappointment, dissatisfaction and anger can cause acts of aggression. Sometimes aggression can be learned through imitating somebody else's actions and thus, it can be acquired as a personal model of behaviour. The influence of different models of aggression can grow exponentially high through a replacement of common values (goodness, cooperation and mutual understanding are replaced by wrong-doing, pressure and brute force). Quite often, the media is presenting models of aggressive behaviour, which blend entertainment with violence, leading to the formation of a wrongful behaviour model.

Aggressive models are reinforced further by a second mechanism, often used in the entertainment industry as well. This mechanism portrays aggression and physical violence as means to combat evil. This can foster the acquisition of an aggressive model of behaviour from an early age and poses many dangers.

Counteracting aggression requires common and individual efforts. Key aspects of a non-violent, non-harmful behaviour model are development of empathy, overcoming alienation and applying a dialogue-oriented communication style. Problem and conflict management without the use of violence is considered a fundamental social skill and a sign of maturity. Often aggression is caused by conflicts, which are part of our everyday life – we face them in our interaction with friends and family, at school, on the street. Some of those conflicts are easy to manage, others require specific management strategy.

Causes of violence can be:

- individual differences in perception
- scarce resources – ex., financial
- values, norms and culture
- conflict of social roles
- unfair treatment
- external uneasiness

There are different conflict management approaches because people react differently; these are competition, cooperation, compromise, avoidance, adaptation or coercion. Conflict management requires:

- familiarity with the situation and its history
- negotiation skills
- personal behaviour control skills
- effective communication skills
- problem resolution skills
- acknowledgement of the other party's interests

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic of aggression by initiating a discussion on the following questions:

- How do you describe violent behaviour?
- Where do you observe violence most often?
- What types of aggressive behaviour can you determine?
- Have you experienced an aggressive behaviour (for example, as a victim)?
- Why and when do people become aggressive?
- How do you react in these cases?
- What are the most effective measures to combat aggression?

Activities:

Write down main ideas on the board in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options:**Exercise 1: Debates**

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Debate
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise by explaining the nature of the “debate” technique. Divide the participants in three groups. The peer educator’s task is to read a statement – the first group must advocate for it, the second must oppose the statement and the third one must decide which group wins the debate. The advocating and opposing groups can provide up to three arguments. The first one explains their position, i.e. for or against the statement. The second statement intends to disprove of the arguments of the other party and the final one provides a platform to respond to the previous argument. The third group must follow carefully the debate and decide which team wins the debate and why.

Activities:

The peer educator chooses a statement related to the topic of aggression, but it should not be unambiguously defined “for or against violence”. An example of an appropriate, debate-triggering statement is “Community and its value system is a primary cause of aggression on part of the community members.” The peer educator can also use a recent issue covered in the media and related to aggression. The goal of the exercise is to develop skills for an argument-based debate and consideration of different viewpoints because the lack of these competences is one of the main reasons for acts of aggression and violence in the first place.

Exercise 2: Chairs

Duration: 20 minutes
Methods: Structured exercise, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – instructions for each one of them
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare three types of instructions and write them down on small sheets of paper:

Instruction 1: Place all chairs in the room in a circle. (10 minutes)

Instruction 2: Place all chairs close to the door. (10 minutes)

Instruction 3: Place all chairs close to the window. (10 minutes)

Activities:

1. Each participant receives one of the instructions above. Try to distribute them evenly among all participants in the group. Ask them not to show their instructions to one another. Request active participation and close observation of the instructions.
2. Participants should work on the task for about 10 minutes. Intervene only in case there is a risk to finish before the end of the allocated time. After they are finished, invite everyone to start a group discussion.

The discussion should focus on the following questions:

- Did you follow the instructions?
 - How did you communicate with the participants who wanted to alternate the task in some way?
 - Did you argue/quarrel/cooperate?
 - If you confronted one another, how did you do it?
3. Summarise the results and establish a link between the individual styles of conflict resolution and the causes, which have provoked the conflict.

Exercise 3: Alphabet of anger

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Group work
Requirements:	For the participants – flip chart, markers, tape
Age group:	14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Small group work should take place in different parts of the room where the participants can discuss and note down their ideas. Prepare three posters with three separate tasks on each of them.

Activities:

1. The participants are divided in three groups. Each group receives a task, previously written on a poster:
Group 1: Most common reasons for anger
Group 2: Positive aspects of anger expression
Group 3: Negative aspects of anger expression
2. After 15 minutes of discussion, each group should choose a spokesperson to present the notes on the poster.
3. The discussion should focus on the reasons and consequences of anger, as well as on efforts to manage it. Emphasise the negative consequences and their influence on other people. Guide the participants to find ways to manage anger constructively.
4. The summary focuses on the understanding that anger is part of human nature. However, anger management helps overcome difficulties without tension.

Exercise 4: Most common acts of aggression

Duration:	30 minutes
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Methods: Group work, lecture
Requirements: For the participants – flip chart paper, markers, tape
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare posters to be used during the session by writing down different tasks for the groups. Introduce the exercise by emphasising that human behaviour can sometimes be characterised as aggressive. Explain that aggression is a type of behaviour that seeks conscious causation of harm or pain and is not limited to a specific location or time.

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in four groups. Each group must list the most common acts of aggression in no more than 10 minutes. Use the following instructions:

Group 1: Acts of aggression on the street

Group 2: Acts of aggression in the family

Group 3: Acts of aggression among friends and peers

Group 4: Acts of aggression at school

2. After time is over, each group chooses a spokesperson and presents their ideas, supporting them with examples from their everyday life.

3. During the discussion encourage the participants to analyse the consequences of aggression for the aggressor and the victim. Emphasise the negative consequences and dangers of an aggressive behaviour.

Exercise 5: With eyes towards the darkness of life

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Group work, case study, lecture
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Choose relevant articles from the media or the Internet, which portray different “faces” of aggression, violence and outrage. Using the information, prepare a series of case studies.

Activities:

1. Introduce the exercise by underlining that aggression, violence and coercion may have many “faces” but they share a common characteristic – causation of harm and pain. One of the most common acts of aggression is physical, psychological and sexual violence. Although it might be easy to identify aggression in its various forms, many people become victims. Usually they do not make use of protective mechanisms because they are not aware of one or they are afraid.

2. Divide the participants in groups depending on the number of participants. Each group receives one of the following case studies:

"It is a complete hell at home. They have faced financial hardship lately and they have been having constant fights. Even the most insignificant thing makes my dad beat my mother and me. He does not stop until we are all covered in bruises. The next day he acts as if nothing has happened; until he gets angry again. I am ashamed and I make up excuses in front of my friends. I am angry that my mom tolerates all this. Sometimes I think that I hate both of them. I want to grow up in order to be able to stand against him." (14-year old boy)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"My dad sends me to beg on the streets because I am older. If I refuse, he beats the hell out of me. If I do not bring back enough money, he does not give me food and if he is drunk, he beats me." (10-year old girl)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"I went to Greece with him because he told me that there is an opportunity for me to work waiter for three months. I was speechless when I arrived there and realised what I was going to do. I told him that I am still a student, I tried to run away. They beat me brutally, raped me many times and then – the story goes from client to client." (17-year old girl)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"I lived with my mother but I ran away because I could not take it anymore. She is constantly shouting and insulting me. She says that I am dumb and stupid and I will fail. I am tired of being considered a failure. I am ashamed in front of my fellow students. I do not dare sharing how I let my mother treat me at home, how she humiliates and crushes me." (16-year old girl)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"A friend of mine introduced me to this man. He used to give me pocket money, take me to Fast food and buy me cigarettes. I did not suspect anything when he introduced me to a friend of his, nor did I anticipate anything when he suggested bringing a friend. Gradually we became close and it happened; at first, I resisted but then I reconciled. When the scandal came to light, everybody became aware. Now the others are laughing at me and say that I am gay." (14-year old boy)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"I went to a party with these boys. We had a drink and the atmosphere became pleasant. There were other people present there. Then suddenly I lost any recollection of many things. The next morning a man told me that they had taken pictures of me nude. One of the boys told me that pictures of me had been uploaded online and they could make money out of them. I am afraid that somebody would discover this story." (13-years old girl)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"I go to school with fear because older boys often take my pocket money and some things they find attractive. Once they even took my watch and threatened me not to tell anybody otherwise they would beat me." (10-year old boy)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"I live in village near of Shkodra city. Some time ago, two of my fellow students raped me in the locker room.

I did not dare scream for help because I was ashamed. Now they are constantly throwing out hints and insults at me. I am scared to be alone in a room or in the yard. I have the feeling that the other boys know about what happened as well because they look at me ironically. I am dead scared that it might happen again, but I do not dare tell anyone about it." (13-year old girl).

Define the type of violence.

"The other boys in the dormitory are making fun of me because I am smaller and weaker. They constantly make me carry their things, make their beds, clean the room and sometimes even wash their clothes. They often take my breakfast away. If I try to oppose them, they beat me. Once they even tied me back to my bed." (12-year old boy)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"I thought I am lucky because my love was shared. I agreed to visit his uncle together. Then everything turned into a nightmare. The two of them beat and raped me repeatedly. This hell went on for two weeks. They sold me at one boys group. The beating started all over again if I did not have enough clients." (16-year old girl)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

"I understood that my father and brothers had decided to marry me. I overheard them yesterday negotiating the price with the groom-to-be. I do not know him because he lives in another city. I do not want to get married, I want to study. I have dreams but everything is over now, my childhood including." (14-year old girl -Roma Community)

Define the type of violence.

Note what could be done in this case.

3. The task of each group is to read the case study, define the type of violence and suggest what measures could be applied in the particular case. Each group has 10 minutes to complete the task.
4. After time is over, all participants should present their case and recommendations and initiate a discussion. Each participant can add information, suggest other measures and ask questions.
5. The emphasis should be on the skills and preparedness to identify violence and look for support and protection in case one is involved in a dangerous situation. Note down the conclusions on the flip chart.

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.4. SAFE MIGRATION

Discussion Topics:

- Safe migration
- Trafficking in human beings
- Work abroad
- Advice for self-protection

Goals:

- Raise the awareness to the problem of unsafe migration, which may lead to trafficking in human beings
- Bring the attention to basic rules of safe migration
- Discuss and define different types of trafficking in human beings and traffickers' profiles
- Develop skills to recognise potential risks of being involved in trafficking in human beings

Expected Results:

- Adolescents demonstrate raised awareness to the problem of unsafe migration, which may lead to trafficking in human beings.
- Adolescents are informed about the rules of safe migration.
- Adolescents recognise different types of trafficking in human beings and traffickers' profiles.
- Adolescents identify potential risks of being involved in trafficking in human beings.

Stage	Safe Migration	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Orient express (30 minutes)	Role play, discussion	
	The story of a young boy (30 minutes)	Communication game, discussion	
	Emigrants (30 minutes)	Role play, discussion	
	My perception of trafficking in human beings (30 minutes)	Brainstorming, lecture	
	Darts (20 minutes)	Game, discussion	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Safe migration

Safe migration occurs when the rights of the traveller are protected during the entire process of travelling. The specific human rights to be observed are set by different international standards in the field of migration.

Safe migration and trafficking in human beings

The direct link between migration and trafficking in human beings is visible in the work of numerous government and non-government institutions. These institutions attempt not only to provide information on dangers associated with trafficking in human beings, but also to provide migrants with useful information on safe migration, employment abroad and services they can use as migrants. These organisations usually provide hotlines for information on how to verify the foreign employers and distribute printed materials with information on visa requirements, legal regulations, support for migrants in different EU countries (ex. contact details of embassies and NGOs in the foreign country) and information about the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking in human beings.

Another strategy adopted mainly by government agencies is the dissemination of information materials on the opportunities for legal work abroad. Campaigns associated with finding a job abroad normally use clear messages and do not try to hide the connection between illegal migration and trafficking in human beings. These campaigns are directed to a lesser extent to trafficking in human beings and more to the concept of safe migration; it is usually achieved by changing scary, negative messages into positive ones. Often they offer practical information, which allows the target group to make informed decisions and to protect itself.

Many migrants today are undocumented, without status or illegal. They bear their own responsibility to take care of their status and identification documents and therefore, accept any applicable restrictions. Meanwhile, each country is obliged to protect the rights of all persons within its territory, regardless of their legal or other status.

Trafficking in human beings

“Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Any person that has been a subject to human trafficking is a victim of trafficking. Possible risk groups are children and young people under 18 years of age, lured by false promises or abducted.

The most common recruitment methods are:

- Kidnapping
- Promises for better paid employment
- Sale by family members, relatives or friends
- Promises to travel

Typically, victims of trafficking in human beings are lured by people, whom they trust. Recruitment is facilitated by promises of easy and pleasant life or well-paid employment. Job responsibilities are presented as attractive and well-paid and often have nothing to do with the real duties of the potential victim.

Types of trafficking in human beings according to purpose:

- Trafficking for sexual exploitation – according Albanian governmental and Albania National Coalition of Anti-Trafficking Shelters identified 81 potential trafficking victims, with an additional five victims officially recognized in 2020. Of the 85 total victims, 58 were children and 62 were female have become victims of human trafficking.
- Trafficking for international adoption, donation of organs and other – According to data in various reports, there is a network for child trafficking in Albania, which “exports” babies for adoption or organ donation in Greece and Italy
- Trafficking for the child labour market (theft, begging, and work in the heavy industry) Albanian children aged between 12 and 14 years beg, steal and prostitute themselves within Albanian cities and in several countries in Western Europe.

How do traffickers operate?

According to an European Network Against Child Trafficking Report, traffickers operate as follows:

- Transport the person to a big city, lock them and abuse them (emotional, mental and/or physical coercion).
- Arrange transportation outside the country of origin.
- After leaving the country, the traffickers confiscate the victims’ identity documents and transport the victims to different destinations.

Protection from trafficking in human beings:

Public authorities, commissions, centres and shelters within their jurisdiction render protection and assistance. Abroad these functions are carried out by Albania diplomatic and consular missions in the respective country. Victims of trafficking are granted anonymity and protection of personal data. Upon receiving information about a child victim of trafficking, the shelters or centres are required to promptly notify the State Agency for Child Protection, which shall take appropriate measures under the Child Protection Act. Children victims of trafficking are accommodated at separate premises from adults. Children victims of trafficking are provided with training/education in state and municipal schools in the country.

Work abroad

If one is applying for work abroad, they should check whether the company is authorised to

carry out brokering of information and employment of Albanian citizens. Ministry of Health and Social Protection publishes on its website companies authorised to perform such an activity. The company, mediating employment opportunities abroad, must provide additional information:

- Existing labour legislation in the foreign country
- Additional legal requirements in the foreign country
- Specific requirements for applicants under local common law

The employer must provide employees with medical assistance under the regulations in Albania . When treatment in the foreign country requires immediate payment, the employer shall assume annual cost up to 50 percent of a monthly salary. Costs for legal representation of the employee abroad or protection of the rights of their relatives (related to their work abroad) shall be borne by the employer. Upon detection of violations, the issue should be brought to the attention of the Employment Agency and State Agency for Albanians Abroad.

Duties of the employer:

Within the framework of any employment relationship, the employer has several responsibilities to provide:

- work that is mutually agreed
- work place and conditions in accordance to the nature of work
- safe and healthy working conditions
- job description

The employer must observe the dignity of the employee while performing their work and pay the agreed remuneration in due time.

Protection from discrimination

When announcing the vacancy and before concluding the contract, the employer has no right to ask the applicant about information and to set requirements related to signs of gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, origin, religion or faith, beliefs, political affiliation, private or public status, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, property status, except when this requirement is crucial and essential to the nature of occupation/activity or the conditions under which it takes place. Employers are not permitted to refuse work due to pregnancy, maternity or parental leave.

Protection of the person

It shall be deemed illegal if in the course of performing one's professional duties, one's employer:

- forces the employee into prostitution
- coerces the employee to do or experience an act against one's will by using force, threat or abuse of power
- breaks occupational safety rules and thereby endanger one's life and health
- deliberately prevents the employee from obtaining a job position or force an employee to resign due to the employee's nationality, race, religion, origin, membership or lack thereof to other organisations, political party, movement or coalition with a political purpose

Advice on self-protection :

- 1.** Carefully research the company/university/person with which one will come in contact by looking for information from institutions, NGOs, police, the Internet, friends or acquaintances.
- 2.** Prior to departure, one must take care to provide relatives and friends with:
 - one's photo and a copy of passport
 - phone number and address abroad
 - phone number and address of the person/organisation/employer/university in the destination country
 - contact details of the embassy/consulate in the country of destination
 - a copy of one's employment contract
- 3.** Before one leaves, it is advisable to discuss with family and friends a signal/phrase/sentence in cases of emergency when one is in distress/trouble. In the majority of human trafficking cases, traffickers allow one or two phone calls (usually being guarded during the call). Therefore, it might be very helpful and even the only possible action one can take at a given moment.

An example could be: "There is a lot of work here.", "The weather is very hot" or "I found an awesome boyfriend." "I get earn a lot of money" When one says these words, even in the presence of traffickers, one's family or relatives will become aware of the troublesome situation and will be able to take action.
- 4.** When one agrees to work abroad, a preliminary contract must be signed, indicating:
 - employer's name
 - exact employment location
 - employment conditions/ remuneration/accommodation
 - contract duration
- 5.** Before going abroad, one should contact the Embassy of Albania in the respective country and ask for current information on residence and employment conditions and requirements.
- 6.** One must note down the contact details of the Albanian Embassy/Consulate in the country of destination. One should keep this information in a secret place and know that one can always get in contact in case of need.
- 7.** When one needs a visa to enter a country, one should be aware of its period of validity. One needs to be aware of this period and know that if it expires while still residing in the country of destination, some grave consequences might follow.
- 8.** One needs to know a foreign language. If one does not know a foreign language, one must learn basic phrases in the language of the destination country.
- 9.** Under no circumstances one should give their identity documents to anyone!
- 10.** If one feels threatened in the country of destination, one should contact:
 - Albanian Embassy/Consulate
 - local police
 - local, Albanian or international NGOs
 - relatives, friends and acquaintances
- 11.** If one does not have access to phone, they must ask strangers for assistance (i.e. to call or leave a message at the nearest police station). One should provide personal data (name, country of origin), location in country of destination and source of threat in order to enable the local authorities to offer quick and adequate intervention.

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic of safe migration by initiating a discussion on the following questions:

- What is safe migration?
- What types of trafficking in human beings do you know?
- What is the link between trafficking in human beings and migration?
- Which groups of people are more vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking in human beings?
- How do traffickers operate?
- Who is responsible for granting protection in cases of trafficking in human beings?
- What should you be aware of when looking for employment abroad?
- What would you advice a friend of yours who is about to travel abroad?

Activities:

Write down the main ideas of participants in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options:

Exercise 1: Orient Express

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Role play, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – cards with role characteristics
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise with a short story about the Orient Express. It is a famous luxury passenger train, travelling between Paris and Istanbul. Georges Nagelmakers from Belgium is considered the father of Orient Express. The first trip began on October 4, 1883, when the train with 40 passengers left “Strasbourg” station in Paris with destination Romania. The train composition included two luxury sleeping carriages, a fine restaurant and eight second-class carriages.

The name Orient Express is connected to the last train stop, which is Istanbul. At first, the passengers, travelling by the Orient Express, were mostly British. However, the elite of Europe and America soon started travelling and it became an international “attraction” and a symbol of prestige and luxury.

Orient Express travels to this day, passing through Bulgaria. Its route is Paris - Vienna - Budapest - Bucharest - Ruse - Varna - Istanbul. In Varna the train makes a stop of four hours. The composition has 17 sleeping cars,

three restaurants, one bar car and an auxiliary section. The staff of the Orient Express includes around 40 people from France, Italy and Britain. The luxury train offers its passengers compartments for individual use. Formal wear is desirable at dinner events; breakfast, afternoon tea and drinks are served in the compartments.

Nowadays, people of all nationalities and ages are among the passengers of Orient Express. A ticket for a five-day trip is € 6 000. Orient Express is described in the criminal novels of Agatha Christie and in one of the most iconic films in the history of cinema.

Activities:

1. Explain to the participants that they will participate in role play. Divide them into two groups – a supervisory and performing one (approximately seven-eight people).
2. Remind the participants that the passengers are of different nationalities, ages and social status. Six of the participants receive one of the following roles without showing it to others (If the group is bigger, the peer educator should prepare more roles.):

- a soccer fan
- a rocker
- a woman with AIDS
- a pregnant pickpocket with two small children
- a bodybuilder
- a drug dealer

The seventh participant goes through the different “compartments” of the train. It is his/her task to choose which compartment to enter and how to behave there. The supervisory group evaluates the behaviour of players. The subsequent discussion gives an opportunity for both groups to comment on what they observed during the role play.

3. After the game, the participants have the opportunity to share their impressions and justify their behaviour during the game. The peer educator should ask the following questions:

- Is the screenplay realistic?
- Are the characters typical?
- Have you met similar people in your neighbourhood/city?
- Can we anticipate the behaviour of each protagonist?
- What could remain “invisible”?
- How can we protect ourselves from a potential danger?
- Why did you chose this particular compartment and what determined your behaviour?
- What caught your attention in the behaviour of the other group?

Exercise 2: The story of a young boy

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Communication game, discussion
Requirements:	For the participants – thematic graphic materials
Age group:	15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

The aim of the game is to check the communication skills of the participants, provoke and develop their associative thinking. The peer educator should prepare graphic materials in accordance to the different situations in the following story:

My name is Arber and I am 15 years old. I am a student at a High School. Some fellow students are volunteers with a local non-governmental organisation and during one of the teacher-student information classes introduced us to the problem of trafficking in human beings. They told us more about the problem – its victims, what happens when one is entrapped in the trafficking cycle, what types of human trafficking there are ... It was shocking to understand that even adults can fall prey to human trafficking ... I have always thought that young girls are being trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and also children for the purpose of organ donation. But I never thought that adults might become victims of trafficking for labour exploitation ... to work as slaves.

A month ago my mom and dad went to Italy to work there. Both of them were unemployed and it was very difficult ... They found a job through acquaintances who recommended an employment agency. Work was not supposed to be hard, in the agricultural sector, and they were supposed to earn good money ... Everybody at home was enthusiastic – all of us made plans: my dad wanted to renovate the house, my mom dreamt of buying new furniture ... I imagined my new computer ... We were all spending imaginary money and they had not gone abroad yet.

Well, finally they left ... And I have not heard from them since. Everybody is quiet at home; a week passed. My grandma checks now and then whether the telephone works. We try to contact them, but there is no connection with the numbers we have. We were not worried before the discussion on trafficking ... We thought that there is no network coverage, they are busy and cell phones are switched off ... but now ...

Right after I came home from school I called my father's friend, the one who has put them in contact with the agency. He told me not to worry, as this kind of situation was considered normal. It was just one month after their departure. I told him that I was worried for my parents because they might have fallen prey to human trafficking ... He got slightly angry. He asked to meet me.

I decided that I had to check personally – I called my fellow students who organised the information session in class. They told me to gather as much information as possible – about the agency, the specific conditions of my parents' employment (city, company, etc), their trip details (date of departure, how long we were out of contact), etc. Later we started calling acquaintances in the police; we talked with representatives of the Albanian Embassy in Italy. And we did it! We found my parents and today I am waiting for them at the station.

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in pairs. (If the group is bigger, choose four-five pairs.)
2. Instruct them to stand with their backs towards each other. One of the participants holds the graphic material and should describe with words the scenario, depicted on the drawing. The other participant should make an association and choose one word that describes best the situation, followed by an appraisal whether it is a positive or negative situation.
3. After the game is over, the peer educator asks all the participants about their feelings about the game, the different answers, etc. Following the discussion, one of the participants should read Arber's story. Emphasise that it is not always possible to "read" correctly a situation; some things always remain hidden. This is why it

is important to develop skills for a realistic evaluation of different situations in life.

Exercise 3: Emigrants

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Role play, discussion
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise by discussing briefly globalisation, the European Union, migration, migrant situation. Emphasise the problems that might occur due to lack of mutual respect and tolerance.

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in two groups. The first group represents the “emigrants” and the second group – the “local citizens”. The participants should form two parallel lines – the “emigrants” are instructed to tell the “local citizens” about their difficult situation and to ask for help. The “local citizens” must demonstrate negative attitude. They should express hostility, arrogance, neglect, contempt. The groups have five minutes for the role play.
2. After time is over, the “emigrants” should extend the same request to the “local citizens”, who should respond positively. They should express commitment, respect, understanding, tolerance and approval. In the end of the exercise, participants share how they felt about the different roles. The exercise should help the participants realise possible problems related to the opposition between “own” and “foreign”.
3. The peer educator encourages the participants to reach independently to the conclusion that tolerance and mutual respect are essential in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic setting.

Exercise 4: My perception of trafficking in human beings

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Brainstorming, lecture
Requirements: For the peer educator – flip chart, markers, tape
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise by reminding that sometimes people find themselves in dangerous situations not because they are bad, but because they placed too much trust and did not recognise all the potential risks of a situation.

Activities:

1. Suggest to the participants to share the first association they make when they hear the concept “trafficking in human beings”.
2. In about 10 minutes all suggestions should be written on the flip chart without being discussed. After the list is complete, the peer educator initiates a discussion. The associations should be grouped according to a common trait. The discussion should focus on the dangers, the possible “traps” (ambiguous job offers, invitations by strangers, unrealistic promises) and the search for solutions.
3. Following the discussion, the participants should be able to summarise the perceptions about

human trafficking and draw some basic conclusions. Emphasise the personal risk factors of human trafficking (stress, psychological traumas, physical violence, dropping out of school, etc.) and the social factors contributing to the intensification of the problem (organised crime, trafficking channels, and overall uncertainty). Encourage the search for possible solutions.

Exercise 5: Darts

Duration: 20 minutes
Methods: Game, discussion
Requirements: For the peer educator – dartboard, drawn on a flip chart sheet with three circles inside (green, yellow and red); darts, note cards
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Guidelines:
The goal of the game is to evaluate adolescents’ knowledge in three directions – how to search for a job in Bulgaria, how to prepare adequately for travelling abroad and what the prerequisites for safe behaviour, lifestyle, work and study abroad are.

Activities:
1. Prepare the dartboard and enough note cards with questions for all participants. Place the dartboard on the whiteboard or on one of the walls.
2. Each participant throws the darts (or other magnetic figures) and depending on the colour within the dartboard, the participant takes out a note card with a question. The colours for the three topics are:
GREEN – How should you search for a job in Bulgaria?
YELLOW – How should you prepare adequately for travelling abroad?
RED – What are the prerequisites for safe behaviour, lifestyle, work and study abroad?
Answering the respective question might also involve a discussion among the participants.

GREEN QUESTION	YELLOW QUESTION	RED QUESTION
How many different ways do you know for job searching? List at least three.	You have been offered an employment contract, written in the language of the destination country. Are you going to sign the contract?	You are in a new city abroad. Which are the first three places you will inquire about?
What obligatory information should you provide in your CV?	List all the necessary documents for travelling abroad.	Suggest different places to store one’s identification documents while being abroad. Justify your suggestion.
What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of job search through job announcements?	List three sources of information about the country, which you are about to visit.	If the conditions set in your employment contract do not correspond to the real conditions, whom are you going to inform about this?

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.5. SAFE INTERNET USE

Discussion Topics:

- Internet use
- Dangers in the virtual space
- Interaction in the virtual space
- Types of online communication
- Social networks
- Computer games
- Online pornography and paedophilia/grooming

Goals:

- Discuss and rationalise potential dangers within the virtual space and online communication
- Discuss basic safety rules in order to incorporate these in daily online interaction
- Create an attitude of sharing and looking for helpful resources in difficult situations
- Create an attitude and responsible position towards one's own safety
- Encourage the formation of a responsible behaviour towards others and respect for the inviolability of people
- Foster personal responsibility when sharing information
- Realise the consequences of aggressive behaviour and disrespect of others

Expected Results:

- Adolescents demonstrate sensitivity towards their own safety.

Stage	Safe Internet Use	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	My Faceboard (30-40 minutes)	Collage, presentation, discussion	
	Me and the others on the Internet (30 minutes)	Group work, case study, discussion	
	How to help a friend (30 minutes)	Group work, case study, presentation, discussion	
	Anna's case (30 minutes)	Group work, case study, discussion	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Internet use

Using a computer and the Internet is a routine for many people around the world. Adolescents nowadays cannot imagine communication without a computer and learn to use a keyboard easier than learning to write. Often children teach their parents how to benefit from the tremendous opportunities of the global network, but they are not always aware of the potential dangers. Measures for child safety are the responsibility of each family and school in the community. Therefore, it is a worldwide trend to design and apply different tools for computer protection, access restriction to certain applications, games and sites, which can pose a threat to children.

Dangers on the Internet

There are different potential dangers on the Internet. Communicating with inimical people, who hide their identity and manipulate children, is one of them. These are not just paedophiles who become concerned, listening and supporting web-friends during an online communication. They can be also hackers, crackers, and distributors of pornographic, racist or xenophobic materials. It turns out that the most tempting aspect for adolescents on the Internet – anonymity or the possibility to construct a desired identity and facilitate interpersonal contact – is actually the biggest threat to their security. The increasingly widespread use of social networks by minors also poses many risks – from misuse of published personal information to virtual violence and abuse, which increasingly becomes real.

Social networks have rapidly penetrated the lives of adolescents and they are still not aware of the potential risks and ways to prevent them. This type of communication is gradually substituting the real interaction, which carries a number of hazards associated with the personal development of children, their communication and social skills. The solution to these problems is not setting an age limit for creating a profile, but preventing and raising the awareness of children, parents and teachers how to use social networks responsibly.

Internet threats may have a material dimension as well. Users are mostly afraid of viruses, but they should not underestimate the serious danger of online shopping triggered programmes that allow financial fraud and crime. Opportunities for online harassment are constantly improving; therefore, adolescents should be kept informed about potential threats and educated on Internet ethics and safe online behaviour.

Communicating on the Internet

Today the Internet is used for both formal and informal communication – interacting with many different people, finding friends, joining social group. Communication over the Internet poses none of the known limits and rules; the virtual space allows us to remain anonymous. Mistakes cannot be punished and shared information cannot be verified. What is important for electronic communication, however, is to be able to distinguish formal from informal communication.

Formal electronic communication

This is the communication with employers, institutions, professionals/specialists. The following points should be observed:

- polite and grammatically correct language (greetings, polite address, etc.)
- presentation of ourselves or our group/organisation (brief, informative)
- presentation of the issue at hand (clear, comprehensive)
- possible time span/deadline for the required information

Informal electronic communication

This is the communication by electronic mail between friends, in various discussion groups (forums, chats and conferences), interactive sites, social networks and others. Here grammar and punctuation are not given a priority. Important are humour, sharing and curiosity. The Internet is a unique opportunity not only to access vast amounts of information, but also in its capacity of a communication tool for the younger generation. Few aspects are especially attractive:

- It is easy to create new contacts that can later be terminated by a simple click.
- It allows the user to be whomever they want or at least to pretend so because of the online anonymity.
- It is easy to find someone who has similar interests and who can empathise with your problems in the virtual space.

These three advantages also pose the greatest danger on the Internet. An interpersonal relationship strengthens over time because of the efforts we invest to nurture it. However, the easiness with which people associate with and abandon virtual friends separates them from reality and leaves them only with a network of potential relations without a real emotion. Communicating on the Internet carries specific risks, which may become a real threat to the health and safety of adolescents. Their safety on the Internet is a subject of rules and a matter of education, control, but also personal responsibility.

Types of online communication

Adolescents often share their experiences first with their friends. They do not always realise the importance of sharing personal information over the Internet to their personal safety. In order to search for new acquaintances or maintain old friendships, adolescents are often inclined to use various forms of online communication where one needs to register and create a profile – chats, forums, social networks, dating sites, etc. In a large percentage of cases, Internet intruders initially find their victims in social networks or dating sites, then communication is transferred to skype, where a real meeting is scheduled. Websites of this kind have clearly defined moral and ethical rules, which everyone must agree to before registering their account. The question is whether the adolescents ever read these rules and to what extent they comply with them.

Often children unintentionally expose themselves to risk by posting personal information or photos and videos with provocative content. In their daily online communication, children do

not understand the responsibility they bear for their behaviour, they are not aware of the potential risks and they are not always able to resist aggressive and disruptive behaviour. Adolescents can be susceptible to influence and suggestions by their unknown acquaintances during online communication through e-mail, discussion forums, advertisements, etc.

Social networks

In recent years the importance and use of virtual social networks is growing. The latest data shows that Facebook, for example, has already over 300 million users. Originally intended as a network to connect people by interests, views, similar professional field, etc., Facebook has gradually become a global “gossip place” and a way of killing free time. Besides the number of adults, there is a progressive increase in the number of adolescents who daily visit this “virtual community”. The various and constantly rising network elements include causes, tests, photos, videos, posts and more with an obscene and inappropriate content for children under the age of 18. Some of the profiles of young members are quite provocative and challenging, which in turn exposes children to certain risks. Facebook grants options to lock or limit the account information, but many users do not benefit from this possibility because in most cases, they are not aware of it or consciously strive for greater “publicity”. It is therefore important for adolescents to be familiar with the individual components of the network, to receive regular information about new features and possibilities, potential risks and ways to prevent them.

In Bulgaria the role of social networks is served through the various dating sites where a large percentage of teenagers have their own profile. Communication within this type of sites can easily be turned into a virtual, and then in real harassment. These sites are also a preferred channel by paedophiles, who initiate a contact with their potential victims in a social network, then the conversation is transferred to skype, which leads to a personal meeting. Teenagers are rarely aware of the risks they are exposed to and do not understand the responsibility associated with their “publicity”. In some cases, their virtual profile/identity may even become a barrier to their professional image in the future.

Computer games

Addiction to computer games is one of the most discussed topics. It is very difficult to warn adolescents especially when their activity is entertaining and seemingly not harmful to anyone. Opinions on the topic are often polarised. Parents usually blame games that are overloaded with violence and aggression. Meanwhile, psychologists claim that there are no addictive games; rather there are gamers prone to addiction. Addiction to the Internet is comparable to all other addictions – alcoholism, drug addiction, eating and sexual disorders, etc. The road to obsession is the same – use, abuse, dependence. But pathology is acknowledged by specialists to occur when the addiction and compulsive need for “surfing” replaces all other priorities and becomes the sole driving force. For example, time spent without incoming mail can be viewed as a true nightmare. Relief sets in when a new letter is received, even if it is spam. Another significant problem is violence in games. Developing an addiction to such games, the adolescent becomes

aggressive towards others because their mind is preoccupied with the number of “killed” virtual opponents.

Quite often adolescents are influenced by their Internet addiction, losing a real vision of the world and what is happening around them. Sense of time disappears and they become less functional under real conditions. A person, who is addicted to online communication and games, loses their ability of having a normal interaction. It is believed that people with personal and emotional problems are more susceptible to addiction. However, Internet addiction in adolescents is not always associated with obvious problems – it is the easy nature of online communication compared to the one of a real contact that makes it a preferred mode of interaction.

Pornography and paedophiles on the Internet

Internet has become a powerful tool for the dissemination of child pornography – approximately 75% of the porn industry. There is evidence of 40 000 sites worldwide with pornographic content involving children. Quite often children are lured by people with whom they interact on long-term basis and who have earned their trust. Often times there might be a promise of a modelling career and/or a serious remuneration. Sometimes children agree to pose either threatened or blackmailed by adults.

According to data published on the Internet, each year U.S. police registers about 150 000 sex offenders. According to statistics, most paedophiles find their victims on the Internet. The main threat to adolescents in the cyberspace is through:

- Materials with inappropriate content: pornography, materials inciting aggression, extremism, terrorism, racism, drug use, etc.
- Dangerous contacts: often via skype, e-mail, chats, discussion forums, advertisements, etc. Adolescents can be particularly susceptible to influence and even suggestions by adults and can enter into cyber or even real sexual relations with acquaintances from the Internet.

According to the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, one in five teenagers is a frequent visitor to the World Wide Web, has been subject to suggestions of a sexual nature. Much of the paedophiles visit dating sites and social networks where they identify the more vulnerable or depressed adolescents. The “good stranger” cleverly convinces the child that they are the same age, they are good and understanding, which gradually leads to a personal contact. Instant messaging, social networks and forums allow anyone to claim a false identity. Paedophiles are usually educated, well-mannered, widely informed and very good “psychologists”. They are capable of gaining the confidence of an adolescent and convince them in their sincerity because they are patient, supportive and always available.

Sometimes parents and children, already scalded by a contact with paedophiles and crooks, believe that there is no way to prove the offence. However, anonymity on the Internet does not exist. One can always trace the origins of information through the Internet service provider. The problem is that adolescents often do not share with their parents fearful that Internet use will

be prohibited in general.

There is a European association of hotline operators with a membership of 50 countries. These lines are often quite effective because people are not always sure of the rapid action on part of the responsible authorities, they do not want publicity or to be called witnesses in court trials. In Bulgaria, the hotline www.web112.net gives full guarantee of anonymity of the incoming alerts. Its specialists inspect, detect and gather the information and then notify the competent authorities to trace and punish the authors of harmful content.

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by discussing the following questions:

- How much time do you spend online?
- Why do you use Internet the most?
- What kinds of dangers are there while you are online?
- Whom do we communicate with and how?
- What types of online communication do you know/use?
- Do you use social networks? Why do you use those most often? What kinds of dangers are there?
- Is there virtual violence? What is a manifestation of virtual violence?
- Is there addiction to computer games? What does it lead to?
- Where can one encounter paedophiles within the virtual space?

Activities:

Write down the main ideas in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options :

Exercise 1: My Faceboard

Duration: 30 - 40 minutes
Methods: Collage, presentation, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – sheet of paper with size 70/100 (depending on the number of groups), glue, scissors, old magazines, photos, pencils, markers
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

If possible, the exercise should take place in a computer lab.

Activities:

1. Begin with discussion and invite the participants to share their personal experience with social networks. Outline the main risks, which online communication can pose and suggest practical advice how to protect oneself.
2. Let the participants share which sites they visit, where they have created a profile and what its content is. Gradually the attention should be shifted to Facebook and the information and understanding of the participants about it.
3. With the help of the participants, the discussion should lead to an outline of the components of a Facebook profile. If there is a participant with no Facebook registration, the others should explain the main types of online communication and the rules for their use. Some of the participants may voluntarily show their own profiles.
4. Depending on the number of participants, the peer educator divides them in several groups of four to five people. Each group receives a sheet of paper, old magazines, coloured sheets of paper, pencils and other necessary materials. Their goal is to create their Facebook profile. Creating a Facebook profile might urge the participants to approach it differently. Main elements of the real Facebook profile should be kept into consideration:
 - wall
 - information field – photos, personal data, interests, messages, etc.
 - friends' list
 - causes, groups
 - other information
5. Each group has 10 minutes to complete the task, followed by a presentation of the "profile". During the discussion, the participants point out similarities and differences with a real profile.
 - What is different and why?
 - What stops us from expressing or including certain information in the Facebook profile but is not an issue to include it in the real Facebook one?Encourage the participants to comment on the different profile components and to look for potential risks.

Exercise 2: Me and the others on the Internet

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Group work, case study, discussion
Requirements:	For the participants – cases
Age group:	14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Explain to the participants that they will have to evaluate somebody's behaviour and acts in the following 10 minutes. The participants will get acquainted with a short story of a girl their age and they will have to anticipate different scenarios for the development of the story.

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in two or three groups depending on their number and present them the two case studies.

Case 1

are fellow students and friends since kindergarten. Megi is a smart, well-mannered, quiet girl with diverse interest and good school record. She is not very sociable in class; her only close friend is Ana. Megi does not go to parties and clubs and sometimes other boys and girls make fun of her. Ana knows that her friend is writing poetry, but she has not read anything yet. One day she manages to convince Ana to send her some of her poems and she is really surprised how professional and talented Megi actually is. She is so impressed that she starts considering the possibility to disseminate her poem on the Internet in order for everybody to see her friend's talent.

What should Ana do?

Case 2

Olta and Eda are fellow students and friends since kindergarten. Their parents are also in good relations and they often spend their holidays together. This summer the two families spent a joint holiday and the two girls had great time together – they were walking down the beaches, took photos, even went to a club with their parents. Olta is the shy one, she does not communicate much with boys; she is more modest and quieter. Most of the boys consider her uptight and make fun of her. Eda comes with the idea of using her own Facebook profile to publish photos of Olta taken during the holiday so that she can show the boys how pretty her friend actually is.

What should Olta do?

2. Each group has seven minutes to work on the case and then a spokesperson presents the group's advice to Olta. It should be explained that the work of the groups would not be compared or judged; therefore, they can choose to express a wrong advice and elaborate on the negative consequences for the girl.
3. Each group receives case 1 or 2 respectively. After group work is over, ask the spokespersons to present

the group's decision. If there are different pieces of advice among the groups, the participants discuss the

expressed opinions and provide argumentation for their position.

4. The final discussion should focus on evaluating the group work and the main conclusions derived from the topic. Some guiding questions might be:

- Do you know a real case of publication of somebody else's materials: poems, photos, pictures, and letters? What were the consequences?

- Do you consider such action a treachery or a crime?

- How can such actions harm the owner of the materials?

- Do you think it is useful to discuss similar topics?

- When you prepare your homework do you use available online materials?

Exercise 3: How to help a friend

Duration: 30 minutes

Methods: Group work, case study, presentations, discussion

Requirements: For the peer educator – case study
For the participants – e-mail messages, flip chart

Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Ask the participants how often they use online communication, e-mails, skype, social networks, etc. Also inquire whether some of the participants experienced a persistent attempt by an unknown person to establish contact. Explain that they will work in groups on a case study in the following 20 minutes.

Activities:

Read the following case to the participants:

12-year old Elisa is friend with Ina who is the same age. Elisa has moved to another school where she does not have made friends yet. This is why, she is often talking to Ina and share everything with her. Elisa is asking for an advice regarding a boy whom she does not know but has exchanges several e-mails with.

2. Deni the participants in groups and give them a copy of Ina's messages to which they have to respond. If there are participants with no prior experience with dating sites, the peer educator should group them with other who have.

3. Ask the participants to write their answer on the flip chart and use various expressions tools (ex. emoticons).

4. Ask the participants to list their advice in few words/phrases or as a simple statement. Their

answers should be phrased like rules for safe Internet use.

5. Each group receives one of the following “e-mails” and has 10 minutes for an individual work.

Hello Megi,

Last night I received a message from Joni (the one I met online). He said that he had been expelled from school, but he was not sorry at all because he did not like it there. Just like me now. He mentioned we could meet and hang out in the old neighbourhood. I replied that my parents would hardly let me but he told me that I should not bother them for permission, as the old neighbourhood is not that far away. What do you think? Should I meet him? Should I tell my parents?

Hello Megi,

Joni sent me some pictures over the e-mail. He looks like a movie star, he is that cute. My dad will not let me meet him. Thank God that the computer is in my room and he will not see whom I am writing to. I was told not to download files in messages from strangers because there might be computer viruses. But Joni is not a stranger; there should be no problem, right? Have you sent a picture of yours over the e-mail? What shall I do?

Hello Megi,

I told you about Joni. He writes to me very often, but I do not understand everything. Do you use this web page? It is really great. And my parents do not know whom I am writing to. Convenient, right? What shall I do if I do not like what somebody writes to me? Have you told your parents about your online acquaintances?

Hello Megi,

Joni insists on giving him my cell phone number because it would be easier to talk to me and find me everywhere, even at school. What do you think, should I give him my number? Do you share your cell phone number with anyone?

Hello Megi,

Joni wrote to me that he was very angry with me because I was not online on Saturday and he wanted to talk to me. He also told me that if I did not do what he told me, he would tell my parents that we had been writing to each other for months. I would be in trouble because I have not told them about him. How does Joni know where I live? I really do not remember whether I have shared my address with him. What should I do? Should I tell my parents?

Hello Megi ,

Joni sent me an e-mail this morning: “Wait for me at the street close to your house at 10:30 today, we will go to the school to meet some friends”. I replied that I could not. I really do not know how he got my address. Do you think that my answer is the right one? Should I meet him?

Hello Megi ,

I know you told me not to give my cell phone number, but Joni insisted to have a constant connection and I typed my number. This morning he kept on sending me messages, quite annoying. I think a teacher saw me texting back in class. Do you think I should tell that he has bothered me in class? I should have not given him my number. Have you had similar problem?

Hello Megi,

I asked Joni not to message me all day long. He replied instantly that he would wait for me afterschool. I do not remember telling him where I study. I am really worried. What should I do?

Hello Megi,

I ignored Joni s calls few days ago, as you told me. He scared me. I was really worried and I told my parents. They were calm and told me that they would get me a new phone number. Then we discussed the potential dangers in online communication. I have not thought much about the anonymous strangers online – my parents were right, Joni could have been anyone. Now I am sure that the pictures he sent me are not a real.

6. After group work is over, a spokesperson presents the advice of his/her group. Summarise the conclusions/ guidelines in the end of the exercise.

Exercise 4: Ana’s case

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Group work, case study, discussion
Requirements: For the peer educator – case study
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Look for additional information about online child pornography – statistics, law excerpts, etc.

Activities:

1. Initiate a brief introductory discussion by using some of the questions:
 - Which materials do you consider pornographic?
 - What do you understand by “child pornography”?
 - Is the production, storage and/or distribution of child pornography criminal offence?
 - Is a person guilty if they talk over and persuade a child to participate in a pornographic production?
 - Is the child participant in a pornographic production a criminal?
2. Inform the participants that they will work on a case study of a young girl. They have to try and anticipate the consequences of the girl’s actions.
3. Read the following case to the participants:

Anisa has been exchanging e-mails with an acquaintance for the last couple of weeks. They shared common interests – favourite singers, actors, and new movies. They found out that they like one and the same band and they are reading the same book at the moment. She shares her disappointment in her girl friends, some problems at school. He is always supportive and gives pieces of advice. He does not talk much about himself; their conversations are mostly about Anisa’s daily life. All of a sudden, he sends her a photo of himself – he is cute and looks really good. He asks her to send a photo of hers; his particular request is for a sexy one.

What should Anisa do?

4. Divide the participants in several groups. Each group should prepare two scenarios – favourable and less favourable one in no more than 10 minutes. Remind the participants that they have to explore Ana’s options in depth and anticipate the consequences.
5. After group work is over, ask the spokespersons to present the conclusions of their groups and share how they felt about completing Ana’s story. The final discussion should summarise the groups’ experience and together they draw conclusions on safe strategy for online communication.

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.6. HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Discussion Topics:

- Definition and characteristics of health
- Healthy nutrition
- Nutrition in adolescent years
- Personal hygiene
- Piercing
- Acne
- Advice for optimal balance between mental and physical activities and rest
- Smoking
- First aid

Goals:

- Rationalise the importance of health
- Raise the sensitivity to one's own health
- Rationalise one's personal responsibility towards health
- Raise the sensitivity towards healthy nutrition
- Raise the awareness towards harmful consequences of eating disorders
- Rationalise the importance of personal hygiene as part of healthy lifestyle
- Raise the awareness towards the risks and consequences of smoking

Expected Results:

- Adolescents are able to trace the link between health and behaviour.
- Adolescents act responsively towards their own health.
- Adolescents are aware of the link between nutrition habits and healthy lifestyle.
- Adolescents are informed about the need to keep personal hygiene and a good outlook.
- Adolescents are aware of the consequences of smoking.

Overview of Exercises:

Stage	Healthy Lifestyles	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Healthy and unhealthy (30 minutes)	Group work, discussion	
	Healthy lifestyle (30 minutes)	Individual work, discussion	
	Healthy nutrition questionnaire (20 minutes)	Individual work, discussion	
	Mirror (30 minutes)	Work in pairs, discussion	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Definition and characteristics of health

Health is a comprehensive mental, physical and social well-being. It is a state of the organism, which takes into account its functions, diseases and anomalies at any time.

Health is interdependence and well-being of the individual, including the following aspects: mental, physical, emotional, personal, spiritual and social. According to the World Health Organisation, health is the complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease.

Healthy nutrition

Health is the result of many interrelated factors, some of which depend on us. One factor, which is surely under our control and is the most effective and affordable medicine, is namely our food. The key to healthy nutrition is in the balance between the different food groups in our daily regime in order to feel healthy and full of energy.

Healthy nutrition, in general, means an adequate supply of the necessary amounts of nutrients – including vitamins, minerals and fibre. Unhealthy foods, on the other hand, are those rich in fats and sugars. Healthy foods are rich in vitamins and minerals and contribute to the growth of the organism.

Food intake has two main purposes:

- 1) Source of energy – Food is the main source of energy for the body. It is facilitated by the intake of proteins, fats and carbohydrates.
- 2) Building material – Food supplies material to build tissues and organs. Only proteins act as building material.

Nutrients:

- Proteins – Proteins in nature are found only along with fats. Both nutrients are to be found in meat and fish in almost identical quantities, with slight protein predominance. Milk contains almost identical protein-fats ratio, and in nuts – fats amount usually exceeds that of proteins.
- Carbohydrates – An indispensable element of all foods and main supplier of energy for the body. During digestion starch and sugars break down into glucose, which is the primary energy source needed for the function of the brain and the central nervous system. If carbohydrates predominate in one's regime, the result might be obesity. However, carbohydrates must not be reduced too much as they are equally important for good health as other nutrients.
- Fats – A mandatory component of food. Dietary fats are the only providers of essential fatty acids and act as solvents and carriers of fat-soluble vitamins.
- Vitamins – Activate and regulate metabolism. Compared to the intake of other nutrients, the amount of vitamins taken is minimal. However, lack of even one vitamin can endanger the entire human organism.
- Minerals – Vital substances that cannot be synthesised in the body; therefore, they must be

taken with food. Minerals have different functions.

Water is essential for the living organism. Regular intake of sufficient amount of fluids is much more important than the adequate intake of food – a person can survive only a few days without water, while the organism can continue its function without food for weeks, sometimes months. Water dissolves the nutrients, transports them to the cells; it is also intracellular milieu for metabolic processes and eliminates the waste products of metabolism outside the body through the urine and sweat.

Main food groups

The variety of foods and food products in our daily and weekly menu and the balance between dietary intake and nutritional needs are crucial to maintaining good health and performance.

- Cereals and potatoes – They are a primary source of carbohydrates from the group of polysaccharides.
- Vegetables – One food group recognised as a leader in healthy nutrition. Vegetables provide carbohydrates, vitamins, folic acid.
- Fruits – A leader in healthy nutrition. They are rich in water and relatively low in energy, fat-free, contain substances that cannot be delivered by any other food group.
- Milk and dairy products – A valuable nutrient source, source of proteins, calcium and vitamins.
- Meat and meat products, fish, eggs, legumes, nuts – Meat is one of the foods richest in protein. Fish is valuable food and a source of proteins, vitamins, calcium and phosphorus. Beans are rich in protein and starch, vitamins and minerals. Nuts are high-energy food. Their protein composition is similar to that of milk.
- Fats – The richest source of energy. Fats can be vegetable and animal.
- Sugar and sugar products – Sugar is widely used in human nutrition. It is part of the composition of bakery and confectionery products. Sugar is added to soft drinks, coffee, tea, dairy drinks.

Nutrition in adolescent years

During the adolescent period, energy requirement is slightly elevated, while the need for nutrients necessary for growth and sexual maturation rises significantly. There is a particularly high need for protein necessary for muscle growth, red blood cells production, hormone production changes. Physiological need for vitamins and minerals is also higher compared to those in other age groups. Minerals like calcium, iron and zinc play major role in the nutrition of adolescents.

Nutrition of adolescents should be varied, which means at least one representative of each food group in the everyday regime, possibly in each meal. Obesity and eating disorders (ex. anorexia and bulimia) can be equally dangerous to adolescents.

Anorexia is characterised by a strong and constant fear of weight gain. People initiate deliberate starvation or severe restriction of one's regime; they make excessive exercises, take laxatives or diuretic drugs, and induce vomiting. Anorexia is typically present in girls during or soon after puberty.

Bulimia is a serious eating disorder characterised by frequent consumption of large quantities

of food followed by deliberate “cleansing” – through self-induced vomiting, laxatives, diuretic drugs, etc. Bulimia may have many causes but one of the most common is depression.

Prolonged starvation may cause usually moderate “side effects”: headache, nausea, white deposits on the tongue, confusion, palpitation, feeling cold, increased body odour, dry skin, reduced secretion of the mucous membranes, muscle pain. Starving longer than four days may cause serious health problems such as blood pressure drop, rapid or weak pulse, severe weakness, difficulty breathing. In case of presence of these symptoms, starvation should cease immediately. Signs of kidney or liver problems may also appear. Therefore, the process must be supervised by a qualified professional who monitors regularly blood pressure, pulse and basic indicators (blood, urine).

Personal hygiene

Personal hygiene is an important part of general hygiene. It deals with preserving and enhancing human health through the application of sanitary measures. Requirements for personal hygiene are conditioned by the role of the skin and other external organs, which play an important role in the proper development and functioning of the body. Personal hygiene also contributes significantly to the improvement of self-esteem.

Inadequate skin care may cause development of diseases and infections that weaken self-confidence. The mouth is rich in micro organisms that under poor hygiene can become harmful and cause diseases. Good hygienic condition of the nose and mouth ensures proper breathing and feeding and protects people from many diseases. Proper hygienic care of the eyes and ears is essential to the overall human condition. Regular hygienic care is also required by the hairy parts of the body, the external genitals and anus. Maintaining the hygiene of the body and underwear ensures proper conduct of vital functions – breathing, sleeping and rest. This also prevents the body from transmitting infections. Personal hygiene should be maintained daily.

Piercing

Placing an earring by piercing the body also opens the door to all sorts of infections. The reason for the infection of the pierced place is most often poor hygiene of the tools used. Poorly cleaned instruments can cause transmission of hepatitis or other infectious diseases. Sometimes an allergic reaction may occur due to body intolerance to the material of the earring. Piercing sensitive areas such as the tongue or eyebrows may cause bleeding or a large scar.

It is advisable to check the beauty salon prior to getting the piercing. A consultation with a doctor is required in cases of allergies, diabetes, skin diseases, weak immune system, infections or pregnancy. Before placing the piercing, young people must be immunised against hepatitis and tetanus. Depending on the location of the piercing, the body reacts differently: from several weeks to more than one year. Pierced areas should not be touched (especially with unclean hands); the earring should not be pulled often.

Acne

Acne is most often caused by skin contamination or high levels of hormones. Washing the face with soft, fragrance-free or antiseptic soap and warm water may be helpful. Some people discover that lack of certain foods (such as potato chips and chocolate) in their regime improves skin condition. Others believe that food content is not relevant because high level of hormones in the body is the main cause of pimples. For some people drinking larger amounts of water can be effective means for preventing pimples. It is important not to squeeze them because it causes further infection. In this case, special creams or acne lotions can be useful.

Advice for optimal balance between mental and physical activity and rest:

1. Build a daily and weekly programme.
2. Every 45 minutes of work should be followed by a mandatory rest period of 10 minutes.
3. Do not engage in strenuous mental work for more than 4-5 consecutive hours.
4. Set bedtime hour at 22:30 and optimal sleep duration of seven hours.
5. Establish a physical regime with appropriate activities for every day – swimming, running, hiking, other sports (for no less than 1 hour).
6. Eat properly: more vitamins and less fat.
7. Mental work should be followed by engaging in art, music and other cultural activities. It has been proven that the brain rests more when occupied with something pleasant rather than being in a completely idle state.
8. Learn to contemplate nature. This is the best type of resting.

Smoking

Tobacco is the cause of death for more than a million people in Europe every year – death that can be avoided! Although the number of young people who smoke declines on a global scale, one third of them continue to smoke regularly. Social problems in urban environments often lead to smoking among teenagers and even children. They believe that cigarettes help them reduce tension, make them more interesting and significant among peers. For girls, smoking is a way of appearing more confident.

According to the World Health Organisation, smoking is a cause of reduction in life expectancy and premature mortality in the age group 35-64 years. The risk of heart attack in smokers is 10-15 times higher, the risk of stroke is two to four times higher, and that of lung cancer – 8 to 15 times. Annually 4 million people die worldwide from diseases caused by the impact of tobacco. Contrary to the observed decline in the number of smokers in the European Union and the USA over the past 10 years, the number of smokers in Bulgaria is rising. Bulgaria is placed third in the world consumption of cigarettes per capita. Compared to data from 80s, smoking by 13- and 14-year-olds has increased over two times. The risk of serious diseases begins to decline at the time of stopping tobacco use. Continued cessation of smoking reduces the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, chronic lung diseases and other lethal illnesses.

Risks and consequences of smoking

Just a few weeks and several consecutive days of smoking one cigarette is sufficient to trigger nicotine addiction. Tobacco products in any form (cigarettes, pipe, hookah, cigars) are equally harmful and cause many diseases. Use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs has different and more dangerous effect on the brain of adolescents, compared to the one of an adult organism.

Smokers die on average 14 years earlier than non-smokers. Passive smoking is the third leading cause of death after active smoking and alcohol abuse.

Nicotine addiction

Addiction is characterised by an inability to refrain from use of a given substance even with full knowledge of the adverse health effects – smoking certainly meets that definition.

Nicotine causes both physical and psychological dependence. Nicotine is addictive; it activates brain structures, which leads to a feeling of pleasure and happiness, causing the smoker to reach for another cigarette. Nicotine stimulates and relieves simultaneously. Behavioural factors also influence the severity of nicotine addiction. For some people the smell, the feeling of a cigarette and the ritual of holding, lighting and smoking are associated with the overall pleasure of smoking and can greatly influence the fight against the desire to smoke.

The interruption of nicotine intake is followed by symptoms of nicotine craving, lasting a month or more. Symptoms of nicotine withdrawal begin several hours after the last cigarette and are the strongest in the first few days. Irritability, urge to smoke, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance and increased appetite are the most common symptoms, which usually last a month. The strong urge to smoke is a major obstacle to successful cessation. This desire can last up to six months.

The most effective smoking cessation technique is a combination of medication and behavioural counselling. Medical therapy involves the use of nicotine products as a replacement therapy. The goal of behavioural counselling programmes are to identify situations that pose the greatest risk of a return to smoking, help smokers observe and control themselves and create alternative models. A very important condition for success in quitting smoking is personal motivation.

First aid

If a friend gets into an accident or has a complaint, threatening their health or life, we should offer first aid, such as:

- Stay calm.
- Without wasting time, call or look for a doctor.
- If breathing stops, call an ambulance.
- Mouth to mouth resuscitation. This is the simplest and most applicable method in cases of drowning, suffocation, electric shock, road accidents.

The steps are:

- Unbutton the collar and other clothing that tightens the chest.
- Tilt the head back to relieve the airway. Otherwise, the tongue will block the air path,
- Take a deep breath, open your mouth wide and press it tightly to the open mouth of the victim.
- After the first rescue breath, we should watch to see if the chest rises.
- We give another rescue breath until we notice that the victim's chest rises up. Then we stop.
- Throughout the entire Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), we should keep the victim's head tilted back. We should continue with emergency breaths with a frequency of 20-40 per minute until breathing becomes normal.
- If air passage is blocked, we should clear the throat and continue.
- If CPR is performed to an older child or adult – the breaths should be stronger and with pinched nostrils.

Signs that CPR is successful are resumed breathing and rosy skin tone.

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by discussing the following questions:

- What is health?
- What does healthy nutrition include?
- What are the consequences of unhealthy nutrition? What do you know about anorexia and bulimia?
- Why is personal hygiene important?
- What risks can be associated with piercing?
- What are the consequences of smoking?
- How can we fight nicotine addiction?

Activities:

Write down main ideas of the participants in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options :

Exercise 1: Healthy and unhealthy

Duration: 30 minutes

Methods: Group work, discussion
Requirements: For the peer educator – flip chart, markers, tape
For the participants – flip chart, markers
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare two posters prior to the exercise. There is a task on each poster.

Activities:

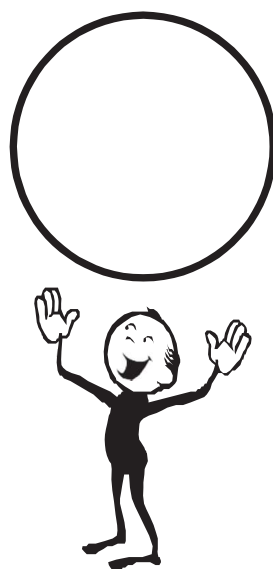
1. Introduce the exercise by asking how often the participants think about their daily routine – which of the activities are healthy/unhealthy. Encourage the participants to provide more answers.
2. The participants are divided in two groups. Each group receives a poster – the first group must list all the healthy activities in everyday life and the second group – the unhealthy ones. Each group has 10 minutes to complete the task. After group work is over, a spokesperson presents the results. The two lists are then discussed with all participants. The focus of the discussion should be on an analysis of the suggested activities and how they relate to the individual daily routine and the health choices one makes every day. An emphasis should be placed on the personal responsibility for one's own health.

Exercise 2: Healthy lifestyle

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Individual work, discussion
Requirements: For the peer educator – “Healthy lifestyle” chart, markers
For the participants – “Healthy lifestyle” work sheet, markers
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Present the chart which is identical to the participants' work sheets:



Exercise 3: Healthy nutrition questionnaire

Duration: 20 minutes
Methods: Individual work, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – questionnaire
Age group: 16 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare a copy of the questionnaire for each participant:

QUESTIONNAIRE ON HEALTHY NUTRITION

Check your knowledge related to the most common nutrition myths. Which are the main mistakes we make in our efforts to eat healthy? This questionnaire helps you understand how well you are informed about healthy nutrition.

Make healthy nutrition part of your life!

1. One portion of vegetables and fruits per day is enough.
a) right
b) wrong
2. Milk consumption leads to overweight and obesity and we should avoid it if we want to lose weight.
a) right
b) wrong
3. High consumption of fats increases the risk of cardio-vascular diseases and some cancer types.
a) right
b) wrong
4. Salt is not harmful when one does not suffer from high blood pressure.
a) right
b) wrong
5. It is necessary to take food supplements (vitamins and minerals) in order to be healthier and active.
a) right
b) wrong
6. Alcohol is beneficial; 1l. of wine per day prevents cardio-vascular diseases.
a) right
b) wrong
7. In order to burn the calories in a piece of cake (500 calories), one must:

- a) walk fast for 30 minutes
 - b) walk for 1 hour
 - c) wrong (no)
8. The fruit with the richest Vitamin C content is:
- a) red currant
 - b) peach
 - c) lemon
9. Compared to other types of oil, olive oil is:
- a) less fatty
 - b) equal in fat
 - c) fattier
10. Bread consumption leads to weight gain:
- a) right
 - b) wrong
11. Cheese is low-calorie food and thus, suitable during diets.
- a) right
 - b) wrong
12. Consumption of natural fruit juices has no consequences to body weight.
- a) right
 - b) wrong
13. Legume consumption should not be accompanied with bread consumption.
- a) right
 - b) wrong
14. Chocolate contains beneficial nutrients.
- a) right
 - b) wrong

Remind the participants that despite the abundant sources of information, there are still a lot of nutrition myths. If one follows such “rules”, they can cause disturbances to the regime and health of a person.

Activities:

1. Each participant receives a copy of the questionnaire with the following instruction: “Carefully read each question. It is a multiple-choice questionnaire. You have to choose the correct answer in your opinion and you have 10 minutes to complete the task.” Each of the participants works individually.
2. After time is over, all participants discuss the questions and answers. They should provide arguments for the answers they have chosen. Encourage the group to listen to each opinion, add information to the answers and stimulate their skills to lead an argument-based discussion.

Answers:

1. Answer: b)
2. Answer: b)
3. Answer: a)
4. Answer: b)
5. Answer: b)
6. Answer: b)
7. Answer: c)
8. Answer: a) Red currant. Its vitamin C content is 200ml., while lemons contain 50ml. and peaches – 30.
9. Answer: b) Equal in fat. All types of oil contain more than 99% fats and have the same calorie value – 900 calories per 100g.
10. Answer: b) Wrong. Bread is a healthy and necessary food. It contains roughly 8% proteins, 50% complex carbohydrates and 0% fats. With its nutrients, bread contributes to a balanced daily regime, as well as to a feeling of satiety, which helps avoid eating between main meals and hence, prevents weight gain.
11. Answer: b) Wrong. Cheese and yellow cheese contain 22 and 30% fats respectively. If on a diet, one should substitute these products with low-fat yoghurt and milk, which also contain proteins and calcium, but have a low calorie value. It is not advisable to eat cheese without bread (with the purpose to lose weight), because one is inclined to eat a larger quantity of cheese and hence, the body receives a higher amount of fats.
12. Answer: b) Wrong. Although fruit juices are more beneficial than the artificially flavoured soft drinks, they tend to be equally sweet. 100ml. of juice and sweet soft drink contain approximately 10g. of sugar, which means that there are 25g. – amount equal to five packets of sugar.
13. Answer: b) Wrong. White beans contain proteins, which supply the essential amino acid lysine. The proteins in cereal foods, including bread, lack the essential amino acid methionine. Therefore, the two types of food, i.e. legumes and cereals, complement each other. Their combination can be used as a substitute to meat, fish, eggs or dairy products, which are the main protein sources.
14. Answer: a) Right. Natural dark chocolate contains numerous micro- and macro elements: magnesium, potassium, iron, phosphorous. It also contains B group vitamins; this is the reason why people eat chocolate in times of sadness and dissatisfaction. The only disadvantage of this “therapy” is the high calorie value – 500 calories per 100g.

Exercise 4: Mirror

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Work in pairs, discussion
Requirements:	For the peer educator – flip chart, markers
Age group:	14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by discussing the skills needed for communicating and making friends. Emphasise the importance of appearance and how other people perceive us. Underline that the attitude expressed by others serves as a mirror to our own personality.

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in pairs. Remind them that every person has both positive and negative traits. Appearance and good personal hygiene are important factors of effective communication.
2. Encourage the participants to look carefully at their partner and to extend three compliments and three notes related to their appearance.
3. Give the participants an opportunity to share how they felt when they had to extend compliments and make notes (also inquire about their feelings when they received the compliments/notes). Divide the flip chart into two columns and write down the positive emotions on one side and the negative – on the other side. Encourage a discussion on the causes of the feelings. The peer educator strives to get the participants make individual conclusions on the importance of good outlook and personal hygiene.

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.7. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Discussion Topics:

- Continuity of education/training and career development
- Higher education, vocational consultation and guidance
- Stages of vocational guidance
- Vocational guidance activities
- Career choice
- Job search
- Job search approaches
- Job application strategies
- Job application documents

Goals:

- Rationalise the need of education as a main factor for a successful life realisation
- Raise the awareness about the possibilities for continuing education
- Increase the motivation to study
- Increase the ability to plan and set goals
- Increase the motivation to chose a profession
- Rationalise and clarify different professional alternatives, evaluate personal capabilities
- Increase knowledge and skills for preparing job application documents and going to a job interview

Expected Results:

- Adolescents identify the interdependence between education and successful life realisation.
- Adolescents are informed about the possibilities to continue their education.
- Adolescents are motivated to study.
- Adolescents demonstrate improved skills to plan and set goals.
- Adolescents are motivated and demonstrate responsibility in making decisions regarding their professional realisation.
- Adolescents are informed and able to prepare job application documents and are prepared to present themselves effectively during a job interview.

Overview of Exercises:

Stage	Career Development	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Job search labyrinth (30/60 minutes)	Group work, presentation/role play, discussion	
	School is ... (30 minutes)	Flexible group work, brainstorming, discussion	
	The choice (30 minutes)	Individual work, discussion	
	A story about professions (30 minutes)	Individual work, group work, discussion	
	Guess which profession this is (30 minutes)	Brainstorming, small group work, discussion	
	Test (30 minutes)	Individual work, discussion	
	Job interview (30 minutes)	Role play	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Continuity of training and career development

Career development is a process of planning and implementing responsible education, profession and career development choices. Adolescents must be encouraged to adopt a positive attitude towards life-long learning and constant qualification upgrade in order for them to be focused and attain successful career development.

The system of continuous learning is supported through secondary schools, universities and informal educational institutions. Risks of social and labour market exclusion are continuously increasing due to a rapid change in economy, science and technology and also due to disparities in living standards of large groups of people. These differences can be dealt with primarily by the quality of skills, which people acquire throughout life. This is the philosophy of the continuing education system. Knowledge and skills are social capital, which requires constant “care”. This is why, lifelong learning is one of the tools to evaluate the adequacy of an educational system in relation to the needs of the modern society. Modern concept of education implies that the most advantageous and proper investment in human resources is the lifelong one.

Higher education

Early vocational guidance is essential for the future realisation of each person. A condition for the right career choice is the adequate self-assessment of personal skills and qualities with regard to the given profession. Other conditions for applying to college are the increased motivation to learn and the good educational training received in school, attested by the overall grade point average in the high school diploma.

The choice to continue one’s education beyond secondary education and selection of further training is a serious and responsible decision. It is part of the overall skills of young people to set goals and plan steps for their implementation. This decision should be made no later than a year before secondary education completion because sufficient time is needed to prepare oneself for entry exams.

Important steps in making a choice:

- Gather information about the levels of higher education, universities/colleges, application requirements and conditions.
- Gather information about the type of entry exams and the grade point average requirement from the high school diploma.
- Assess your possibilities to apply either for a full- or for part-time education.
- Explore the opportunities for a preparatory course for prospective students.
- Get yourself acquainted with the regulations of the school, which you apply for.

Vocational guidance and self-assessment

Vocational guidance is an important prerequisite for a successful career. Experience shows that

an effective career is directly related to a successfully chosen profession. Psychologists claim that everyone should do what they do best. This is how the desired work ensures valuable and successful career. The main step during the vocational guidance is a “diagnosis” of one’s interests, assessment of opportunities and reasons behind one’s career choice.

Stages of vocational guidance

The first step is self-analysis – analysis of the interests and conclusions about the reasons behind one’s choice. The second stage could be called assessment of opportunities, including personal abilities and external possibilities. The assessment of one’s potential is associated with an analysis of future employment chances. It is important that the vocational guidance is not a sporadic action. It should be a focused, continuous process, starting from school age and ending in the mature years of an individual.

Vocational guidance activities

Vocational guidance includes providing professional information to and consultation of individuals in deciding on the selection of a profession and related professional qualification. Consultation is better suited to individuals who find it difficult to navigate through different opportunities and need help to make a decision. The essence of vocational guidance is assisting and encouraging free and independent choice of a profession or relevant alternatives.

Professional information sheds light to the nature of an occupation; conditions and requirements for exercising a given profession; status and trends in applicability and development of professions on national and regional levels; personal requirements; opportunities for further training and increasing one’s qualification; training institutions, etc. Vocational guidance services are offered at the Labour Offices and/or their information and consulting units.

Career choice

Prerequisites for career choice are two-fold. On one hand, one should be informed about different professions and their requirements, the need for human resources and workforce for a professional cluster and territorial distribution of free positions. On the other hand, adolescents should be aware of their “maturity” to make a career choice as an expression of personality development.

Practical advice for making a career choice:

1. Assess yourself. Identify your beliefs, interests, talents, strengths and weaknesses. Ask yourself:

- What are your professional interests?
- What is your personal style?
- What are the things you love to do?

2. Explore the labour market. Inform yourself about the type of work you are interested in and **learn more about it. Ask yourself:**

- Which professional field is of interest to you?
- What type of work environment do you prefer?

- Are there new professional sectors emerging on the labour market?
- 3.** Match your personal interests with your professional possibilities. Summarise the information and relate it to your personal characteristics. Ask yourself:
- Which professional fields complement your personality?
 - Will you be successful in what you would like to do?
- 4.** Analyse your choice. Make a plan in order to get an immediate idea of the professions you chose. Ask yourself:
- Can you gain experience by working part-time or as a volunteer/intern?
 - Are there other ways to get acquainted with the specifics of the profession you choose?
 - With whom could you talk in order to learn more about their experience?
- 5.** Prepare for your career by acquiring the necessary qualification. Ask yourself:
- Is higher education a necessity?
 - How can you prepare yourself better for your profession?
 - Can you obtain membership to professional associations and organisations?
- 6.** Devote yourself to the chosen career. Consider your choice and follow the path. Ask yourself:
- Is this really your call?
 - What are your short- and long-term goals?
 - Who could you turn to for support?

Stages in the decision-making process include 1) realising the necessity to make a decision, 2) making the decision itself and 3) evaluating the decision. If somewhere along the way you get “lost” always go back to the first step. If you still feel insecure, seek advice.

Professional development is a process that could last a lifetime. Together with changes in your personality, your professional goals and interests will change as well. According to experts, adults change their career direction (not the job itself) on average five to seven times in their lives. However, once you learn how to make choices, the next time you need to do so, you will find the process much easier.

Job search

The starting point of a job search is self-assessment – education, skills, interests, abilities, personality type, employment opportunities (full- or part-time), health, physical and psychological characteristics. Flexibility of capabilities and skills is a key factor in finding the right job.

Job search involves several approaches:

- Registration at “Labour Bureau” Departments – Registration could be done at local departments according to permanent or current address of anyone who is unemployed and actively seeking job; employed, but willing to change employment; students who looks for part-time employment. The Labour Bureau provides mediation in finding a job, career counselling, practical skills to prepare job application documents and conduct an interview, legal advice, referral to appropriate employment programmes, information on working abroad, registration at a recruitment agency.
- Private recruitment agencies – Agencies that have an appropriate permission to perform employment “brokering”. These agencies select relevant candidates, provide skills training and secure employment according to the requirements of different employers.

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- E-job fairs – An electronic version of the recruitment agencies, which offer vacancies to online users. Specialised sections offer tips and guidelines on filling in employment documents and forms.
 - Newspaper or online job advertisements
 - Letter of inquiry to potential employers – This option is possible, especially if the applicant has a specific professional profile.
 - Recommendation by a friend/acquaintance to a potential employer

Job search strategies

After exploring different opportunities, one should make a decision and prepare the application documents.

- Recommendations – They are specifically required in the selection of candidates for managerial positions; however, it is better to be prepared for all situations. Most appropriate recommendations are those by former employers, former or current teachers or public figures. A special formal request for a recommendation is required in many large companies or in the case of a publicly known person. Usually the candidate should know personally his/her employer or the person to write a recommendation, in which case the request might be informal.
- Cover letter - It must add value to the CV of the candidate in terms of content. A cover letter provides additional information (not included in the CV) related to contacts in the business sector, specific projects in which the applicant was involved, knowledge of other companies in the field or the company itself, etc. While the CV is more or less predictable in terms of format and content, the cover letter allows the applicant to “sell” themselves in a more creative, aggressive and convincing way. The cover letter is the first opportunity to make a good impression to a potential employer. It is recommended that the letter be addressed to a specific person. If you do not know the name, you can address the cover letter to a person occupying a certain position.

Advice for writing a cover letter:

- A cover letter should highlight how your skills and experience meet the expectations of potential employers. It must include a clear reason why the organisation should hire you.
- The aim is to provide additional information (one that does not appear in your CV). Be creative and expand the information about your achievements, ambitions and competitive advantage; however, do not present false information.
- Avoid using clichés (ex. “exceptional motivation”, “excellent communication skills”, “analytical approach to solving problems”, etc).
- Adapt your cover letter to different employers and organisations.
- Format your cover letter appropriately.
- The letter should not be very long (approximately one page), because employers rarely pay more than a minute to review it. Quality is more important than quantity.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) – A key document when applying for a job. It should provide information about the candidate’s desired position, professional experience, achievements, education and training, additional skills. The CV should be concise and focused around the most positive features. Often employers or recruiters have to go through hundreds, even thousands of CVs to fill one vacant spot. Usually they just throw a glance to the piles of applications. Therefore, the strongest CV is the one where one’s characteristics and advantages are visible

even at a first glance.

Advice for writing a CV:

- Be specific. Try to make your CV brief, clear and precise.
- Do not be afraid to use specific terminology. Employers who will read your CV will be competent in the specific field.
- Use keywords.
- Be honest and do not exaggerate.
- Leave enough space between paragraphs; it makes the CV clear and readable.

• Interview – The ability to present oneself effectively during an interview is often decisive for the outcome of any job competition. What is needed is a meticulous preparation for the meeting with the potential employer, without leaving them the impression that all the answers are just well rehearsed clichés. Two major points determine whether the selection will be positive for the candidate: their qualification and performance. A candidate cannot improve their qualification in just several days or weeks, but they could compensate with good preparation and presentation at the interview.

Some employers prefer to combine the interview with other methods – tests, assessment centres, etc. The final stage of an interview is similar to a roundtable discussion. Within a tension-free setting, the candidate presents himself/herself, answers various questions and is given the opportunity to provide a comprehensive picture of his/her profile. Moreover, the candidate receives specific information about the position, workplace and company.

Many employers prefer a structured interview. The candidate presents himself/herself and the interviewer assesses how their education, professional experience, interests, expected remuneration and others meet the profile requirements for the position. A precondition is that the candidate should gather as much information about the company, position and the person who will conduct the interview as possible. The applicant should be aware of why they are interested in the specific position; they should express clearly their motivation, present their best skills and strengths and demonstrate how they achieved success in the past.

One should choose moderate and elegant clothing for the interview, which must comply with the dress code of the company, its activities and position one applies for. Girls must pay attention to their hairstyle and make-up – natural colours look best.

Usually at the end of the interview one will be given the opportunity to ask questions. They show genuine interest in the particular job opportunity, so one should consider them seriously. During the interview one needs to think simultaneously about several things – appearance, body language, sufficiently loud and clear speaking, etiquette, names, careful listening. One should maintain eye contact with the interviewer, which is a sign of openness and sincerity. Professional etiquette requires the employer to notify the candidate about the selection outcome regardless whether it is positive or negative.

Advice for a job interview:

- Learn as much as possible about the company and the people who will interview you.
- Decide what your strengths are in relation to the position, which has been announced.
- Prepare questions you would like to ask.

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- Prepare responses to questions that you expect to be asked.
 - Arrive 10-15 minutes earlier.
 - Pay attention to your appearance.
 - Do not bring anyone with you.
 - Remain standing until you are invited to sit.
 - Do not smoke or chew.
 - Listen carefully. Answer briefly but comprehensively.
 - Demonstrate that your education and experience make you a suitable applicant for the job.
 - Do not describe yourself using negative statements (ex. bad luck, financial or personal problems).
 - Do not criticise others – especially your former employers or colleagues.
 - Do not ask about salary before the employer extends a proposal or asks this question first.
 - Inquire about other details related to the job. This will retain the impression that you are interested.
 - Do not be afraid to demonstrate your strengths. Modesty is not always an advantage.
 - Do not compare yourself with other candidates – you really do not know them.
 - Express gratitude to the interviewers.
 - Shake hands before leaving the room.

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by discussing the following questions:

- What is the connection between education and career development?
- How do we choose our profession and how do we plan practical steps to implement our choice?
- What are the stages of vocational guidance in your opinion?
- How and where do you search for a job?
- What job search strategies are there in your opinion?
- What documents do you have to prepare in order to apply for a position?
- How do you think you should look and behave during a job interview?

Activities:

Write down the main ideas of the participants in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options:

Exercise 1: Job search labyrinth

Duration: 30/60 minutes
Methods: Group work, presentation/role play, discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

The exercise demonstrates the adolescents' skills to search for a job effectively.

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in four groups and each group receives one of the following tasks:

Group 1: Newspaper advertisement – List three advantages and three disadvantages of searching for a job through newspaper advertisements.

Group 2: Job offer by a friend – List three advantages and three disadvantages of searching for a job offered by a friend.

Group 3: Recruitment agency – List three advantages and three disadvantages of searching for a job through a recruitment agency.

Group 4: Personal search – List three advantages and three disadvantages of searching for a job personally. The groups have approximately 10 minutes to complete the task. After time is over, a spokesperson presents the group results, while the rest of the participants discuss and add comments.

2. The exercise can be extended to two school hours. During the second school hour, each group creates their own job advertisement and organises a job interview with a representative from another group. After all "interviews" are finished, the participants are encouraged to discuss and evaluate the entire process.

Exercise 2: School is ...

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Flexible group work, brainstorming, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – flip chart, markers
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Place two posters on two opposite walls of the room. It should be written "School is pleasant because ..." on one of the sheets and "School is unpleasant because ..." on the other one.

Activities:

1. Introduce the exercise by pointing out that education in Bulgaria is universal and obligatory for all children below the age of 16 years. Inquire about the participants' opinion on that fact.

- Is education really necessary?
- What does it give us?
- Why do students have mixed feelings about school?

Focus the attention of the participants on the possibility that school is not only information and knowledge acquisition point, but it can also be a forum for interaction with friends and teachers, it can be sports and entertainment venue.

2. The task of the exercise is to ask the participants about their personal attitude towards school and then to move to the flip chart that represents his/her opinion. In the end, there should be two groups, whose task is to list all the things they like/do not like about school in no more than 10 minutes.

3. After time is over, each group presents their list of arguments. Inform the participants that they are free to move to the other group, if in the course of discussion and argumentation, they have changed their mind.

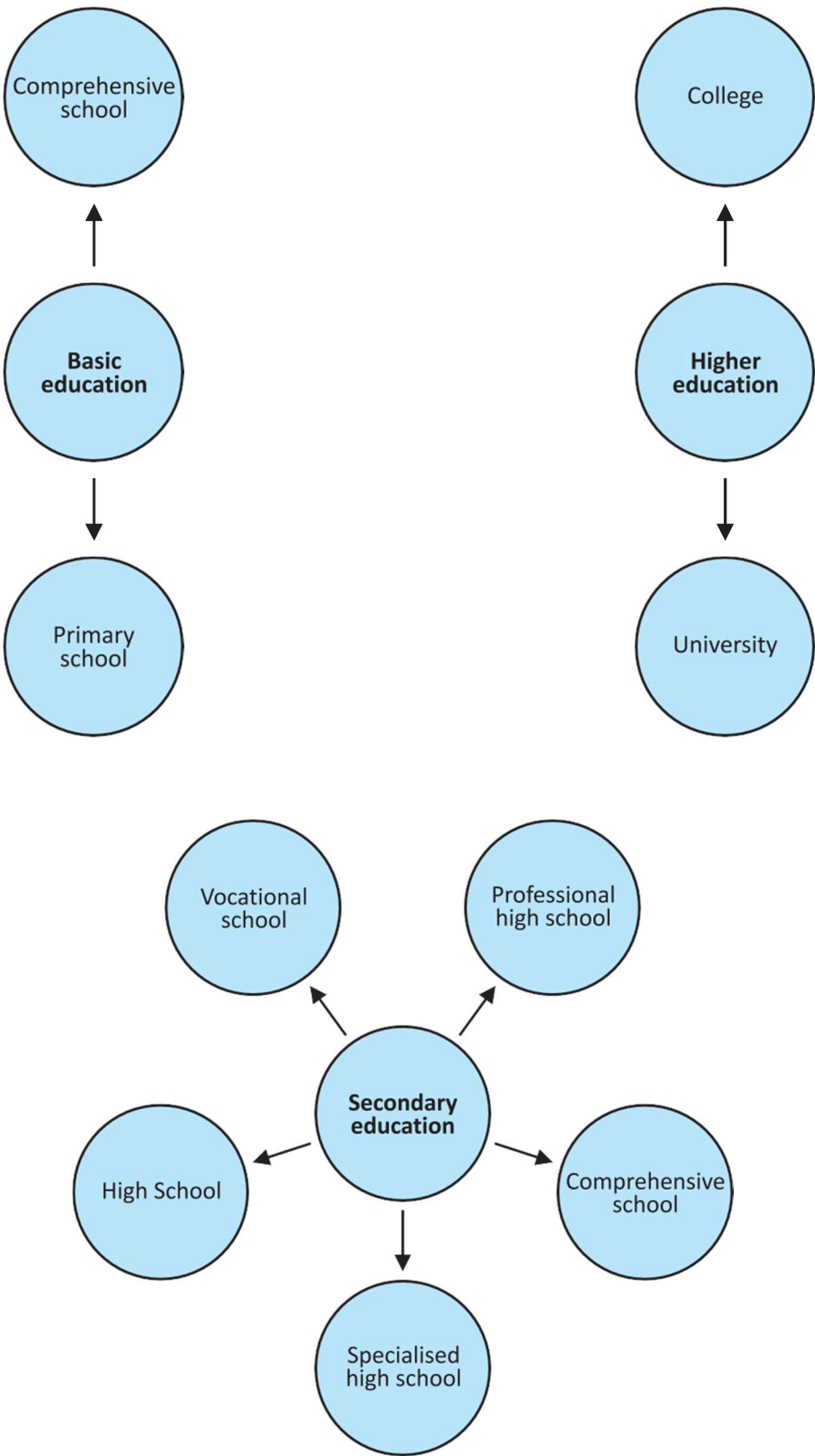
4. Initiate a discussion on each one of the arguments on the two lists. The discussion should be supported by real experience and examples. Emphasise that negative situations/experiences might be avoided if both sides demonstrate patience, tolerance and understanding. Inquire whether deliberate absence from school is a solution to problems and conflicts. Focus on the necessity to look for alternative solutions, based on mutual respect of interests.

Exercise 3: The choice

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Individual work, discussion
Requirements:	For the peer educator – information table For the participants – work sheets
Age group:	15 – 18 years

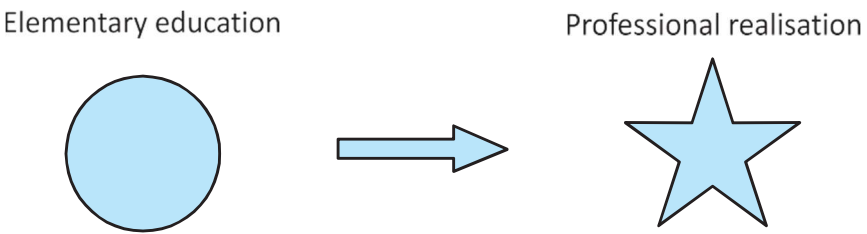
Guidelines:

Prepare two tables – one of them lists information on different academic levels and types of schools and the other – lists the schools in the particular city or region:

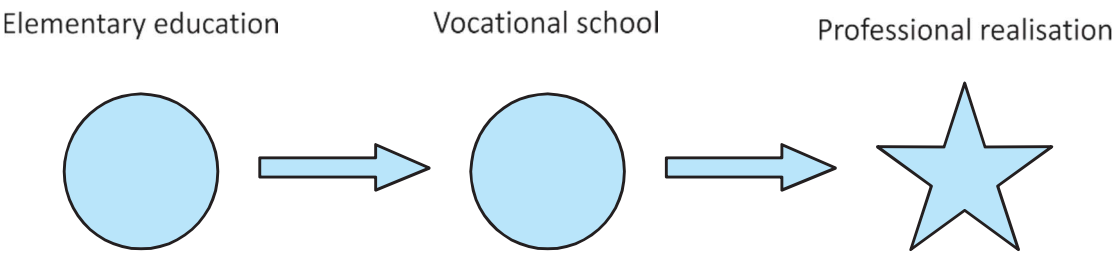


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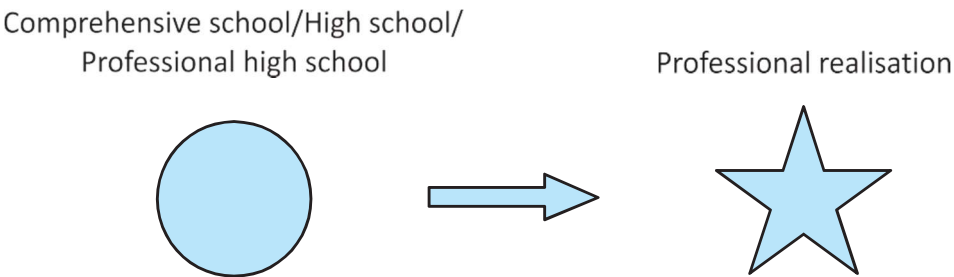
Option A



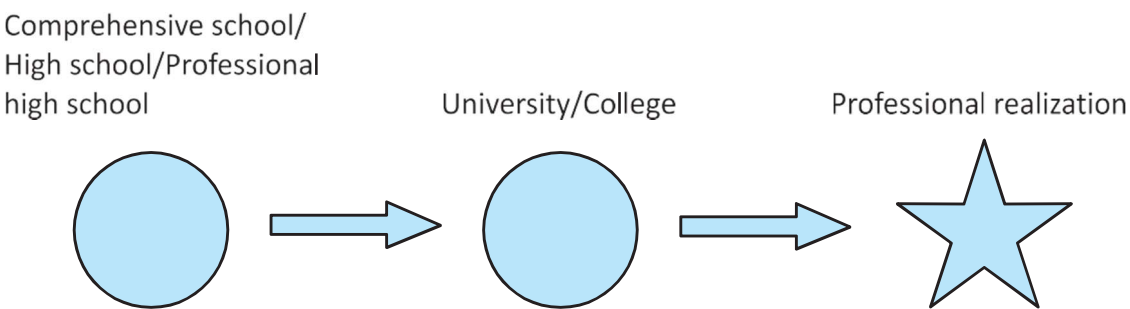
Option B



Option C



Option D



Activities:

1. Familiarise the participants with information on the education levels, school types and academic subjects. Focus on the link between education and professional realisation.
2. Each participant receives “The choice” work sheet. Give the following instruction: “Take a look at the worksheet. There are several alternatives to education and professional qualification. Make your choice and write down the schools, degrees and qualification, which will help you reach your desired professional realisation.” The participants have 10 minutes to complete the task.
3. After time is over, give the floor to volunteers who would like to explain their choice and plans for the future. Encourage realistic goal setting and bring the attention to the link between desires and capabilities. Emphasise that the participants should develop realistic self-assessment, evaluation of interests and attitudes towards different professions. Ideally, the participants themselves will conclude that good professional realisation requires time and efforts invested in education. The overall goal of the exercise is to raise the motivation of the participants to continue their education and gain skills to plan and assess their future.

Exercise 4: A story about professions

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Individual work, group work, discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic with a brief overview of different professions and their specifics. Ask the participants about the essence of some professions and specific qualities required for the effective exercise of the job.

Activities:

1. The participants sit in a circle. Give the following instruction: “Imagine that you are a story teller. Together we are going to create and tell stories about the different professions. I will begin the story. You should listen carefully because every person must continue the story logically. Our stories should picture a typical day of people in a given profession.”
2. Begin the story with the following statement: “Once I knew an engineer (architect, doctor, teacher, construction worker, farmer, etc)” The participants should then continue the story with logical statements. The story is over once all participants share their statements. Evaluate the group work and start a new story.
3. The goal of the exercise is to develop knowledge regarding different professions. In the end of each story, the peer educator should point out false statements, provide correct information and give the participants an opportunity to comment.

Exercise 5: Guess which profession this is

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Brainstorming, small group work, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – note cards with different professions written on them, flip chart paper, markers, tape
Age group: 14 – 18 ages

Guidelines:

Prepare 10 note cards with different professions written on them.

Activities:

1. Initiate the exercise with a brief outline of the connection between career choice and professional realisation, social adaptation and successful social integration of the individual. On one hand, adolescents should look for information regarding the specifics of a certain job – who, where and how. On the other hand, they should also take into consideration the professional qualification needed for different professions.
2. The participants should be divided in groups of three to four members. Each group receives a flip chart and a marker. They should choose one note card and keep it secret from the other groups.
3. Each group uses the flip chart paper to list characteristics of the profession they chose without naming it directly. Examples of the statements they could write are the qualities required by the profession, education and qualification, etc. Each group has 10 minutes to complete the task.
4. After time is over, each group presents its profession and the rest of the participants should guess which profession is described. They should ask questions and comment on why the given professions are important. The participants should also share their impressions and personal experience, if they know people who are occupied in the field.
5. In the end of the exercise, the group should draw conclusions on the importance of the right career choice as a precondition for a successful social integration.

Exercise 6: Test

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Individual work, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – test
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Provide enough copies of the following test:

**E. Klimov's Differential Assessment of Attitudes
Questionnaire**

Let us suppose that after you finish your education, you are able to work any type of job. However, if you had to choose between two options, what would you choose:

1. a) Take care of animals
b) Work with machines/tools
2. a) Help sick people
b) Create tables, schemes; programme

3. a) Assess the quality of book illustrations, posters, cards, music pieces
b) Take care of plants (contemplate, protect, evaluate)
4. a) Work with different materials (wood, textiles, metal, plastic, etc)
b) Work in the sphere of marketing, advertising, sales
5. a) Review science fiction books and articles
b) Review books, stage plays, concerts
6. a) Raise animals (regardless of their breed)
b) Train sports team or give instructions (driving lessons, occupation safety, etc)
7. a) Copy pictures and images
b) Drive a large vehicle (crane, tractor, train, etc)
8. a) Provide and clarify information to people who might need it (information service point, tourist information point, etc)
b) Arrange exhibitions, show rooms (or participate in the preparation of stage plays, concerts, etc.)
9. a) Repair different stuff (clothes, technology, housing)
b) Look for and correct errors in texts, tables, drawings
10. a) Heal animals
b) Calculate, prepare reports
11. a) Raise new plants
b) Design and construct new industrial products (cars, clothes, houses, packages, etc)
12. a) Solve conflicts, persuade, explain, judge
b) Navigate through drawings, schemes, tables (check, clarify, correct these)
13. a) Deal with people's free time
b) Observe and study microbes
14. a) Maintain medical tools and machines
b) Provide first aid under extraordinary circumstances
15. a) Create art
b) Provide precise descriptions and compile reports on phenomena, events, objects, etc.
16. a) Conduct laboratory analysis at medical institutions
b) Receive and examine sick people; discuss with them their condition and prescribe treatment
17. a) Paint walls, rooms, objects
b) Assemble machines, tools

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- 18. a) Organise visits to the theatre, museums, excursions, tourist hikes
b) Perform on stage, participate in a concert
 - 19. a) Develop products (cars, clothes) according to designs/drawings
b) Draw, copy plans and maps
 - 20. a) Fight plant diseases, forest/garden pests
b) Type texts (computer, typewriter, etc)

Emphasise that the right career choice depends on the personal evaluation of one's own attitudes, aptitudes and interests within a given professional direction.

Activities:

1. Give all participants the following instruction: "You have 20 pairs of statements, which describe different activities. Choose only one of the statements and mark it with an 'x'. Work fast without thinking thoroughly and spending too much time on the pairs of statements. You have 10 minutes to complete the task."
2. After the task is completed, give each participant a copy of the key to the test. Participants should then determine individually their own type of attitude. A volunteer may analyse their results and list few professions that would be suitable to their attitude profile.

KEY TO THE TEST

I – 1a, 3b, 6a, 10b, 11a, 13b, 16a, 20a

I – human – nature – professions related to the flora and fauna

II – 1b, 4a, 7b, 9a, 11b, 14a, 17b, 19a

II – human – technology – professions with a technical nature

III – 2a, 4b, 6b, 8a, 12a, 14b, 16b, 18a

III – human – human – professions related to other people and communication

IV – 2b, 5a, 9b, 10b, 12b, 15b, 19b, 20a

IV – human – sign/symbol – professions involving calculations, programming, taking measures

V – 3a, 5b, 7a, 13a, 15b, 17a, 18b

V – human – artistic symbol – all art-related/creative professions

Exercise 7: Job interview

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Small group work, role play, lecture, discussion
Requirements:	For the peer educator – flip chart, markers, tape For the participants – two sets of note cards
Age group:	16 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare two sets of note cards. Each set should contain one note card with “employer” and three note cards with “candidate” written on them. The rest of the note cards in the set should be blank. The total number of cards in a set should be equal to the number of participants in the group. Fold the cards so that the text is not visible. Place a desk and two chairs so that this space could be used for the role play.

Activities:

1. Introduce the exercise by asking the following questions about the nature of a job interview:
 - What should be the preparation for a job interview?
 - Who conducts a job interview? Why?
 - What are some of the most commonly raised questions during a job interview?
 - What impression should the candidate aim at?
 - What should be the appearance of the candidate?
 - What behaviour is acceptable during a job interview?
 - How should the candidate answer the questions?
 - Emphasise that a job interview gives the employer a possibility to gather information about the candidate’s education, professional and personal qualities and relate those to the position requirements.
2. Divide the participants in two groups. Give each group a set of note cards. Give the following instruction: “There is an employer, three candidates and observers in each group. Each group should prepare and present a job interview. The employer conducts an interview with all three candidates and selects one of them for the position. The employer must justify their choice.”
3. Write down all the qualities listed by the “employer”. At the end of the exercise, the participants discuss the difficulties they have faced while playing the different roles and their feelings. Give the observers opportunity to analyse the performance of the groups, share their opinion and discuss the qualities, required by the “employers”. The goal of the exercise is to improve self-confidence and encourage a positive self-assessment.

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration:	5-7 minutes
Methods:	Discussion
Age group:	14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.8. LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Discussion Topics:

- Effective communication
- Communication skills
- Observation and self-assessment
- Friendship
- Social networks
- Psychological styles
- Team, stages of team development
- Expression of opinion
- Decision-making strategies
- Self-perception and self-consciousness
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Individual style
- Assertive behaviour
- Success-defining factors
- Personal development planning

Goals:

- Develop sensitivity towards the link between personal behaviour and communication with others, between personal development and realisation within a group/team/community
- Raise self-evaluation of participants through skills for effective communication with others
- Develop communication skills and self-analysis during interaction with others
- Rationalise the interdependence between feelings and behaviour
- Rationalise advantageous/disadvantageous factors in the communication process
- Develop team work skills
- Develop attitude of sharing one's personal opinion, thoughts and feelings
- Rationalise personal value and importance
- Develop skills for setting personal goals and analysis of capabilities

Stage	Leadership Skills	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options:		Total: 30 minutes
	Do you listen? (30 minutes)	Role play	
	My feelings (30 minutes)	Individual work, discussion	
	Team – the rules of the game (30 minutes)	Information analysis, presentation	
	I found an envelope (30 minutes)	Structured exercises, discussion	
	My psychological portrait (30 minutes)	Individual work, lecture	
	A leader (30 minutes)	Small group work, discussion	
	An interview (30 minutes)	Group work, role play, discussion	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

Effective communication

Effective communication requires several factors – ability to recognise the link between causes and effects, desire to communicate, another party to communicate with, topics for interaction and diverse tools to express one's thoughts and feelings. Communication is built on skills for both information reception and expression.

In general, communication is a process of sending and receiving messages, which provides an opportunity to exchange knowledge, attitude and skills. Even though we connect communication primarily with speech, there are indeed two information channels – verbal and non-verbal.

Speech is the most recognisable characteristic of communication – words, exclamations, sentences, which we pronounce or listen to on a daily basis. However, same words and phrases might trigger different responses and feelings. This is so because we not only transmit and receive specific data, but we also channel our attitude and feelings towards the communicated data. Quite often attitude and feelings are being expressed not by words, rather by body language, which can complement our verbal message and even substitute it in certain cases. The movement of our hands, fingers, head, legs and other body parts are some of the most expressive messages in human communication process and meanwhile, some of the most difficult to control.

Communication skills

Asking questions helps collect information, maintain the conversation, inquire about the other side's position and encourage the communication process. The most important aspect is to ask the so-called open questions – questions, which include the words who, what, when, how often, where, why. These questions facilitate in-depth understanding of the topic and provide the participants with an opportunity to obtain details answers.

Listening can be active or passive. Active listening occurs when the person establishes links between what they hear and what they already know. Effective communication is therefore the process of expressing one's thoughts and encouraging sharing of suggestions and opinions by the listener. It includes asking open questions and listening actively. On the contrary, passive communication is only based on giving advice, when no such is requested, expressing radical opinion, threat, preaching, judgement, critic, appraisal, flattery, ridicule, etc.

Observation and self-assessment

Observation during the communication process is not a passive role, but a skill, which helps us compare and analyse the differences between the communicating parties. As observers, we should not react spontaneously or emotionally; our task is to rationalise the behaviour of both

sides of the communication process. We are able to notice the differences in the movement of others, their reactions, the level of participation and involvement, their expression and humour. Such an analysis allows us to observe ourselves and evaluate our behaviour and attitude – where we stand, how we move and express our thoughts, how we participate. In other words, through self-observation we can develop skills to look at our own behaviour from outside.

Self-assessment includes:

- non-verbal communication
- eye contact
- talking and listening
- feedback
- change in behaviour as a result to the feedback

Feedback

Feedback is a shared feeling, thought or experience, which we rationalise after a specific action by another person. It estimates how work influences each of the participants and how everyone fulfils their responsibilities; feedback also helps each participant to observe their personal behaviour and actions and provides information about the impact of one's behaviour on others. Self-perception comprises of assessment of a particular experience. The source of experience and the assessment are usually a subjective interpretation of the reactions of others regarding the manifestation of given personal characteristics related to common social standards and values.

Self-assessment is formed gradually and it becomes more stable with time. It is shaped by the approval/disapproval one receives by others and determines the level of one's belief in their personal value and importance. Positive self-assessment is a source of confidence and emotional well-being, while low or negative self-assessment is linked to anxiety and uncertainty. A serious step towards increasing one's positive self-assessment is the ability for personal growth, analysis of strengths and weaknesses and ability to present those effectively within the social circle.

Friendship

Friendship is an interaction based on mutual feelings of goodwill and closeness. Building friendship is a gradual process, which takes place in several stages:

- Formulating a set of impressions regarding the other person based on sporadic meetings
- Meeting the other person after a deliberate invitation
- Meeting the other person on a regular basis and developing a connection based on trust

Friendship during different age periods:

Childhood – Children between the ages of 3 and 5 years build spontaneous friendships, which are determined by shared activities. Between the ages of 8 and 10 years, children realise the needs of others and are able to cooperate with them. After the age of 12 years, children feel the need of a close friend and become independent from their parents.

Adolescence – Friendships with representatives of the same sex are more intensive. It is to be viewed as a preparation for a heterosexual closeness. Girls experience the need of a close friend earlier than boys. Meanwhile, boys choose their friends based on their admiration for the person. Both girls and boys place high importance on trust. Girls usually have several close friends, while the friendship circle of boys is a bit larger.

Friendship and peer interaction have several main functions – they are a channel for information exchange on different topics (love, sexuality, fashion, music), a source of experience, milieu for expression of feelings, discovery of differences based on sex, freedom of choice, conflict or conformism (linked to the desire to appear similar to others).

During childhood, adults act as natural role models and are considered the most important in the interaction process. In adolescent years, however, there is a shift towards communication with peers because of similarity in the attitude towards social experience.

Social networks

Usually friends are not isolated from the rest of the world. They interact with other people and these relationships form a wider social network.

Social networks can be defined by increasing the information about the links between people inside and outside the friendship circle. They can be identified through an analysis of the behaviour and the prism of selecting one's friends, through the surrounding social conditions and the organisational interaction of the people and their closeness. Social networks can be highly important for the interaction and function between people.

Social networks help increase one's contacts and the frequency of interaction. A wider network, comprising of different members is more likely to provide access to necessary support. It may relate to finding a job, accommodation, treatment, etc. In addition, the psychological health of people, who participate in tight social networks, is better due to the fact that the network is a source of social support. Different ideas are also exchanged easily through networks. Networking is a convenient way to develop one's social skills and competences.

Psychological styles

Extrovert-introvert style

We are extrovert, if:

- We talk to others and listen to what they have to say.
- We love action.
- We often interrupt our work in order to talk on the phone.
- We get bored by slow, continuous activities.
- We act hastily, sometimes even without thinking it through.

We are introvert, if:

- We read a book, love quietness.
- We love working alone, we communicate with difficulty.

- We think about what we want to say and do, we concentrate.
- We realise our feelings.
- We think about a problem in order to understand it.
- We think before we do, we do not like to be interrupted.

Sensory-intuitive style

We demonstrate sensory style, if:

- We like specific examples.
- We search for facts and sources of information.
- We taste our food before start eating.
- We notice change.
- We remember words and speech.
- We follow our schedule and programme.

We demonstrate intuitive style, if:

- We love ideas.
- We search for new methods of action.
- We think of innovative application of our knowledge.
- We see the “big picture” and we mix facts.
- We change our schedule and programme.

Cognitive-emotional style

We demonstrate cognitive style, if:

- We make decisions based on logic, possibly in an objective manner.
- We analyse product ingredients and prices and buy only the best products.
- We do the right things no matter whether we like it or not.
- We do not buy the blue shirt we like because we already have two blue shirts.
- We do not share our feelings and we find it difficult to cope with the emotions of others.
- We create rules in order to deal with tasks.

We demonstrate emotional style, if:

- We make decisions subjectively according to our values and feelings.
- We buy things because we like them.
- We do not accept a job position because we do not like the office environment.
- We decide to move to live at another place in order to be close to somebody we are worried about.
- We are sensitive to the feelings of others; we love to make them happy.

Judging-receptive style

We demonstrate judging style, if:

- We make “To do” lists.
- We plan everything (our daily schedule, meetings, weekends).
- We take care of every detail and finish every task.
- We hardly change our opinion about people and situations.

-
- We meet deadlines.

We demonstrate perceptive style, if:

- We postpone making decisions in order to explore other possibilities.
- We are spontaneous; we act without a clear plan.
- We undertake many tasks and we cannot finish them.
- We are curious towards other people and new things.
- We do everything in the last minute.

Stages of team development

The team is a group of people who work together to accomplish a common goal. Team formation is a process of support and encouragement of the team to accomplish the given goal. Some of the characteristics of a successful team are:

- a feeling of community belonging, closeness
- a common goal
- sharing success and failure
- cooperation
- assuming different roles
- making effective common decisions

Stages of team formation – There are four mandatory stages of team formation. Due to different reasons the team might return to a previous stage of development or even start the process from the beginning.

- 1. Forming** – the stage of exploration. Team members are usually cautious and act rather politely because they are still not fully aware of what to expect from the others on the team. Each team member explores the limits of acceptable behaviour.
- 2. Storming** – the stage of competition between the team members. Relations within the group are tense, conflicts might arise as members strive to define and assume power.
- 3. Norming** – the stage when the team becomes more unite. After the conflicts and bickering in the norming stage, team members discover common interests and goals.
- 4. Performing** – this stage is the result of the accomplishments during the previous three stages. During the elapsed time, the team members have learned how to work together effectively.

Team roles:

- 1. Front headlight** – the person who looks forwards and foresees events.
- 2. Back headlight** – the person who thinks in retrospect and considers past experience of the team.
- 3. Engine** – the person who shuffles concepts.
- 4. Gasoline** – the person who provides ideas and “energy”.
- 5. Driving wheel** – the person who provides the motion and leads the ideas and discussions to results.
- 6. Steering wheel** – the person who guides the group in the right direction towards the goal.
- 7. Shield** – the person who can save the group in a troublesome situation.
- 8. Decoration** – the person who stands as the face of the group and provides its visibility.
- 9. Trunk** – the person who is in possession of many things but is hard to reach.

10. Brakes – the person who helps avoid accidents; however, if their services are used frequently, the group might reach a halt.

Ineffective behaviour within the team is linked to underestimation, avoidance, rejection, ridicule, dominance. Interaction within the team is a process of information exchange between the members, which needs to be clearly understood by everybody. It includes free sharing of opinion how team members influence each other through their individual behaviour. This is the so-called feedback.

Some of the characteristics of a good leader include:

- acts as a role model
- explains the necessity of team rules
- allows others to make decisions
- approaches others in a respectful way
- helps others to learn new things
- focuses on the results
- listens actively
- keeps their promises
- works diligently as others (sometimes even more than others)
- never says “I told you to do so.”
- considers the ideas of others
- strives to be honest and open
- demonstrates a sense of humour
- uses “we” rather than “I”
- celebrates the success of the team

Expressing opinion

Each child, adolescent and adult expresses their attitude towards themselves and the rest of the world differently – through their feelings, language, movements, thoughts and even dreams. The world is made aware of our existence when we express our opinion, when we share our feelings, ideas and underlying reasons. The more we want others to know about us, the more and the clearer we should talk to them. Our opinion is important to our relatives, friends and ourselves.

How to express ourselves in a more convincing, interesting and explicit way? We should consider the following questions:

- Which is the area of our interest?
- What kind of information can I access?
- Where can I obtain additional information?
- Do I have a specific opinion on certain topics?
- How can I express my opinion to my peers?
- How can I express my opinion to adults?
- If my opinion is accepted, how should I express my appreciation?
- If my opinion is neither accepted, nor heard, how should I react?
- What kind of difficulties might I encounter when I express my opinion? How could I overcome these?

Personal vs. expert opinion

Personal opinion is our individual opinion on a specific question, problem or situation. It is formed on the basis of our personal experience, even our fears and ability to analyse situations and draw conclusions about their development. Sharing our personal opinion with others, we inform them about our position and we provide an insight into our value system and worldview, social involvement and responsibility towards ourselves and the others.

Expert opinion is the one based on our education, professional experience and professional standing. It can differ from our personal opinion because it is often influenced by specific professional knowledge we have acquired on a given problem (this might be different from our personal experience); the corporate position, which we represent (this might also be different); the strategy for problem solution, etc.

Decision-making approaches

There are two main decision-making or problem-solving approaches – algorithmic (logical) and creative (curve-like). None of them is better than the other. Their applicability and effectiveness depend on the specific situation. The choice of approach depends also on the personal characteristics of the person who makes the decision.

Algorithmic approach:

- What is the right decision?
- This problem is serious, it will be difficult to solve.
- I am afraid that I might ask a stupid question.
- I need an expert advice.
- This is a stupid idea, forget about it.
- I need to solve this problem immediately.
- I cannot share my idea with Ivan, he will think that it is stupid.

Creative approach:

- How many decisions can I think of?
- This problem is serious, but it is a stimulating challenge.
- “Stupid” questions might lead to wise decisions.
- I think I should discuss the questions with my colleagues and experts on the topic.
- This idea seems irrelevant, but let us discuss it a little bit more.
- I will leave this problem aside for a day or two. Often I reach a conclusion/solution by letting things set in.
- Ivan always sees things from a different angle. What would he say about this idea?

No matter what decision we have to make, it is useful to keep few rules in mind:

- Decisions must be made after collecting enough information and considering all aspects.
- Each situation offers several possible decisions, which we must consider carefully.
- Decisions should be avoided when we experience strong emotions like anger, fear, grief.
- We should take some time before we make a decision but we must not postpone

endlessly.

Decision-making styles:

There are different decision-making styles and some of them are:

- Pros and cons (advantages and disadvantages) – One considers both the pros and cons of a given decision by dividing them in two columns. This does not necessarily solve the problem but helps one to set their main priorities and possible risks.
- Spontaneous style – One makes the decision by intuition, he/she considers their feelings about the particular situation. However, it is advisable to look back and estimate how reliable one's intuition has been.
- A conversation with another person – Some people prefer to share their feelings with another person before they make a decision. This might be of help because of the opportunity to clarify possible outcomes and consequences. However, decision should be individual because people differ in their behaviour and perception.
- Planned postponement – There are people who need a longer period of time to make a final decision. It is often advisable to postpone making a decision rather than reach one hastily. However, this style should not be confused with the regular procrastination. This implies periodic review of different aspects and analysis of what might have changed in the meantime.
- Hypothesis test – Other people need time to make a preliminary decision or a hypothesis. Then they explore arguments to support or negate the hypothesis by analysing their personal experience or that of others. This is an appropriate method if one is not afraid to change their decisions over time. The hypothesis might be wrong but the process allows for the exclusion of some of the options and clarification of the focus.

Recommendations:

- Decision-making is a choice between different options, it is not a choice between good and bad.
- Avoid instantaneous decisions, especially those, which might be hard or impossible to reverse.
- Do not make decisions by letting problems pile up with time.
- Write down possible decisions, their advantages and disadvantages.
- Think about the people that might be influenced by one's decisions. If it is impossible, include these people in the process.
- Remember that one cannot make a decision that is 100% correct; only time will show this.
- If you do not make any decision, you make the decision not to do anything.
- Believe in one's personal skills to find the right solution to a problem.

Eight steps of the decision-making process:

1. Define the decision as closely as possible. Try to determine whether it is your personal decision or somebody else's.
2. Define the problem, which requires solution. Ask yourself and others few questions:

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- What makes you believe that there is a problem?
 - Where and how did the problem occur; whom did it involve?
 - What is your role in the problem?
3. Write down as many different problem-solving options as possible. Search for additional information about other possible solutions, especially if you face several possibilities.
 4. Test your options. Once you have a list of possible solutions, you should assess them in order to choose the right one. In order to do that, you should take the following smaller steps – choose assessment criteria, the most realistic option, estimate the risks involved in each possibility.
 5. Choice of the most appropriate option. Each decision must be evaluated through the prism of the expected results. If the decision is as good as its outcomes – this is the right decision.
 6. Action plan. You should plan the subsequent steps to translate the decision in concrete actions, think of “signals” for successful implementation, plan the needed resources, determine who will bear the main responsibility for the decision implementation and inform all people who might possibly be influenced by the decision.
 7. Observe the plan implementation. The observation process includes all “signals” of success – initial actions, deadlines, responsibilities, and resources.
 8. Problem solution. This final stage requires assessment of your progress in implementing the plan and reaching the desired outcome.

Self-perception and self-consciousness

Becoming aware of oneself as unique and realising one's identity provide an opportunity for each person to discover an entirely new world – that of his/her own personality. Development of self-consciousness begins in early age (2-3 years) and manifests itself through separating oneself from others, recognising personal belongings and one's own name.

Later during pre-school years, one develops skills to describe their appearance. As age progresses (during elementary school period), the focus is gradually shifted from external to internal characteristics, namely personal acts and qualities. The more age progresses, the more one's thoughts and feelings become linked to self-consciousness, self-assessment and concrete behaviour.

The interest in the self increases during the period of middle school, when one's interests are directed towards one's body, behaviour and personal qualities. This period is highly influenced by establishing a correlation with others and different role models (popular peers or celebrities). Self-perception is linked to acquisition of personal characteristics model, which is detected in other peers. During adolescence, self-perception is no longer related only to self-exploration, but it is also linked to asserting one's identity. During this period, self-perception is focused on different opportunities for making a choice – life, professional, moral, emotional, etc. These choices can be successful, if the young person knows themselves, their interests, strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths and weaknesses are part of the individual characteristic of a person. Knowing one's personal strengths and weaknesses is an important skill, which is in the basis of the process of personal growth. This skill corresponds directly to reflexion skills.

Reflexion is an exploratory process, during which a person researches their inner world, themselves as a researcher and the act of research itself. There are two types of reflexion:

- Intellectual reflexion – When people face a new/unknown situation, they manage to rationalise the tasks/problems, summarise them and reach a conclusion or solution.
- Personal reflexion – It manifests itself in personal skills to maintain “feedback” with oneself, i.e. the ability to look at oneself from outside.

Individual style

In general terms, individual style is a combination of personal characteristics, which reflect a person’s unique lifestyle – clothing, behaviour, expression modes, etc. One’s style is part of the person’s identity and uniqueness. Lifestyle is determined and depends on the individuality of a person seen as a unity of their psychophysical characteristics. The uniqueness of characteristics provides shape of one’s life.

Personal style includes several components – cognitive and speech patterns, clothing style, individual style of acting, mimics, gestures, etc. Together with other characteristics they construct the individual style. One of the most common ways to form one’s individual style is imitation. People develop themselves through imitation, whose progression goes along the line of an unconscious imitation through a more rationalised imitation to a goal-oriented choice of presenting one’s identity.

Imitation during adolescence is different from the one in childhood. It is not a blind and mechanic process of imitating, rather a rationalised imitation including one’s personal reflection on the model. It is indeed during adolescence that the person forms their individual style and realises their own characteristics. As age progresses, certain changes with the subject of imitation occur – the tendency to regard parents, teachers and peers as role models decreases, while the urge to imitate famous people increases as the adolescent discovers a specific link related to his/her personal interests. Imitation determines adolescent’s choice of style, clothing, hairstyle, gestures, phrasing, personal belonging, etc.

Assertive behaviour

Assertiveness is a skill to uphold one’s personality through self-confidence and persistent behaviour. It is detectable in one’s interaction patterns. Assertiveness is part of the communication process based on defending one’s interests, upholding dignity and importance of one’s personality, firm expression and demand for respect of one’s human rights.

Effective communication has two sides – on one hand, there is a behaviour model of being benevolent, open, prone to cooperation and compromise; and on the other hand, there is a behaviour model, which represents a firm uphold of one’s rights and uniqueness. The second model demonstrates that a person upholds their rights unconditionally, insists that their rights are respected and that there are areas open to negotiation (in conflict resolution); however, there are certain areas, which are not to be discussed further with the goal of being alternated (basic rights and interests of the individual).

Success-defining factors

One of the strongest factors for success is self-confidence in one's own capabilities and ability to accomplish one's goals. The most important belief system to be constructed is the one, which makes you believe with certainty that you can accomplish your goals. This is called positive thinking in contrast to positive knowledge. Positive thinking can sometimes be a desire or a feeling of hope. Meanwhile, positive knowledge occurs when you are absolutely certain that your actions will be successful no matter what the external circumstances are.

Another principle related to personal belief is will. It is a pre-condition for success. Will is based on confidence, belief and trust in one's capabilities. Personal development, control and discipline are key to one's success. In this regard, control over one's thoughts is the most difficult to achieve during the process of self-development.

Personal development planning

Managing one's life does not mean opposing those who help you. People who provide support, regardless whether they are professionals or not, can share important information and skills and deserve respect. They should be regarded as partners who also bear responsibility and not as people who control your development.

Planning one's own future is not a magical process, which offers easy to make decisions. Sometimes it can be complex and difficult process. What one needs might not correspond directly to what others believe one is need of. This is why, the individual is in the centre of the process and they should not be afraid to share their shortcomings and desire to change.

Below are some of the key questions, whose answers help plan one's future:

- Dreams: What are your hopes, aspirations, plans for your future life? What should you change in the present in order to achieve these?
- Interaction/relationships: Who are the most important people, whom you wish to be present in your life? How do you see your relations to them?
- Work: What professional career, work schedule, position, location and environment do you prefer?
- Home: Where do you want to live? What kind of accommodation do you prefer? Do you want to live with roommates and/or family? Which neighbourhoods do you prefer (downtown area, suburbs, village, small town, etc)?
- Personal interests/free time: How do you see your hobbies and interests within the framework of your life?
- Personal growth: What kind of skills and knowledge do you need in order to accomplish your goals? Which are your person qualities, attitudes and skills? Do you need a change in order to succeed?
- Health: Do you have a health problem? What do you have to do? Do you have to change your lifestyle?
- Special areas: What would you say is a typical characteristic of yours? What is the most important aspect in planning your future?

Session Development:

Stage 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by initiating a discussion on the following questions:

- When does a communication process become effective?
- Which are the main communication skills? What communication styles can you list?
- What makes up a good team?
- Which are the main roles in a team?
- What characteristics should a good leader possess?
- How do you make decisions?
- What are some of the factors, which pre-determine success?

Activities:

Write down the main ideas of the participants in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options :

Exercise 1: Do you listen?

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Role play
Requirements: For the peer educator – a list with instructions, flip chart, markers
For the participants – note cards with instructions
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Explain to the participants that this exercise will help them determine the skills needed for an effective communication. Divide them in groups of three – each group should decide who would be a speaker, listener and observer.

Activities:

1. After the choice has been made, invite the participants with the same role (e.g. speakers, listeners and observers) to form separate groups in order to discuss their roles. Each listener receives a note card with an instruction. The peer educator prepares enough number of cards depending on the number of listeners. In any case, one of the listeners in each group should receive the first instruction from the list, i.e. to listen carefully. It is possible that there are more participants with the same instruction within a group. The

listeners should keep their instruction secret from the others.

2. Instruct the speakers to think of a topic, which is important to them and they are able to discuss it for five minutes within their group. The observers should silently observe the interaction between the speakers and the listeners without interfering. The participants go back to their original group and have five minutes to complete the task. After the end of the exercise, all participants gather in a wide group for a subsequent discussion.

3. Explain to the participants how the discussion should be organised – each group member (first the observer, followed by the speaker and the listener) explains what happened in their group and how they felt. The listeners tell the others what their instruction was.

4. The discussion should continue by focusing on the following questions:

- How do you understand that others listen to you when you speak?
- How do you feel when others do not listen to you?

In the end, invite the speakers and the listeners to shake hands in order to demonstrate that they do not have negative feelings towards each other, as the interaction was merely part of a role play.

Instructions for the listeners

- Listen actively and ask topic-appropriate questions.
- Interrupt and do not allow the speaker to finish their sentence.
- Change the subject spontaneously.
- Extend compliments to the speaker.
- Laugh when the speaker appears serious.
- Talk to somebody else when the speaker is sharing his/her ideas.
- Look around the room and appear distracted when the speaker presents his/her topic.
- Provide advice without being asked for one.
- Appear shocked by what the speaker shares.
- Do not maintain eye contact with the speaker.

Exercise 2: My feelings

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Individual work, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – “Feelings” table
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare the following work sheet for each of the participants:

Table: Feelings

Feelings	How do I express them? (What do I do?)	How do I suppress them? (What do I do?)	What are the results? (consequences)	What do I want to change? (future projection)

Activities:

1. Introduce the exercise by directing the attention of the participants to the idea that feelings can be both universal and individual because people experience events and express accompanying emotions sometimes in a similar manner and other times in a different one. Make it clear that feelings can be expressed through words and body language. Underline that it is important to realise one’s feelings because this provides an opportunity to know oneself better, rationalise one’s behaviour and also get to know others better. Suggest to the participants to reflect and try to analyse their feelings in different situations.
2. Suggest to the participants to think about a specific situation in their lives when they have been highly emotional. Their task is to analyse their feelings with the help of the table. They have 10 minutes to complete the task.
3. After time is over, volunteers share their experience and self-analysis is encouraged in order to improve

one's understanding, develop sensitivity towards expressing one's feelings and facilitate a desire for change.

Exercise 3: Team – the rules of the game

Duration: 30 - 35 minutes
Methods: Information analysis, presentation
Requirements: For the participants – flip chart, markers
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Inform the participants that the topic for group work is to analyse successful teams. Volunteers should research principles and rules of team action in any given area – for example, in sports, technology, medicine, economics, culture, etc. The participants collect information and might form groups according to interest (no more than five). They prepare posters, explaining teamwork and the research they have conducted. Graphics, symbols, pictures and other materials can be used.

Activities:

1. Introduce the preliminary research, which the volunteers conducted, and link it to the topic of group work – understand better what a team is, why it is needed, what the rules of interaction are, etc.
2. Present the next steps with the instruction: “We have four or five groups ready to present interesting examples of team work. A spokesperson of each group presents in no more than four-five minutes the rules of actions in the team their group has researched. The presentation focuses on the goals and rules of the team, which make it successful. The rest of the participants may ask questions in the following two minutes.”
3. The spokespersons present their posters and provide additional information. Keep an eye on the time for presentation and questioning.
4. In the end, emphasise the main team characteristics – common goal, team composition, clear rules and roles, constant interaction, trust, system of appraisal and sanctions. Make sure to link the different presentations; find commonalities and complementarities.

Exercise 4: I found an envelope

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Structured exercise, discussion
Requirements: For the peer educator – an envelope containing 10lv.
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Without saying anything, the peer educator stands in the middle of the room and places a sealed envelope on the floor. (The envelope contains 10lv.)

Activities:

1. Ask the participants a series of questions and encourage multiple answers.
- What does the envelope contain in your opinion?

• How do I choose who shall open the envelope?

• Instruct the chosen participant to open the envelope and ask him/her what they see inside.

• What would you do, if you found an envelope with money inside?

• What would you do, if you were a teacher or a school director? How would you decide whose money it is?

• What would you do, if three people claim that the money is theirs?

• Have you ever found money? If yes, elaborate.

• Have you ever lost money? If yes, what happened and how did you feel?
2. During the discussion, the peer educator observes that more participants share their experience.
- Emphasise the importance of expressing different feelings and experiences related to a similar situation.

Exercise 5: My psychological portrait

Duration:

30 minutes

Methods:

Individual work, lecture

Requirements:

For the participants – “My psychological portrait” questionnaire, “Self-esteem action plan”

Age group:

14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Make enough copies the “My psychological portrait” questionnaire.

“My psychological portrait”
Questionnaire

Dear participants,

Below you will find a list of personal characteristics – read through the list and decide which one describes you. Underline those, which you can certainly pick as representative of your personality. Then assess your attitude towards the underlined characteristics and note your answer in the respective column, representing whether the characteristics make you happy, indifferent or unhappy.

Statements	It makes me happy	I am indifferent to the statement	It makes me unhappy
I am happy.			
I am not good at anything.			
I am good at everything.			
Slow in considering (things, events, etc)			

Statements	It makes me happy	I am indifferent to the statement	It makes me unhappy
Clumsy			
Boring			
Unlucky			
Earnest			
Deceiver			
Introvert			
Dreamer			
Optimist			
Reliable			
Short-tempered			
Good friend			
Moody			
Communicative			
Religious			
Clever			
Weak-willed			
Inconsiderate			

Activities:

1. Introduce the exercise with the statement that one’s main and secondary goals are assisted by getting to know one’s capabilities. Each participant receives a copy of the questionnaire and receives the instruction: “Each one of you receives a copy of the questionnaire. You have 10 minutes to answer the questions; there are no good or bad answers. Each response is valuable and your choice should be honest. In the end, all of us will comment on the results.”
2. After comments have been made, the participants work to increase their self-esteem by noting down couple of first steps of their personal plan (10 minutes). This helps develop one’s skills for self-analysis and planning.

Self-esteem action plan

First steps in making an action plan for increasing one’s self-esteem:

What do I want to change? (Goals)	What will I do in order to achieve it? (Activities)	What consequences might arise? (Results)

3. The participants work alone. After time is over, the participants present their results. The next step for each of the participants is to set the beginning of a personal action plan to raise their self-esteem by indicating what they would like to change and how this change can be executed. Remind the participants that they have 10 minutes and then volunteers can present their ideas to the group.
4. Summarise the discussion by pointing out that the participants have outlined their psychological portrait and they have identified some of their personal characteristics and their evaluation. The focus is placed on the values, which help formulate one's self-assessment.

Exercise 6: A leader

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Small group work, discussion
Requirements:	For the peer educator – flip chart, markers For the participants – flip chart, markers, tape
Age group:	15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise by underlining that each person has their own values; however, when one lives within a community, there is also a common value system to consider. Community leaders are formed on the basis of this value system. The leader defends the interests of the community; they fight to accomplish the community's goals and exhibit certain qualities.

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in three groups. Each group receives a poster and a marker. The participants should choose a leader of the group and describe their qualities on the poster. They have 10 minutes to complete tasks.
2. After time is over, each group presents its choice and argumentation. Provide an opportunity for each leader to list their valuable traits in no more than two minutes and thus, convince the others in their ability to defend the interests of the community.
3. The participants vote to choose one of the three leaders. The vote is counted and after the result is clear, some of the participants might be willing to share the arguments behind their vote.
4. Summarise the values, leadership characteristics and skills, which the group outlined in the course of discussion.

Exercise 7: An interview

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Group work, role play, discussion
Requirements:	For the peer educator – flip-chart, markers For the participants – sheets of paper
Age group:	15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare a work area by arranging the chairs one by one and provide some space between each couple.

Activities:

1. Initiate the exercise with brief information about journalism. Clarify the concept “interview” and provide guidelines for conducting one. Write down few main questions, which the participants should use during the exercise.
2. Divide the participants in two groups – journalists and celebrities. The groups sit in front of each other so that pairs can be formed. They receive the following instruction: “The journalists conduct an interview with the celebrities; however, it is not going to be a regular interview, rather one that depicts the positive sides of the celebrity. The journalist should focus on the positive traits only. Make use of the questions on the poster. Write down the questions and the answers within no more than 10 minutes.”
3. After time is over, the journalists present their interviews. Encourage them to share their feelings during the role play. Ask the following questions:
 - Is it easy to portray only the positive characteristics?
 - Is it easy to share only your positive traits?
 - What did you learn for one another?
4. Summarise which positive characteristics are most commonly expressed during the interviews. Provide an opportunity to discuss them among all the participants. Emphasise the necessity to form skills for expressing one’s value and upholding oneself within different situations.

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator’s work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

5.9. LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Discussion Topics:

- “Time” category
- Time management
- Time management tools
- Time planning
- How do we spend our time?
- Goal-oriented techniques
- “To do” lists
- Development of appropriate time environment
- Personal plan effective communication

Goals:

- Rationalise the concept of time
- Develop skills for time planning
- Develop skills for task planning and prioritising
- Realise the need to organise one’s free time in a balanced and beneficial way

Expected Results:

- Adolescents rationalise “time” and its importance in life.
- Adolescents develop skills to plan and assess one’s time.
- Adolescents develop skills to plan daily routine and prioritise tasks.
- Adolescents realise the necessity to use their free time constructively.

Brief Overview of Exercises

Stage	Leisure Activities	Method	Duration
Stage 1	Introductory discussion	Frontal discussion	8-10 minutes
Stage 2	Practical exercises – options		Total: 30 minutes
	Organise a youth centre (30–40 minutes)	Group work, presentation, discussion	
	Daily routine (30 minutes)	Group work, discussion	
	Hobbies (30 minutes)	Group work, discussion	
	My week plan (30 – 35 minutes)	Individual work, group work, discussion	
Stage 3	Summary and reflexion	Discussion, feedback	5-7 minutes

Background information for peer leaders:

“Time” category

Time is one of the specific coordinates in our lives; we exist based on these coordinates. Time defines the duration of a certain moment. As a philosophical category, the dimensions of time are:

- past – The period, which a person has already experienced.
- present – The period, which a person experiences at the moment.
- future – The period, which urges the person to make plans, goals and strategies for.

Time management

People possess three main resources, which help them organise their lives: human, financial and time resources. Human resource comprises of one’s competence, education, qualification, chances for realisation. Financial resource depends on a multitude of factors and is not always a determining factor. Time is one the most valuable resources because it can be earned; however, wasting time is irreversible. Time management is an issue of skills oriented at how we can use time, how to organise it, how to accomplish our goals within its framework.

How should we use our time constructively?

Time organisation requires skills, which help us use our time effectively and in the most efficient manner. Making use of these skills is the main difference between effective and ineffective people. Time management lets us learn how to:

- determine which activities are important and which should be crossed out in our routine
- use our time in the most efficient way
- use our free time constructively with regard to leisure and hobbies
- increase work hours
- control distracting activities, which waste our time, obstruct our work flow and useful activities
- increase our productivity and decrease stress levels
- be productive and feel secure in the work we perform
- spend more time for a real rest and enjoy our preferred leisure activities

Concentration on your work and not on the state of being constantly busy

Many people spend their time handling a lot of work but they do not accomplish a lot because they do not concentrate on the right tasks. Time management and planning aim at directing as much of one’s efforts towards higher results as possible.

The key to organising one’s time in an effective way is to concentrate on the results and not on being constantly busy. It is useful to keep in mind that a person displays different levels of effectiveness during different hours of the day. If one keeps a journal/schedule of their activities for several days, they can notice that there are certain time segments when thinking is clearer and more effective. Productivity is also higher during a certain time period.

Meanwhile, there are periods of feeling tired and it comes at no surprise that quality of work

decreases during these periods. This information is important because it allows us to make a work schedule. Important tasks and activities, which require creativity, should be scheduled for the time period of higher concentration. Routine tasks should be left for the less productive hours.

It is important to know that energy levels depend on one's nutrition regime, which might influence time organisation and planning. A breakfast rich in carbohydrates supplies the brain with the necessary sugars during the early hours of the day. Energy levels also depend on whether a person combines high levels of work (mental, creative, physical) with rest and distraction from work-related tasks. Therefore, if a person works throughout the day without a rest, the second half of the day will not be productive. Rational nutrition and appropriate rest increase considerably the quality of spent time.

Time organisation tools:

Cognitive tools

- assessment of one's personal time
- concentration on the priorities in one's daily schedule
- planning aimed at effective time use
- using time effectively
- creating more time
- avoiding distractions

Time organisation tools

- "To do" lists
- task division and cooperation request
- using SWOT analysis
- reading skills
- drafting skills
- telephone conversation skills
- skills for combining work with rest
- leisure activities (hobbies, sports, tourism)
- time evaluation

Time planning

Time planning helps people use their time in the most effective way in view of their personal development. The first step is assessing the value of time and prioritising important tasks – studying, improving one's education, work, career development, personal business, development of one's skills, leisure activities, house chores, communication and interaction with others.

The next step is to concentrate on the results and to learn how to plan. Planning is a process which leads to identification of steps for accomplishing one's goals and listing of who, what, when, where and how to accomplish the goal in the most effective way without letting distractions interfere.

Planning can be divided in two stages:

- Personal planning, which sets personal goals for a certain period of time.
- Project planning, which is the official implementation of a planned process with clear goals,

tasks (activities), expected results, resources and budget.

Acquiring skills for the two stages of planning is a process, which begins in early age, develops during adolescence and continues with accumulating personal and social experience.

How do we spend our time?

Memory is not a reliable factor when one needs to assess how they spend their time – it is quite easy to forget the amount of time spent in talking to friends, walks, watching TV or just doing nothing. Memory functions badly when your shape is not optimal during the day.

One might not be aware that one's level of productivity varies throughout the day – the majority of people operate on different levels of effectiveness during the different hours of the day.

A technique, which might shed light to this process, is to keep record of one's activities for several days. Without changing one's routine, write down all the activities since the moment one wakes up in the morning. Each time one changes the activities, note down the time period needed for the activities. Beside listing the activities, also make a note on the accompanying feeling, i.e. whether one is concentrated, laid-back, tired, energetic and most of all, satisfied with what one does.

Once the list of activities is complete, analyse it. It can be surprising to notice how much time is wasted for completing irrelevant tasks or doing nothing. The list provides an opportunity to realise the potential beneficial things, which could have been accomplished during the day.

Aligning the tools/mechanisms in view of attaining specific results

Everything we do in relation to time organisation is directed to make an influence on the effectiveness and productivity. This is an additional help, which might teach us self-organisation and time planning. This means:

- specific plan
- clear link between the different tasks and end results
- being better organised
- being organised in such a way that there is no need to remember everything
- being able to recognise and concentrate on the most important
- waste less energy for irrelevant tasks
- better coordination of tasks
- better opportunities to cope with and avoid distracting factors and interruptions
- develop a habit of higher time discipline
- better opportunities to cope with unexpected and urgent situations in the everyday life

Developing an appropriate time environment

Good organisation is a pre-condition for effectiveness and productivity. Bad organisation leads to piling up of tasks and losing sight of the goal. Everything seems to require a lot more time than needed and thus, tasks pile up day after day, leading to a lack of regulation and sense of accomplishment. These factors determine the future and possibilities for one's success. Lack of organisation might cause real problems. The inability to organise and manage our own time leads

to:

- inability to follow our goals and plans
- lack of clear priorities
- being late and unprepared for daily tasks
- chaos
- loss of personal value
- procrastination
- fatigue, boredom, lack of interest towards useful things
- inability to enjoy tasks

We can be organised only if we have a plan. There are many other factors, which contribute to personal organisation. Some are very simple but have quite an influence. Other factors are more fundamental in nature. Both sets of factors require additional consideration how to be included in one's current lifestyle; some of them might become routine if used on a long-term basis.

Personal plan

A personal plan is not just creating a plan of activities. They should be listed in a specific order and could be evaluated through a technique of listing, assessing, anticipating and deciding:

- List all the tasks.
- Assess the time needed for accomplishing each of the tasks with the greatest possible precision.
- Anticipate additional time, as tasks sometimes require more time than planned even in the worse case scenario. Make sure there is enough time allocated to routine tasks.
- Decide on your priorities. This is an extremely element of time organisation.

Review the plan on a daily basis; this process should become a routine. If an additional task emerges, it could be included in the list immediately and set aside for later.

Session Development:

Exercise 1: Introductory discussion

Duration: 8-10 minutes
Methods: Frontal discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the topic by initiating a discussion on the following questions:

- How do you spend your free time?
- When can we claim that we have spent our time meaningfully?
- How can we organise our day in a time-efficient manner?
- What is the difference between working and being busy?

-
- Do you know any time organisation tools?
 - How do you plan your time?

Activities:

Write down the main ideas of the participants in order to summarise the discussion.

Stage 2: Practical exercises – options:

Exercise 1: Organise a youth centre

Duration: 30-40 minutes
Methods: Group work, presentation, discussion
Requirements: For the participants – flip chart, markers, tape
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Introduce the exercise by asking the participants to tell what possibilities for leisure activities there are in their hometown.

- Are they members of a particular club?
- Do they participate in initiatives or youth organisations?
- Why did they choose to spend their free time there and what do they learn from the activity?

Activities:

1. Divide the participants in several groups (three to five, depending on the size of the group). Each group receives the task to form an association/organisation related to free time and leisure activities. It is important that there are different associations/organisations.
2. Within 10-15 minutes each group has to prepare an advertisement of their activity. It should present the association/organisation, its activities, target group, benefits for adolescents/children. The groups might also create a logo for their association/organisation.
3. After time is over, the groups have three minutes to present their youth centres to the others. At the end of the exercise, each participant can choose a youth centre to participate in. The members of the largest youth centre should comment on why it is attractive; meanwhile the members of the smallest youth centre should think of measures to increase their popularity.

Exercise 2: Daily routine

Duration: 30 minutes
Methods: Group work, discussion
Requirements: For the peer educator – flip chart, markers
For the participants – sheets of paper, markers or coloured pens
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare a work area, where there is enough space for the participants to work individually and compile their daily routines.

Activities:

1. Introduce the topic by discussing the necessity to formulate clear rules about the organisation of the group. Focus on the daily routine as a means of distributing tasks within one day.
2. Divide the participants in three groups. Each group receives a sheet of paper and coloured pens. Give the following instruction: "Compile your daily routine: mark obligatory tasks in red, non-obligatory in green and leisure activities in blue. You have 10 minutes to complete the task."
3. After time is over, each group presents their daily routines.
4. Discuss the tasks listed in the routines. The participants comment on which activities are listed as obligatory and which are not, leisure time and how to spend it. Inquire how the groups reached a common decision, whether there were arguments and how these were resolved. At the end of the exercise, the group develops a master daily routine and writes it down on a poster.

Exercise 3: Hobbies

Duration:	30 minutes
Methods:	Group work, discussion
Requirements:	For the peer educator – information on different hobbies For the participants – different note cards with hobbies written on them, flip chart, tape
Age group:	15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Prepare a set of note cards, which list different hobbies.

Activities:

1. Introduce the exercise by discussing different favourite activities, which help us use our free time. Invite the participants who have a specific hobby to talk about it.
2. Ask the following questions:
 - What kinds of hobbies do you know?
 - Are there any specific requirements when choosing a hobby – age, sex, financial resources, space, etc?
 - Are there appropriate/inappropriate hobbies?
 - Do you think that a hobby is an effective method to employ during one's free time?
 - Do you have a hobby? If not, will you choose one?
3. Divide the participants in small groups (five-six people in a group). Each group receives a set of note cards, posters and tape. Give them the following instruction: "Divide the poster in two columns – on one side, tape the note cards with different hobbies, which might be exercised right away; on the other side, tape the note cards with the hobbies you would like to exercise in the future, after you graduate high school. You have 10 minutes to complete the task."
4. After time is over, each group presents the order of their note cards. Ask the following questions:

-
- What attracts you in this type of activity?
 - Why did you place a certain note card under one of the two columns?
 - Are there note cards, which you did not place on the poster? If yes, why did you not choose this hobby?
5. Guide the participants to clarify the essence of different hobbies and emphasise the specific requirements needed for each of them. Encourage the participants to choose a hobby appropriate to their age as an effective and pleasant way to spend their free time.

Exercise 4: My week plan

Duration: 30 – 35 minutes
Methods: Individual work, group work, discussion
Requirements: For the peer educator – flip chart, markers
For the participants – “My personal week plan” work sheet, a set of markers or coloured pens
Age group: 15 – 18 years

Guidelines:

Make enough copies of the work sheet:

Day	Planned activities
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Activities:

1. Introduce the exercise by asking questions about the way each participants spends their time. Emphasise the need for planning one's time, explain how to do it and what goals to set. Focus on the need to link the personal schedule with family habits and routine.
2. Each participant receives a copy of the "My week plan" work sheet and coloured pens/pencils. Give them the following instruction: "The work sheet has two column. You can see the weekdays listed in the first column. The second column provides you with space to plan your daily activity during the different times of the day. You should list all the activities within a 24-hour cycle. Use the colours according to the instruction underneath the table."
3. Let the participants know that they have 15 minutes to complete the task. After time is over, ask them to share how they have planned their free time. Ask questions related to the difficulties, which they faced during the process of planning; emphasise the importance of the feelings associated with each activity a feeling of safety, organisation, involvement and responsibility.
4. At the end of the exercise, focus the attention of the participants to the dominating colour in their week plans. Underline the importance of individual planning:
 - possibility to develop one's capabilities
 - development of skills to prioritise
 - correct time organisation
 - avoiding negative consequences of being late and not being able to complete tasks within the deadline
 - overcoming boredom and idleness

Stage 3: Summary and reflexion

Duration: 5-7 minutes
Methods: Discussion
Age group: 14 – 18 years

Guidelines:

In few minutes summarise the main topics covered and opinions expressed.

Activities:

The last part of the session should give the opportunity to collect feedback from the participants. Their immediate reaction will provide information how to improve peer educator's work in future. This is why, the peer educator should devote several minutes to ask the participants how they feel at the end of the session and which moments they liked/disliked. Inquire about suggestions and recommendations. This feedback request does not involve endless discussion and debate, rather a reflexion and honest group answer on some basic questions. The session evaluation is intended to encourage each individual reaction, provide space for everybody to share their personal point of view and opinion.

6. EVALUATION

The following methods are used for self-reflexion and progress assessment within a group, which works together over a longer period of time. In case the programme is implemented within one or two academic years with the same group of adolescents, some of the methods may be repeated at the beginning and end of each academic year. The analysis should focus mostly on the change in indicators and the correlation between this change and participation in the programme.

METHOD 1: STORIES OF CHANGE

Duration: 50 minutes
Requirements: Flip chart, plain sheets of paper, pens/pencils for each participant

Guidelines:

The exercise “Stories of change” is an instrument for self-reflexion and expression over a period of time. It allows participants to see how a programme may have affected their lives, focusing on the most significant change that has occurred over time.

Steps:

1. Distribute the materials

Ensure that each of the participants has the necessary materials – paper and pens/pencils. Ask them to label the paper.

2. Introduce the activity

Explain to the participants that you are interested in how the programme has affected their lives. You want to see the changes over time so you would like them to write these things down so it is easier to remember. They have to respond to this question: “Looking back over the last few months, what do you think was the most significant change that took place your life as a result of participating in the programme?” Participants respond to this question in two parts:

- Write a description of what the most significant change was. What happened, who was involved, where did it happen, when did it happen?
- Write an explanation of why this change was so important. What differences did it make? How does this change the future?

3. Give an example

Giving an example of the “most significant change” story is very important. The example should not influence participants’ own thoughts about themselves. So, when you show an example of how to write a story, talk about playing soccer. Show how playing soccer has made you good at sports. This is significant because now you have more friends; you are also getting more exercise. Maybe you will try for the national team!

4. Give participants time and encouragement

Give all participants half an hour to write their stories. Encourage them to look at their own piece of paper – there is no “correct” story. They should focus on describing accurately what they are thinking. Encourage those who finish writing their stories early to help their colleagues who might need help with writing.

5. Collect the stories

Once the stories have been written, collect all of them and shuffle them up in a pile so you do not know who has written which story. Skim through the stories and pick two stories randomly. Read these without revealing who the authors of the selected stories are.

6. Discuss the information shared by participants

Ask questions to encourage a discussion on the two selected stories and try to get others to participate in asking questions as well. Examples of some of the questions that can be discussed include:

- Does this story apply to them? Why? Why not?
- How has the programme brought positive change?
- How could the programme be improved to bring greater positive change?

After everybody has a chance to speak, ask the group if anybody else has something to add about their stories or the process. Try to keep in mind what the participants say.

7. Once the discussion is over, write down lessons. Pay attention to the following points:

- Key points from the discussion
- The setting of this interview, the comfort level of your participants, interesting body language
- How did you feel about the interview, listing: (a) What worked really well, and (b) What would you change about how the activity was carried out.

8. Store all materials

Collect all sheets of paper and attach them to the check-in sheet. You will probably be using these materials in future discussions. The next time you conduct this exercise, you should check the comments and notes from the previous session. Try to identify points that might be improved. It might be useful to bring a poster or copies of the stories from previous sessions and ask the participants to discuss what has changed and what has remained the same (and why).

METHOD 2: „I AM”

Duration: 40 minutes

Requirements: Flip chart, blank sheets of paper, pens/pencils for each participants

Guidelines:

The “I AM” exercise is an example of free listing in which children and adolescents describe themselves (I am ...) by writing down the first 10 descriptive words that reflect who they are or how they define themselves. In “I AM” sessions children and adolescents reflect on how they perceive themselves and express it in writing. Free listing is a programme activity that explores what words and names we associate with bigger ideas or categories (e.g. names of plants, treatments for an illness or brands of a particular product). It is a very useful way of understanding these words and categories directly from the participants. By allowing the participants to describe their values, attitudes and behaviours, it allows us to learn how their description of themselves changes over time.

Steps:

1. Distribute the materials

Ensure that each of the participants has the necessary materials – paper and pens/pencils.

2. Introduce the activity

Explain to the participants that you are interested in how they think of themselves. You want to do this in a quick way and you would like them to just think of the first thing that comes to their mind. You are asking for a list of 10 words that participants would use to identify him/her, starting with “I am male/female”. If your participants list more, do not stop them! If participants are more interested in drawing out their words, do not discourage them. Participants will first make their own lists of words/drawings and then they will share with the larger group.

3. Give an example

Giving an example of an “I am” list is very important. The example should not influence participants’ own thoughts about themselves. So, when you show an example of how to make an “I am” list, use a fruit or an animal as an example. For example, “I am a cow. My list goes like this: I am a cow, I am brown, I am a milk-giver, I am meat, I am a pet, I am holy to some people, I am a mother, I am a polluter (cow dung!), I am a source of cooking fuel, I am slow.”

EXAMPLE:

I am a tree.	I am a girl.
1. I am green.	1. I am strong.
2. I am 300 years old.	2. I am tall.
3. I am tall.	3. I am attractive.
4. I am capable of bearing fruit.	4. I am silly sometimes.
5. I am being liked by other trees.	5. I am mischievous.
6. I am responsible – many animals can count on me.	6. I am my father’s favourite.
7. I am scared by bad weather.	7. I am thoughtful.
8. I am favourite to many of the children here.	8. I am sometimes late!
9. I am very strong.	9. I am happy to be at ...
10. I am now destroyed by a storm.	10. I am happy to go home!

4. Give participants time and encouragement

Give all participants about 20 minutes to make their individual lists. Encourage them to look at their own piece of paper – there is no “correct” list. They should focus on describing accurately what they are thinking.

5. Make a master list

Once individual lists have been made, put the chart paper up where everyone can see it. Tell your participants that from their lists of ten, you will make a master list of 25 words for this group. Ask them to say, “I am...” and add the word they were thinking of. If what they wanted to say has already been said, they can say that. When this happens, on the chart paper, add a mark next to that word on the list. You will go around the circle and each person has to say something. Sometimes it will be useful for you to be silent. This will provoke the participants. Another method to encourage more answers is to ask: “What else” or “Give me another example”.

6. Discuss the information shared by the participants

Once the master list has been made, initiate a discussion. Examples of some of the questions that can be discussed include:

- Give examples from their personal experience about the words they have chosen?
- Ask how the selected words are different or similar?
- Does age make a difference?

After everybody has a chance to speak, ask the group if anybody else has something to add about their lists or this process. Try to keep in your mind what the participants say. Also, if elements of the intervention come up, keep mental note of that, as well.

7. Once the discussion is over, write down lessons

Pay attention to the following points:

- Key points from the discussion
- The setting of this interview, the comfort level of your participant, interesting body language
- How did you feel about the interview, listing: (a) What worked really well, and (b) What you would change about how the activity was carried out.

8. Store all materials

Collect all sheets of paper and attach them to the check-in sheet. You will probably be using these materials in future discussions.

9. The next time you conduct this exercise

You should check the comments and notes from the previous session. Try to identify points that might be improved. It might be useful to bring a poster or copies of the stories from previous sessions and ask the participants to discuss what has changed and what has remained the same (and why). You could also inquire whether some of the participants have discussed their list with peers and whether they have done the exercise some other time with their friends. Collect their opinion on “I AM”.

10. Pay attention to the following points in your analysis:

- Frequency – what ideas appear the most? Programme-related topics, personal qualities, socio - demographics/socio-economics – gender, age, etc., things they like (do not like), things they like to do (do not like to do), aspirations.
- Theme sorting – what kinds of ideas appear? Valid themes – positive, negative neutral, programme-related, action-oriented vs. passive, I AM vs. non I AM statements, descriptive of self vs. descriptive of self in relation

to others.

- Preliminary comparison of the group – do ideas differ on the basis of the expected indications?
- How do all these variables change over time?

METHOD 3: PERSONAL COAT OF ARMS

Duration: 30 – 40 minutes

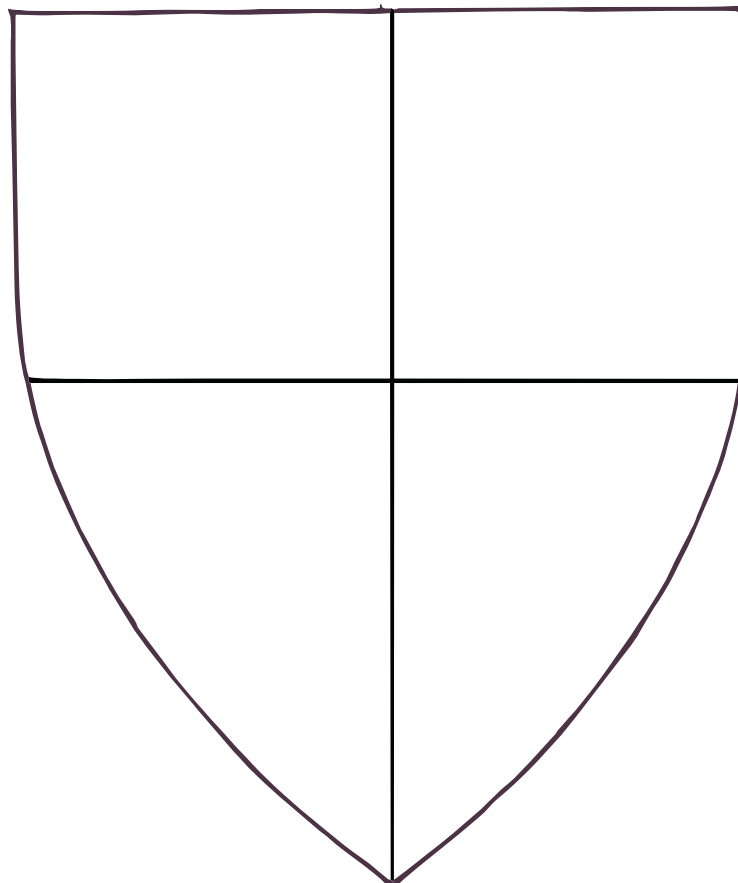
Requirements: “Personal Coat of Arms” work sheet, pens/pencils for each participant

Guidelines:

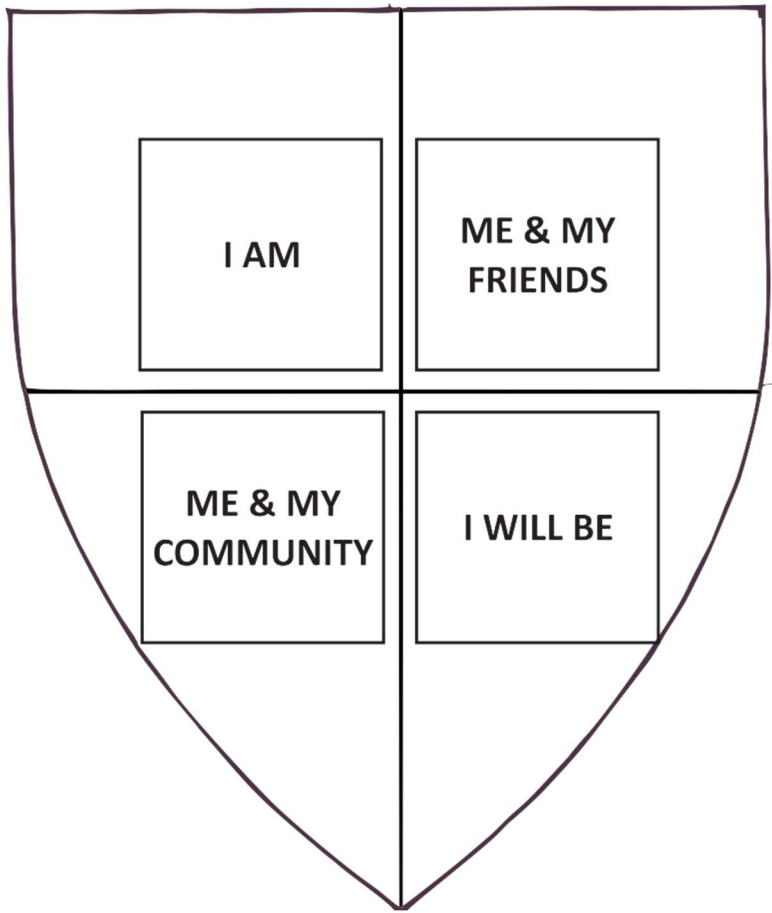
The exercise “Personal Coat of Arms” is an instrument for self-reflexion, self-evaluation and expression over a period of time. It allows peers to rationalise how they see themselves in the current moment and what aspirations they have for the future; it also calls for their perception of them being part of the community.

Steps:

1. Introduce the exercise with the idea that every person is unique and needs to realise their individuality and place among others. Underline that getting to know one’s true self is part of human nature and an important step towards rationalisation of one’s value and significance. Encourage the participants by asking questions about how they form their perception of themselves as individuals. Ask for multiple answers.
2. Distribute the following work sheet to the participants:



3. Draw the scheme and demonstrate to the participants what information is expected in each of the sections:



4. Explain that everybody decides for themselves what they are going to write in each section – a sentence, separate words, a drawing, a symbol or something else. The participants have 10-15 minutes to complete the task.
5. After time is over, some of the participants might want to share their “Coat of Arms”. The discussion should encourage self-analysis and reflexion on being an individual, as well as part of a group. The focus should be on identification of personal traits and the need for self-development.
6. After the exercise collect all work sheets. When you repeat the exercise over a period of time, the participants have the possibility to notice a change in their self-evaluation and rationalise the reasons for the change.

METHOD 4: I AM MORE ..., THAN ...

- Duration:** 30 – 40 minutes
- Requirements:** “I am more ... than ...” work sheet, pens/pencils for each participants

Guidelines:

The exercise “I am more ... than ...” develops skills for self-analysis. Introduce the exercise with the idea that every person is unique and needs to realise their individuality and place among others. Underline that getting to know one’s true self is part of human nature and an important step towards rationalisation of one’s value and significance. Encourage the participants by asking questions about how they form their perception of themselves as individuals. Ask for multiple answers.

Steps:

1. Distribute the following work sheet to the participants:

I am more than
I am more than
I am more than
I am more than
I am more than
I am more than
I am more than
I am more than
I am more than
I am more than

The participants should write down characteristics/traits that they believe describe them. They should try to list at least 10 phrases within no more than 10-15 minutes.

2. After time is over, the facilitator should initiate a discussion. The participants share their phrases and the emphasis should lead to a self-analysis, underlining their individuality and closeness to others. The focus should also be placed on identifying personal traits and realising personal responsibility to know oneself and work towards self-development.

3. After the end of the exercise, the facilitator should keep all work sheets. Conducting the same exercise over a period of time will provide an opportunity to definite the changes in self-perception and rationalise the underlying causes.

METHOD 5: MASK: I – IN FRONT OF MYSELF AND OTHERS

Duration: 30 – 40 minutes

Requirements: A4 sheets of paper, scissors, pens/pencils for each participant

Guidelines:

The exercise provides an opportunity for the participants to realise how they perceive themselves and how others see them.

Steps:

1. Introduce the exercise starting with the topic of trust and openness when perceiving and presenting oneself/others. Emphasise that exchange of information is a pre-condition for people to work on their own development.
2. Give each participant sheet of paper, scissors and markers. Give them the following instruction: “Your task is to create a mask of yourself. Each mask has two sides. The external side shows how you think others perceive you; the internal one demonstrates how you perceive yourself. Each one of you has 15 minutes to create the mask, after which you should present your two sides and explain what is meant with the picture you drew.” (three minutes per participant)
3. The facilitator should assist those of the participants who find it difficult to choose an approach by encouraging them to be open and creative. The volunteers should present themselves by placing the mask in front of their faces. The others ask questions and comment on their own perceptions and feeling about the shared information. The emphasis should be on the need for feedback in order to strengthen self-reflexion and skills for self-analysis and perception.
4. After the presentation, the facilitator should focus on the similarities and differences between self-perception and that of others and the possibilities for personal development.
5. After the end of the exercise, collect all “masks”. Conducting the same exercise over a period of time will provide an opportunity to analyse whether something has changed in their self-perception and why.

7. ANNEX

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL (FACILITATION SKILLS)

Date:	Location (school):	City:	
Peer leader:			
Number of participants:			
Topic of the session:			
FACILITATION SKILLS			
LISTENING SKILLS	YES	NO	NOTES
1. The peer leader maintains eye contact with the participants who are speaking at a particular time. (in more than 50% of the session)			
2. The peer leader summarises participants' comments. (more than 50% of the comments during a session)			
USE OF SUPPORTIVE MATERIALS			
3. The peer leader places the supportive materials appropriately so that everyone can see them. (100% during the session) - Location - Size of font			
4. The facilitator transfers information through constant exchange of questions and answers. (80% of the time)			
GROUP FACILITATION			
5 a) When posing a question, the peer leader looks at all participants before choosing who would answer. (more than 50% of the questions)			
5 b) When posing a question, the peer leader first chooses a volunteer; then he/she repeats the question and chooses a rather shy and distant participant. (at least twice during the session)			
6. The peer leader provides only accurate information. (100% during the session)			
7. When talking, the peer leader moves their head/body so that they face all participants. (80% of the time)			
8. The peer leader changes their body position during the session. (at least 50% of the session)			
9. The peer leader gives clear instructions on what is to be done in group work/role play. (see notes)			
BODY LANGUAGE			
10. The peer leader smiles. (at least twice during the session)			
11. The peer leader moves their arms while talking. (in more than 50% of the time)			
TIME MANAGEMENT			
12. The peer leader starts the session on time. (up to 10 minutes of delay)			
13. The peer leader makes a summary of the last session with the participants. (8-12 minutes)			
14. The peer leader finishes the session on time. (in 50-70 minutes from the beginning of the session)			

Notes

1. Use of materials:

- Location: Supportive materials are located in a way that makes all other materials/previous handouts clearly visible. They are to be taken down after the session.
- Materials held by the peer leader should be raised and moved so that everybody can see them easily.
- Size: All materials should be adequate in size so that the participants can see the text written on them.

2. When the sessions require dissemination of information (ex. HIV/AIDS, trafficking in children, gender equality):

- Write “no” if the peer leader reads more than three sentences from their notes on the topic.
- Write “no” if the peer leader poses questions like “Is it clear to you?” or “Did you understand?”
- Write “yes” if the peer leader poses questions and facilitates not only answers, but also feedback.

3. The observer should be familiarised with the reference materials prior to the session in order to be sure that the information is accurate.

4. Write “yes” when the peer leader looks straight at the participants’ faces. If the peer leader looks past the participants’ heads or down to their feet, write “no”.

5. Write “yes” if the participants ask no more than two questions to clarify what is required from them during group work/role play.

13. Write “yes” if the peer leader uses exercises that require active participation or the method questions-answers in order to summarise previous session from the participants themselves within 8-12 minutes.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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ADOLESCENT-RELATED RISKS AND DANGERS

Peer Education Training Manual