Peer to Peer:
Creating Successful
Peer Education Programs
The vision of IPPF/WHR is to build upon a network of local and global partnerships to advance the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, men and young people. IPPF/WHR is one of six Regional Offices of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and is a secretariat to 46 member associations in the Western Hemisphere. For our partners, IPPF/WHR offers technical assistance and training in a variety of capacity-building and programmatic areas, including proposal writing and evaluation. To find out more, visit our Web site at www.ippfwhr.org or contact us at info@ippfwhr.org
Peer to Peer:
Creating Successful
Peer Education Programs
This publication is based on a bibliographic review of peer education programs prepared by Yvette Cuca for the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR) in 2003. Subsequently, in February 2003 IPPF/WHR convened a group of experts in adolescent sexual and reproductive health from South American and North American organizations to discuss the contents and form of this guide. We would like to thank the participants in this group for offering their valuable recommendations: José Angel Aguilar, Claire Brindis, Nicole Cheetham, Rodolfo Coisou, Norma González, Angela Martínez, Susana Moya, Marcela Rueda, Angela Sebastián, and IPPF/WHR employees Eva Bazant, Denise Kohn, River Finlay, Rebecca Koladycz, Alejandra Meglioli and Rupal Sanghvi. Alejandra Meglioli wrote the chapters on planning, recruitment, training and implementing peer educator programs. Rebecca Koladycz wrote the chapter on monitoring and evaluation.

We would also like to thank the people who helped create the publication, particularly staff from several IPPF member associations: Angela Sebastián from INPPARES (Peru); Lorena Santos from MEXFAM (Mexico); and Susana Moya and Marcela Rueda from PROFAMILIA (Colombia). Thanks to José Aguilar and PROFAMILIA (Dominican Republic) staff for sharing useful tools that were adapted for this publication. Also thanks to Denise Kohn and Rebecca Koladycz for their valuable contributions, to Cecilia Valdés for editing the Spanish version, Zhenja La Rosa for editing the English version, Nicole Lisa for translating the publication into English, and Rafael Jiménez for the graphic design.

We offer our sincere thanks to The Brown Foundation, Inc, Houston and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for helping to fund this project.

*Peer to Peer: Creating Successful Peer Education Programs* was published by IPPF/WHR in New York, New York in September 2004.

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Peer education programs are a common means of addressing youth sexual and reproductive rights and they have proven to be a promising method for this area of work. Peer educators\(^1\) are people belonging to a group from a specific environment, such as a school, workplace, the army, prison, youth or sports clubs, gang or neighborhood, who are trained to educate other members of the same group. In sexual and reproductive health (SRH) programs, youth are trained to offer information on these issues to their peers, with the premise that most young people feel more comfortable receiving information from people of the same age group rather than from adults.

Organizations and individuals that decide to implement peer education programs face a series of practical challenges throughout the different stages of planning the program, selecting, training and retaining peer educators, as well as in the supervision, and monitoring and evaluation of the project. However, there is little documentation—especially for programs in Latin America and the Caribbean—about designing and implementing peer education programs or about how to address the practical challenges that often arise.

With this in mind, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR) decided to create a guide to aid its member associations and other organizations working with youth in the design and implementation of peer education programs. This document is not a training manual for peer educators but rather is principally intended for organizations that are either planning a new youth program or hope to integrate peer education into an existing project. For new programs, this guide can be used as a list of elements that should be considered for inclusion in the program. Organizations that currently have youth programs can also use this guide to assess which aspects of their program could be improved.

This guide describes the steps necessary for planning, identifying and training youth, and implementing, monitoring and evaluating a peer education program. Additionally, it contains examples of sexual and reproductive health projects for youth from IPPF/WHR member associations and other organizations in Latin American and the Caribbean. The guide is based on IPPF/WHR’s experience as well as an extensive bibliographic review of peer education programs.

Chapter I describes the steps for adequately planning a peer education program. Chapter II describes steps for the identification, selection and training of youth to become members of the program. Chapter III looks at implementation, including the type and variety of activities that can be offered through the program, and at supervising educators. Chapter IV addresses program monitoring and evaluation.

At the end of each chapter, there are tools that can easily be adapted to the needs of each program. Also included is an additional bibliography for those interested in learning more about the topic.

Finally, an appendix describes selected IPPF/WHR peer education programs.

\(^1\) Also called youth promoters, volunteers and peer helpers.
## I. Planning a Peer Education Program

### Summary of steps for planning a peer education program

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### Introduction

The planning stage is the time to develop an overview of the program, identify needs and objectives, select a target population, establish activities, determine who will be responsible for different activities, estimate the resources needed, and consider program monitoring and evaluation. It is also a time for dialogue, involving community members, parents and other potential resources that can support your organization’s work with youth.

In order to plan, you must first conduct a basic needs assessment of the youth you intend to reach with this peer education program. For this, you will need to prioritize and specify the target populations and the areas of intervention. Likewise, you should assess your organization’s own capacity for working with youth both so you can be realistic about what is feasible and so you can include in your work plan any organizational changes that need to be made to support the youth program.

Youth participation during the planning stage is crucial because youth can offer valid contributions and they will help to set clear and realistic expectations for the peer educators.

### Step 1: Conduct a Needs Assessment

A needs assessment is the starting point for the conceptualization and implementation of a peer education program, as it allows you to identify existing needs within the group or community with which you wish to work. It also allows you to understand more about who these youth are, including their average age, problems and concerns, norms, preferences, time availability, economic and familial circumstances, and civil status. This step helps you to envision the best way to approach the program, as well as to identify potential factors that could interfere with your strategies.

When defining your target population, be as specific as you can. Although youth are often seen as a homogenous group, they are a diverse population with diverse needs. There are a number of factors that will influence young people’s needs as well as the best strategies to reach them, including:

- Gender (male or female)
- Age (10-14; 15-19; 20-24 years old)
- Educational level (primary, secondary, university)
- Work occupation and situation
- Sexual orientation (homosexual, lesbian, transgendered, bisexual, intersexed)
- Sexual activity and existing children
- Residence (urban or rural)
- Life situation (street children, household situation)
- Civil status (married, single, cohabitating)
- Other factors (physical disabilities, HIV status, drug use, sex work)

Among these, age is particularly important to define because different age groups will need to be reached with different methods, messages and services that are appropriate to their particular needs.
Once you have decided on who will be the target population, conducting a needs assessment will give you a better understanding of these youth and their particular needs, attitudes and behaviors. You can use quantitative and/or qualitative methodologies for the needs assessment, but consider the time and resources you have available when deciding which methods to use.

Possible Data Sources for Needs Assessments

Quantitative
- Statistics (national census, local registries)
- Surveys (national health surveys)
- Data included in previous reports and assessments

Qualitative
- Focus groups
- Semi-structured interviews with key people
- Observations
- Review of materials and documents

The people who conduct the needs assessment can be staff already working for your institution; however, if your organization doesn’t have staff available for this purpose, you will need to hire outside consultants. Youth involved with the organization can help with the needs assessment by identifying information needs, conducting interviews/surveys, and analyzing data. (See Chapter IV, Monitoring and Evaluation for more information on how to conduct a needs assessment.)

The data collected from the needs assessment will help you to determine what strategies and activities will be best suited for your target population. IPPF/WHR has developed a tool (see the Planning Questionnaire in the “Tools” section at the end of this chapter) that will help you design a program based on solid data and focus your strategies in accordance with the needs and circumstances of specific populations.

Step 2: Create a Work Plan

After you have completed the initial needs assessment, develop a work plan that outlines the overall goal, specific objectives, and activities for the program. The work plan will help you to identify the resources needed, including staff, equipment and facilities, as well as to assign responsibilities.

Setting Goals and Objectives

The program goal reflects the needs of the population you want to work with, based on the needs assessment and overall goals of your organization’s youth program. The goal describes a general change desired in the long term. Generally, the program cannot accomplish the goal alone, but rather contributes to the achievement of the goal. Therefore, do not expect that the project will be able to measure changes at this level.

Specific objectives describe in detail how to achieve these changes and serve to clarify the direction of the program. They should take into account:
- The target audience
- The change desired
- The time frame for achieving this change
- Where the intervention will be carried out

It is important to be realistic when developing program objectives. One program cannot address all the issues that youth face, and one group of youth cannot, within a short time frame, for example, reduce the rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or adolescent pregnancy in a given city. Changing behaviors is a long process, and unless the program has financing for several years, it is more appropriate to expect changes in knowledge with only incremental changes in behavior. A realistic program not only increases its opportunities for successful implementation, but also helps to reduce the burnout peer educators feel if they are not achieving their objectives.

It is common for peer education programs to invest a lot of time and resources in the training of peer educators, and this is certainly important. But when establishing objectives and activities for peer education programs, keep in mind that the final beneficiaries of the program are the other youth whom you hope to reach through the peer educators, not the peer educators themselves. The objectives should be geared toward reaching the target population as a whole.
Developing a Logical Framework and Work Plan

Once the goal and specific objectives have been defined, you can begin to plan the implementation of your program. A good way to organize this information is by developing a logical framework—a table where you can chart the goal, objectives, strategies planned to meet each objective, and indicators of success for each activity. (See the “Tools” section of this chapter for a sample format for a logical framework.) When you design activities, consider your organization’s skills and look at the organization’s past experience with similar projects to learn from its previous successes and setbacks. More detailed activity planning will happen as the project progresses (see Chapter III, Implementation).

The work plan is the road map for your program, but it will need to be flexible so that you can respond to changes, the preliminary findings from evaluations, and the needs of the target population. Periodically examine your work plan throughout the course of your program to ensure that the activities planned are feasible and appropriate, and make adjustments when necessary. As you make changes, however, keep the program objectives in mind so that any changes to the activities will still allow the objectives to be met.

Planning for Monitoring and Evaluation

The goal of monitoring and evaluation is to obtain information about the project’s progress. It allows you to compare the proposed objectives with the results achieved, and thus to make adjustments to the project as needed. Because of their crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of the activities during the course of the project, monitoring and evaluation should be planned in conjunction with the activities, not when the project has ended. Monitoring and evaluation are guided by indicators that measure whether the objectives will be reached, including numbers, percentages, dates, location, and type of activities developed. Having a plan for monitoring and evaluation helps to ensure that the project continues in the right direction and can demonstrate real results at its conclusion.

The following are suggested steps in developing a monitoring and evaluation plan:
1. Review the project objectives and make sure they are measurable or quantifiable.
2. Decide how often the project team will meet, and review the functions of each team member.
3. Evaluate the resources available for collecting data and decide whether data analysis will be done manually or whether it will be automated through the use of computers and appropriate software.
4. Coordinate the development of instruments, definitions of terms, forms, and the database with the evaluation department (if one exists in your organization).
5. Train the coordinator and peer educators in monitoring and evaluation methodologies.

For a more detailed explanation of monitoring and evaluation strategies and methodologies, see Chapter IV, Monitoring and Evaluation.

Budgeting

Developing a budget entails estimating the costs of all the stages of the project, including monitoring and evaluation. The budget should be based on the project’s objectives and activities.

The costs of a project’s implementation will vary depending on its structure. Consider consolidating items in the budget you are creating so that you will have more flexibility to adapt to changes that occur during the program’s implementation. For example, under training, include the costs of all of the trainings instead of creating a separate budget line for each training; this will give you greater flexibility in spending money on the trainings.

Costs to consider when creating a budget:

- Staff salaries (wages and benefits)
- Travel expenses for staff and peer educators
- Equipment and other assets
- Training
- Information, education and communication materials and activities
- Incentives for peer educators (T-shirts, bags, caps, etc.)
- Operating costs
- Materials and supplies
- Monitoring and evaluation activities

Note that many donors have specific requirements for the format of the budget, and there are certain costs that they may not cover. If your project has a donor, be sure to check with them about budget requirements.
Step 3: Consider Incentives for Youth

Youth who decide to volunteer to be peer educators may do so for altruistic reasons. However, providing incentives to youth can also help keep them interested, increase their attendance, and boost their sense of responsibility for the program. For example, incentives like T-shirts and backpacks help youth identify with the project and give them a sense of belonging; other incentives, such as food, refreshments, and transportation, help ensure continual participation. If the incentives will incur added expenses, the program coordinator should make sure they are included in the budget. The project team should decide what types of incentives are feasible, appropriate and acceptable, in accordance with the suggestions and needs of the youth themselves.

Possible incentives include the following:

Professional/Networking Incentives
- Opportunity to meet and socialize with other youth
- Opportunity to recruit and train new peer educators
- Participation in conferences and meetings
- Job references/letters of recommendation
- Scholarships/school credit
- Participation in a regional or international network of peer educators
- Exchanges with other youth programs
- Opportunity for media coverage

Personal Incentives
- Identifying items (bicycles, key rings, T-shirts, baseball caps, pins, backpacks)
- Travel subsidies/transportation costs
- Certificates
- Community service credit
- Coupons for community stores or free admission to clubs for youth
- Opportunity to earn money (selling condoms, etc.)
- Discounts for youth and their families
- Opportunity for personal and professional development
- Recognition by the community and the program
- Field trips
- Recreational activities

Step 4: Determine Where to Work

The information collected in the needs assessment and your objectives will guide your decision about where to locate the intervention. It is important to consider the accessibility of the selected area, as well as your organization’s skills in working there. Particularly important are the relationships your organization currently has with community members or the possibilities for establishing these relationships, as these will help you to optimize your promotional resources in the area. Find out if there are other organizations working with youth and establish ties with them. Keep the young people’s needs in mind— who they are, what their time restrictions are (studying, working), and where they congregate.

Step 5: Identify an Adult Program Coordinator

Identifying an appropriate coordinator for the program is critical to its success. Literature on the characteristics of a good youth program coordinator suggest that the coordinator should be dedicated to and enjoy working with youth, knowledgeable about and comfortable with sexual and reproductive health issues, and, perhaps most importantly, “seen by the peer educators as trustworthy, credible, ‘one of them,’ someone they could turn to for help and advice at any given time.” The coordinator can be someone who already works for the organization or an outside consultant. In any case, it is worthwhile to invest the resources to find the right person.

Experience shows that the most successful programs are those that have a full-time coordinator, since working effectively with adolescents requires substantial time and energy. In addition to being exclusively assigned to the program, the coordinator should be available and flexible for scheduling purposes. The schedule should be clear from the start, but it should be emphasized that there is a chance that the hours may change.
YouthShakers, an international organization dedicated to youth advocacy and leadership, recommends that the program coordinator have the following characteristics:

- Excellent communication skills
- Commitment to the program goals and objectives
- Knowledge of and comfort with sexuality education
- Respect for youth
- Ability to work with youth from different cultural, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds as well as youth of different sexual orientations
- Creativity
- Flexibility
- Sense of humor
- Ability to have a good time
- Experience in developing projects and/or fundraising

**Step 6: Identify a Team to Develop the Project**

Once a program coordinator is on board, it is time to choose a group of young people for the project’s team. To ensure youth participation in the planning stage, the program coordinator can recruit some peer educators early on, possibly from among youth already involved in your organization. In choosing youth, ensure that they are of both genders and that they represent the project’s target population as closely as possible.

**Step 7: Train the Program Coordinator and Sensitize Staff**

Training the entire team is important because it unifies the vision of the program and helps to create a culture of support inside the organization for working with youth. This initial training guarantees a solid base for developing the intervention. Depending on the duration of the project, follow-up trainings may be necessary.

In addition to training program staff, it is important to sensitize all institutional staff to the project. This sensitization should emphasize the needs of youth, the contribution the project will make toward addressing those needs, and the importance of respecting the spaces designated for youth. You can use data from the needs assessment to support your arguments for developing this project. The organization’s governing body should also be sensitized to why this project is important. The staff should be informed about youth sexual and reproductive health issues within the context of a rights framework, emphasizing sexual and reproductive rights and using a gender perspective that promotes equality and respect for sexual differences. Periodically updating the staff about the results of the program is an important way to keep them committed to reaching youth.

**Step 8: Develop and Strengthen a Network of Support for the Project**

Inviting members of the community, parents, and other stakeholders to participate in the project from the planning stage helps to reduce the risk of objections or opposition to the project and can contribute to increased commitment as well as sustainability. One way to initiate this process is to hold a kickoff meeting with the various stakeholders at which you present data on the needs the project seeks to address, explain the project’s objectives, and ask for community support.

Youth can participate in this process by identifying these stakeholders, including parents, governmental representatives, health care personnel (particularly from youth-friendly clinics), staff from other organizations that work with youth, school directors, school groups, religious leaders, community leaders or politicians, police, industry leaders, and people who participate in sports, education, health, media, politics and entertainment.
You can involve stakeholders in a variety of ways, for example by creating boards of directors, consultative committees or support coalitions that have a defined role in offering support to the project. Members of the community can offer ideas, make spaces available for meetings and project activities, make financial donations, or be part of a support network.

**Working in Communities: Peer Education in the Dominican Republic**

PROFAMILIA, the IPPF member association in the Dominican Republic, has an established community-based peer education program that aims to contribute to improving the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and youth between 13 and 24 years of age, with an emphasis on preventing pregnancy, STIs/HIV/AIDS, and violence. This program provides information about sexuality to the community, youth, parents and teachers through a network of volunteer peer educators. Each year, approximately 600 youth volunteers receive training as peer educators for this program. Peer educators live in the neighborhood where the program’s activities are developed. In 2000, PROFAMILIA began to change its focus to make the program more sustainable. Since then, it has invested considerable time in forming alliances with community institutions like churches, schools, sports and cultural clubs, neighborhood associations, and cooperatives. In addition to offering space for activities, these alliances have helped PROFAMILIA to recruit, choose and support peer educators.

**Step 9: Organize a Physical Space for the Project**

A physical space should be set aside for use by the peer education program. This space should be decorated in a way that makes young people feel both comfortable being there and empowered to use it. An important way to create this “youth-friendly” environment is to work with youth in establishing clear rules for the use of this space and then give youth the authority to enforce these rules. A formal letter of agreement with the community or organization that provides the space can also help to ensure that these rules are followed.

**Step 10: Analyze Program Funding, Sustainability and Integration**

**Funding**

As you plan your project, consider potential sources of funding, whether from internal budget lines or from an external donor. Many peer education programs receive funding from international donors, but you should also investigate potential national donors, such as government agencies and foundations, as well as community stakeholders, such as a coalition of companies with social responsibility programs. Keep in mind that some stakeholders may also be willing to make in-kind donations, such as T-shirts, printing services, space for trainings, etc. Ensuring local financial support is important not just as a means to cover the costs of the project but also as a way to boost the confidence of peer educators by letting them know that they have community support.

When the organization already has a commitment to working with youth, project funding may come from an internal budget. However, IPPF/WHR’s experience shows that organizations find it difficult to justify designating their own funds for work with youth. Financial decision-makers often seek to create sustainable programs that generate their own income, and a youth program that is not self-sustainable may not be realistic. Staff sensitization to the critical importance of youth programs is thus crucial to getting funds designated for this purpose, (see Step 7: Train the program coordinator and sensitize staff).
Sustainability

Planning for sustainability—or the capacity for continuity of the project—helps to assure both donors and the organization that their investments will not be wasted by having to close the program when dedicated funding ends. Thinking about sustainability from the planning stage is crucial because it allows you to devise activities and strategies that will make project continuity possible. For example, inviting local donors, businesses and parents to events and keeping them informed about the project’s activities can help to ensure their ongoing support for the project. Similarly, documenting the effectiveness of the project and promoting achievements among decision-makers and donors can increase the possibility of future donations. Diversifying sources of funding can also contribute to sustainability as it reduces reliance on a single donor for the continuation of the project.

Integration

Generally, peer education programs are more effective when they are integrated into the other areas and programs of the organization’s work, rather than being a separate program. For example, an integrated peer education program in an organization that also addresses HIV/AIDS would ensure that the activities of each program would feed into each other. Peer educators could play a part in supporting or implementing the variety of complementary activities that the HIV/AIDS prevention program might include, such as condom distribution, social marketing, counseling, analysis and support services for STIs/HIV, information, education and communication campaigns (IEC); drama/theater, advocacy, home/hospice care, and support for orphanages. One of the most important components of an integrated program is that peer educators should be able to refer their “contacts” to existing services. For integration to work, peer educators must be familiar with the services and staff of the organization, and the service providers must be knowledgeable about the peer education program.

Issues to Consider for Planning

- Always conduct a needs assessment; however, the scale of the needs assessment may vary depending on the stage of development of the peer education program. If your organization has worked extensively with youth or with the issues the project will address, the needs assessment can be based on earlier studies. What is important is to utilize accurate and up-to-date information as the basis for interventions. There are many resources where you can find information, including demographic surveys of youth and studies from universities and other research centers. You should also review the findings of other research and lessons learned. Remember, your organization is not the only one working on this issue.

- It is important to ensure youth participation from the beginning of the program because it helps them to have a sense of ownership of the project and thus guarantees better commitment to and participation in the project.

- Including monitoring and evaluation in the planning stage is essential to ensuring the effectiveness of the project, as carrying out monitoring and evaluation activities will help you to understand what is working and how to adapt the project as you go along. By planning for monitoring and evaluation, you will also be able to ensure that adequate resources are available for these activities.
Tools for Program Planning

Tool 1: Planning Questionnaire
Tool 2: Logical Framework Form
Tool 3: Sample Letter Seeking Community Support

I. Planning a Peer Education Program

Questions to be answered in the planning phase:
- Is the peer education program an appropriate mechanism to meet the needs of the target population?
- How and when will the needs assessment be conducted?
- What are the objectives of the program?
- Who is the target population?
- How large is the population?
- What is the ideal profile of the peer educators, given the target population?
- Are there people within the target population who have the time, interest and ability to work as peer educators?
- How many peer educators will be necessary to reach the population?
- Can the project train this number of peer educators?
- What will the peer educators need to do? (Provide information, make referrals, etc.)
- What do the peer educators need in order to reach these objectives? (Training, materials, contraceptives, etc.)
- Can the project provide these things?
- Does the budget include supervision expenses?
- How can we make sure youth can participate and express their opinions?
- For this project, will it be possible to attract and maintain the interest and support of opinion-makers and influential people in the project community?

Questions to be answered in the needs assessment:
- What problems does the community see regarding the sexual and reproductive health of youth?
- Do adolescents see a need to gain knowledge, skills or services in sexual health?
- Do national and local data support these perceptions?
- What programs and services are currently in place to support the promotion of young people’s health? How does the community view them? How do youth view them?
- What needs do adolescents have that are not currently being satisfied?
- What limitations do adolescents face in getting information about sexual health?
- What sexual and reproductive health issues or related questions will be addressed through this project?
- What methods will it be necessary to offer?
- What other complementary methods will be used to reach adolescents?
### Tool 2: Logical Framework Form

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<tr>
<th>Objective 1:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Activities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Indicators</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Means of Verification</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Frequency of Data Collection</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Person Responsible</strong></td>
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### Objective 2:

| **Key Activities**                              |
| **Indicators**                                  |
| **Means of Verification**                       |
| **Frequency of Data Collection**                |
| **Person Responsible**                          |
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Tool 3: Sample Letter Seeking Community Support

Logo

June 20, 2004

La Luciérnaga
Calle San Martin y Bolivar
Barrio Nuevo, Santo Domingo
Dominican Republic

Dear [Director of La Luciérnaga]:

Profamilia is a non-profit organization that provides sexual and reproductive health services to adults and youth. As part of our work with youth, we have an outreach program where youth educators organize meetings with their peers to provide them with information about sexuality. This outreach program covers three neighborhoods in Santo Domingo, including the Barrio Nuevo.

Since your organization works in the same neighborhood and has a strong presence in the community, I believe that your support for our activities could greatly benefit youth in the area. There are a variety of ways that you could support our activities, for example: lending your space for us to conduct activities with youth, helping us build contacts with community members, and facilitating the work of the Profamilia youth educators in your neighborhood.

I would like to meet with you to further discuss ways in which we can collaborate. Working together, we can contribute to the development of our youth and community.

I will call you in the next few days to set up an appointment.

Sincerely,

[Executive Director]
Profamilia, Dominican Republic
Other Resources on Program Planning


Aguilar Gil J, Sebastiani A. *Manual de Trabajo con Jóvenes*. INPPARES, 2000, (unpublished). Request a copy by writing to Angela Sebastiani. asebasti@inppares.org.pe


Introduction

The success of any peer education program is determined in large part by the skills and commitment of the individual youth peer educators who participate in the program. Because their contributions are such an integral part of the program planning and implementation, selecting the right youth to become peer educators and providing them with appropriate training is crucial. One way to ensure that you are recruiting youth who will be right for the program is to involve the youth who participated in the planning stage in identifying potential peer educators who represent the target population.

The group of peer educators identified for the program will need ongoing training to master the knowledge and skills needed to be effective peer educators on the specific issues the project seeks to address. The content of the training should relate directly to the objectives and type of activities planned in the program. Peer educators should participate in all aspects of planning the training, including choosing issues to be addressed, identifying a facilitator, contracting outside lecturers, establishing the logistics of the training, and facilitating interactive activities. As youth gain knowledge and refine their skills through training, they will feel more empowered and this, in turn, increases their self-esteem, motivation, decision-making skills, and sense of responsibility for the project.

Training should be seen as a continuous learning process, and all programs should plan for three types of trainings: initial, follow-up and reinforcement.

Step 1: Recruit Potential Peer Educators

There are many ways to spark young people’s interest in becoming peer educators, and you should consult with youth participating in the planning phase to determine the best way to recruit youth for this project. Many program coordinators say that successful programs actively seek out potential peer educators rather than waiting for them to respond to a pamphlet or announcement. Some possibilities for recruiting youth include:

- Have youth from the target population identify peers they could or want to speak with about the program’s issues.
- Ask existing peer educators to help in the recruitment of new educators.
- Inform youth clients at clinics about the program and let them know that you are recruiting for peer educators.
- Involve professors, directors and administrators of schools in identifying candidates from among their students.
- Make presentations to youth at places where they congregate, such as schools, youth centers, commercial centers or street corners.
- Publicize the recruitment for peer educators on the radio, in newspapers, and through other mass media.
- Distribute brochures about the peer education program at places where youth will see them.
Once you have gotten out the message that you are recruiting youth to become peer educators for your project, it is helpful to hold a meeting for interested youth that provides general information about the project and inspires them to join the group. As youth will be able to ask questions and share their ideas, this type of meeting is also an opportunity for your organization to learn more about the knowledge and skills of the potential peer educators. Furthermore, it gives youth a sense of belonging to the project from its beginning.

Step 2: Select Peer Educators

There is no programmatic consensus on the criteria for selecting young people to act as peer educators; some argue that every young person who is interested should have the opportunity to become a peer educator, while others believe that not all youth have the necessary maturity, skills or motivation to be effective peer educators, just as not all adults are equally suited for certain jobs. However, there is consensus that the selection criteria for peer educators should be clear, public, and shared by the entire team. IPPF’s Vision 2000 program suggests that “clear selection criteria should be established prior to recruitment, with the opinions of older peer educators and target groups on ‘what makes a successful peer educator’ taken into account. This makes criteria more realistic and encourages young clients to have confidence in the individuals selected.”

Selection criteria will depend on the activities planned for the program. For example, if the program will include theater presentations, it will be important to find youth interested in acting. Keep in mind that there will be various roles to play within the program, and it is not necessarily the student with good academic performance who fits the profile of an effective peer educator.

It is a good idea to recruit an equal number of male and female peer educators, unless the target population is exclusively male or female, in which case the program team should decide what is appropriate. The coordinator will determine the number of peer educators necessary based on program planning. Keep in mind that because some of the youth selected may leave the project or may not be suitable as peer educators, you will need to recruit more youth initially than needed for the project.

Possible Selection Criteria for Peer Educators

- Age within the range of the target population
- Commitment to the goals and objectives of the program
- Ability and willingness to make the necessary time commitment
- Interest in working with peers and the community
- Tolerant and respectful of others’ ideas and behaviors
- Dynamic, motivated, innovative, creative, energetic, questioning, trustworthy, discreet

After the initial recruitment, you will need to interview the interested youth in more depth. The program coordinator and, if possible, a few youth volunteers from the organization can interview the potential peer educators and choose youth to participate in the project. As emphasized above, the selection of peer educators should be transparent and should conform to pre-established criteria.

Selection Process of Peer Educators at PROFAMILIA/Colombia

PROFAMILIA, the IPPF member association in Colombia, begins its recruitment process with informational presentations at institutions where youth congregate, such as schools and youth clubs, to spark interest in the project. PROFAMILIA explains how the project works, the benefits of participation, and the commitments required of peer educators. When PROFAMILIA has recruited at least 25 interested youth, it conducts approximately 20 hours of basic training on sexual and reproductive health issues for this group. During this time, PROFAMILIA staff get a better sense of who these young people are in terms of the way they relate to each other, their skills, and their interests. PROFAMILIA pre-selects certain youth from this group to have an hour-long personal interview with staff. After comparing results from the basic training and the personal interview, PROFAMILIA makes the final selection of peer educators. This entire process lasts approximately three weeks.
Step 3: Assess the Selected Peer Educators

Each group of youth is unique and thus will require training that is tailored to their particular knowledge and skills. Before starting the training, conduct a group assessment to determine the needs and strengths of the youth selected to become peer educators. This group profile will help you to design the content for the training and to determine what training techniques are best suited to reach these particular youth. The needs assessment will also help you set priorities for the training, plan for the necessary human and material resources, and figure out the budget requirements for meeting the identified needs of the peer educators selected. Many countries have legal restrictions regarding working with youth; know the laws, and consider requesting the approval and permission of an adult responsible for the young person before he or she participates in the program.

Issues to Consider for Recruitment

- Recruit more youth than are necessary. Not all youth who attend initial meetings and trainings will be interested or fit the profile. Others may leave the program because they age out, want to spend time on other tasks, lose interest, or experience significant changes in their lives, such as work or attending college. Establish alternatives for youth who do not participate in the initial group as peer educators, but who want to be involved with the organization in other capacities.

- Selection criteria for youth educators should be clearly defined before recruitment begins. These criteria should support the project’s objectives and activities. Professors and directors tend to choose the best students, but these youth are not necessarily the most suitable for work with their peers. Remember that the most successful peer educators are not necessarily model students but rather those youth who commit to the program’s objectives and who really want to participate. An effective group will include youth who have a variety of talents.

Step 4: Define the Content of the Training Program

The training should be a comprehensive program that covers the range of sexual and reproductive health issues addressed by the project, as well as a number of skills and developmental issues that relate to the work of a peer educator. For example, a training should also include: skills development; personal, emotional and cultural issues; and the functions and responsibilities of peer educators. As previously mentioned, the content of the training program should relate directly to the needs identified in the initial needs assessment. In choosing and developing materials to be used in the training, make sure that they are gender sensitive, are appropriate to the age and culture of the target population, and address the objectives and needs of the training. (For more information, see the Checklist to Evaluate Training Materials in the Tools section of this chapter.)

Content of a Training Program

- Education on the issues
- Skills development
- Personal, emotional and cultural issues
- Functions and responsibilities of peer educators

Education on the Issues

The sexual and reproductive health issues addressed in a training program should reflect both the needs identified in the needs assessment as well as the project’s goal and objectives. For example, if your project’s goal is to reduce the incidence of HIV among a particular youth population, topics to emphasize might include: a definition of HIV, the ways the virus can and cannot be transmitted, means of prevention, condom negotiation, and treatment options for teens living with HIV. A project that is aimed at reducing teen pregnancy might focus more on conception and contraceptive methods.

Whatever the specific goal and objectives of your project may be, all trainings for peer education programs that relate to sexual and reproductive health should address:
abortion; adolescent development; self-esteem; communication; sexual and reproductive rights; sexual differences; pregnancy; sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS; contraceptive methods, including emergency contraception; educational life projects and resource management; sexual relations; sexuality and gender; values and decision-making; and violence.

Peer educators need to feel comfortable with this information so that they can communicate it clearly and accurately to their peers. It should be noted that, in the course of their work, they will often be confronted with myths and misinformation about these issues; the training should therefore address the most common myths relevant to the project's issues, and give peer educators detailed information to counter these myths.5

**Skills Development**

There are three main sets of skills that peer educators will need to develop in order to be effective:

- **Technical skills:** All peer educators will need to have an understanding of basic sexual and reproductive health concepts, such as the correct use of a condom, how contraceptives work, etc.

- **Teaching skills:** This second set of skills places special emphasis on education, communication and presentation techniques. For example, peer educators need to know how to teach youth to correctly put on a condom. Youth will need to learn how to have group debates and cope with personal questions, jokes and disorder, as well as how to give clear directions, guide debates, process activities, and pinpoint problems when working with a difficult group.

- **Teamwork skills:** The activities conducted by peer educators are often done in pairs or by the entire team; therefore, it is important that the coordinator encourage the cultivation of skills for working as a team.6

Whatever the situation, peer educators need sufficient time and opportunity to practice these skills and use the support materials or equipment necessary for these activities.

**Personal, Emotional and Cultural Issues**

The topics covered in trainings are closely related to personal beliefs and cultural values, and peer educators will need to be sensitive to this relationship in order to be more objective as educators as well as to understand others better. Peer educators need to recognize “that the function of peer educators is to provide information and referrals, not counseling, judging or trying to impose their own values.”7 Exploring issues related to sexuality, religion, gender roles, sexuality, people living with HIV, drugs use, sexual orientation, decision-making, and risk-taking can help peer educators develop the respect for different values, lifestyles and beliefs that is essential to their work. As these can be sensitive issues, it is important to establish upfront that everything discussed in the context of the program will be kept confidential.

**Functions and Responsibilities of Peer Educators**

Even before the training begins, the peer educators should know what will be expected of them in terms of their roles and responsibilities, and it is useful to reiterate this information during the training. This can be done by reviewing the forms the peer educators will need to fill out to report on their work, or during activity planning, when it will be necessary to assign responsibility for each task. For example, set goals in conjunction with the peer educators for the number of beneficiaries each peer educator will reach or the number of activities each will present. It is also important to mention what the peer educators can expect from the program, such as sources of support, supervision, and incentive systems (see Chapter III, Implementing a Peer Education Program).

**Step 5: Choose the Trainer**

The program’s objectives and the needs of the peer educators who were selected will determine the specific skills to look for in a trainer. The project coordinator is not necessarily the person who should lead the training, although he or she should participate in the training. The trainer should be well-versed in the issues he or she will cover and should have the ability to teach the relevant skills. It is often useful to have a main facilitator and additional lecturers, such as doctors, nurses, people living with HIV, and youth with more experience, to lead
individual sessions. A variety of lecturers can make the training more interesting and offers young people different perspectives, which can help them in creating their own strategies for reaching other youth. If these human resources exist in the organization, invite them to participate; seeking guest lecturers from inside your organization has the added benefit of helping to generate institutional commitment to the project.

Step 6: Conduct Initial Training

An initial intensive training is an excellent way to motivate the peer educators because it creates a team environment and gives them the knowledge and skills they need for their work. An initial, integrated, comprehensive training course reduces attrition from the program as well as the amount of supervision and subsequent trainings necessary, thus saving money in the long run. It has been shown that intensive trainings result in a smoother process and better results.

The length of the initial training will depend on the number of issues covered. Some programs take a full weekend outside of the regular meeting place; others take 10 to 40 hours, on consecutive days or periodically over a few weeks or months. When planning the training, consider how much time the peer educators will be available. The length of a single day of training should not be more than five hours.

The initial training should establish a foundation of knowledge and skills that can be built on during follow-up trainings. In addition to the course curriculum, the training should allow ample time for questions, debate and teamwork, and should give the participants plenty of opportunities to practice the skills they have learned. For example, assigning homework after each segment of the training can help to reinforce the information and skills taught. In addition, youth should visit the clinics and meet with the clinic staff as part of their training so that they can see first-hand the type of youth-friendly services available, which can make it easier to make referrals to the clinic.

Whatever the content of the training, define clear objectives for the specific knowledge and skills the peer educators should have at the end of the training. You will need to conduct a pre-test of knowledge and skills before the training begins to use as a baseline for assessing how effective the trainings are.

The starting point for the training should be the peer educators’ own knowledge and experiences, as this will make it relevant to their lives and will motivate them to learn. For this to be possible, the trainer must create an atmosphere where participants feel comfortable speaking about their experiences. Encouraging participants to ask questions, allowing time for and facilitating discussions, and creating opportunities for self-reflection are all ways that a trainer can create a supportive and safe atmosphere for youth to share. Although training is not the place for “group therapy” and participants should not expect to address personal issues in this setting, trainers should be prepared to help youth privately to deal with painful personal issues that may come up, or to refer youth to someone who can help. Keep in mind that trainers are often seen by youth as role models, and will need to provide emotional support and understanding.

Step 7: Conduct Follow-up Training

During the course of the project, peer educators should receive follow-up training in short sessions on specific issues and skills that are identified from obstacles and lessons learned in the project’s implementation. In this way, the project team can continually refine its work, exploring specific issues in greater depth or introducing new issues identified as needs. Often, it is the peer educators themselves who ask to learn about new issues because the youth they work with are asking them for this information. Because follow-up trainings allow the entire team to meet as a group, they are also a good way to reinforce and build teamwork throughout the course of the project.

Follow-up training can be done during full day sessions, in shorter sessions that last just a few hours, or by providing written information and updates. The group should decide how often the continuing education sessions and feedback should happen. You should also consider personalized follow-up for youth who need special attention.
Step 8: Evaluate the Training Process

The evaluation of the training process should seek to determine whether the peer educators have the knowledge and skills they need to work effectively, as outlined in the objectives of the training. In the short term, you can use pre- and post-tests for this purpose. We recommend that you also use an evaluation form at the end of each session; this will help the trainer and program coordinator identify strong and weak points in the training, as well as possible topics for follow-up sessions. Training performance indicators can include:

- Percentage of correct answers on issues covered
- Number of participants evaluated using information received in the training
- Change in attitudes of the participants
- Self-identified need for further training

Analyze the information collected to glean results of the training and modify the strategies and activities accordingly. Give feedback to the group on the results in a general way; if the results of an individual are deficient, talk to the peer educator privately.

If at the end of the process some of the participants in the trainings have shortcomings, the coordinator can decide whether the individuals have the skills necessary to be a peer educator and, if not, whether additional training can be organized for them to improve their skills and information. If this is not possible, the coordinator can talk to the individual about his or her potential for other types of work within the organization.

Step 9: Recognize Youth for Completing Training

Recognizing young people’s efforts can both give them a sense of accomplishment as well as boost their motivation. One way to do this is to award certificates of completion to the youth at the end of the initial training. Plan a special activity for this purpose, and invite mothers, fathers, and members of the community to participate. The organization’s leaders and representatives from community organizations can offer their congratulations and reflections on the importance of the commitment the youth peer educators have made. We also recommend presenting peer educators with identification cards, T-shirts or some other identifying item that they can wear to all of the activities they conduct.

Follow-Up Activities Conducted by INPPARES/Peru

INPPARES, the IPPF member association in Peru, has a well-defined system for providing follow-up training and information to its network of peer educators. The program coordinator sends periodic email updates to the peer educators to provide updates about the project, more in-depth information about specific issues, and relevant information about the work of other organizations. If the peer educators have questions or need more information, they can speak with the coordinator. Computers are available for peer educators to use at INPPARES, which also serves as an incentive for the educators.

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II. Recruiting and Training Peer Educators

Issues to Consider for Training

- The trainer chosen should have experience working with youth and empathy for young people. He or she should have a holistic view of sexuality, skills managing groups, and the ability to use a participative methodology.

- The content of the training should reflect both the project’s objectives as well as the particular needs of the group. The facilitator should review the pre-test evaluation results in order to adapt or modify the training program accordingly.

- From the outset, establish clear expectations for the peer educators and include discussion of these during the training sessions.

- The education techniques used should change throughout the training in order to maintain the young people's interest and active participation.

- Training sessions should be pedagogical in focus, rather than therapeutic. However, the trainer should be prepared to refer youth who need assistance dealing with personal issues that may arise.

- Emphasize that the confidentiality of training sessions and any conversations the peer educators have as part of their work must be respected completely, even after peer educators leave the program. This is essential to youth feeling comfortable sharing their experiences, feelings and ideas.

- Once the training ends, make sure that youth practice their new knowledge and skills in the community, with the guidance and support of the coordinator or of an educator with more experience.
Tools for Recruitment and Training

Tool 1: Sample Recruitment Flyer
- Profamilia Youth

Become a Youth Educator!
If you are between 18 and 24 years old, can dedicate time to volunteer work, and are interested in the issues of sexuality and sexual rights, join Profamilia’s team of youth educators on Fridays from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

Youth Center: 15th Street, No. 34 – 47
Tel: 339-0951 Ext. 951 or 339-0900 Ext. 109

For more information, please feel free to contact us via email at rjmp@profamilia.org.co or calling toll free 1-800-0110-0900 from anywhere in Colombia or 339-0900 in Bogota.

Tool 2: Model Recruitment Interview
- How did you hear about this program?
- What do you know about the peer education program?
- Why do you want to do this type of work?
- Do you have experience as a facilitator or leader of other adolescents?
- If so, what was being a facilitator like? What do you consider to be your main strengths and weaknesses?
- What personal compensation do you expect from this position?
- What do you do when someone questions your system of values and beliefs?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses in personal relationships?
- How do you make friends or meet other people?
- How do you think you would feel discussing issues of sexuality with your friends? With people of the same sex? Of the other sex? In mixed groups?
- Tell me something special about yourself, something that differentiates you from other people or something interesting that happened to you.
- Is there anything else you think it is important that I know?
II. Recruiting and Training Peer Educators

Tool 3: Sample Training Certificate

International Planned Parenthood Federation, Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR)

Certifies that

BETTY MANRIQUE

has completed the 40-hour course: Peer Educator “Hablemos”

Lima, PERU
August 1, 2003

Alejandra Meglioli
Program Coordinator

Rebecca Koladycz
Senior Evaluation Officer

Tool 4: Sample Identification Card

Peer educators should carry this document with them when they are conducting program activities on behalf of INPPARES

Instituto Peruano de Paternidad Responsable
INPPARES
Future Youth Center
Gregorio Escobedo 115 · Jesus María, Lima 11, Peru

PHOTO

Fausto Grinspun
Peer Educator

Valid from February 15, 2003 through February 15, 2004
Tool 5: Checklist to Evaluate Training Materials

- Is it appropriate for the ages of the peer educators and their public?
- Is it inclusive and sensitive to different cultures?
- Are both genders equally and equitably presented in the material?
- Does it recognize and address positively sexual orientation?
- Are the activities focused on skill development?
- Is it scientifically accurate and objective?
- Does it deal with values?
- Has it been evaluated?
- Does it adequately address the needs of the particular program?
- Are the activities focused on educational development?

Other Resources for the Recruitment and Training of Peer Educators


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1 Advocates for Youth. Issues at a Glance; Brindis (pp. 19-20); HORIZONS (p. 9); IPPF. Peer Education: Successfully Promoting Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health. London: IPPF Vision 2000 Funds, 2002 (p. 3); YouthShakers.

2 YouthShakers.

3 IPPF Vision 2000, 2002 (p. 3).

4 Flanagan and Mahler (pp. 15-16); IPPF. The Peer Education Approach in Promoting Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health. London: IPPF Vision 2000 Funds, 2001 (p. 18); IPPF Vision 2000, 2002 (p. 3); Blankhart (p. 151); World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO. School Health Education to Prevent AIDS and STD: A Resource Package for Curriculum Planners. WHO and UNESCO (p. 15); FOCUS on Young Adults. Reproductive Health Programs for Young Adults: Outreach Programs. In FOCUS. Washington, DC: FOCUS on Young Adults, August 1998; FOCUS on Young Adults. Using Peer Promoters in Reproductive Health Programs for Youth; Svenson (pp. 26-27); South-South Program (pp. 28-29).

5 Svenson (p. 28).

6 Svenson (p. 28).

7 YouthShakers.

8 Flanagan and Mahler (p. 19). Blankhart (p. 153).

9 IPPF Vision 2000, 2002 (p. 4); and YouthShakers.

10 PPFA (p. 7).

11 Svenson (p. 28).

12 Adapted from Brindis (p. 20).

13 YouthShakers.
Introduction

A common mistake of peer education programs is a focus on training the peer educators without a corresponding emphasis on implementing activities for other youth. The training should not be seen as an end in and of itself, but rather as a preparation phase where peer educators gain the knowledge and skills they will need to effectively reach the youth who are the intended beneficiaries of the project. The activities planned for the implementation of the project should be designed with the specific needs of the target population in mind. Youth peer educators, who were selected from among the target population, are the best judges as to what other youth need, and should be involved in every aspect of activity planning and implementation.

Step 1: Design and Plan Program Activities

Each activity you plan should directly relate to your program’s proposed objectives and goals; to ensure that this is the case, review your program’s objectives and goals as you plan activities. The peer educators and program coordinator should work together to determine what types of activities would be best suited for the target population and to achieve the project’s objectives.
The creative possibilities for activities that can be implemented are endless, but the majority of activities for reaching youth about sexual and reproductive health issues can be grouped into four broad categories, as follows:

A. Promotion, information, education and communication

Promotional activities: These activities involve giving information, generally to large audiences, to raise awareness about an issue but not necessarily to educate individuals. Platforms for these activities include discussion groups, television, music concerts, and radio programs. Distributing flyers and hanging posters are also promotional activities.

Informational/educational activities: These activities involve giving information to individuals or small groups, such as in a workshop setting, with the purpose of educating them on specific issues. Educational activities are most effective when they are participatory, as this helps people learn and remember what they learn. In addition to distributing informational and educational materials, facilitators of educational activities often distribute contraceptives as well.

Counseling/orientation activities: These activities involve direct, private contact with youth to learn extensively about and address their needs. This type of setting allows for and encourages problem solving for individual needs. Counseling and orientation can be conducted either for individuals or small groups.

B. Community distribution of services, merchandise and referrals: Peer educators’ activities can include the distribution of condoms and other contraceptives, as well as referring youth to clinics or other services.

Distributing male and female condoms - APROFAM, Guatemala

During 2001-2002, the IPPF member association in Guatemala (APROFAM) implemented a project distributing male and female condoms to youth to prevent STIs and unwanted pregnancy in three target communities. The sale of condoms was so well received by youth (APROFAM exceeded its distribution goal) that the educators asked to sell other methods and products, like birth control pills, flavored condoms, and pregnancy tests. Some of the barriers encountered during the distribution included rejection by some community members who argued that it was illegal to sell condoms to minors, accusations that the condoms were stolen, and police confiscation of the product. During the planning phase of activities, it is important to consider the types of resistance that might occur and develop strategies for overcoming them.

C. Advocacy: The IPPF, defines advocacy as “the act or process of supporting a cause or issue. An advocacy campaign is a set of targeted actions in support of a cause or issue. We advocate a cause or issue because we want to:

- build support for that cause or issue;
- influence others to support it; or
- try to influence or change legislation that affects it.”

Youth can best articulate their own needs to fight for a cause.
D. **Special activities:** These can include participating in national or international congresses, and taking trips to attend workshops or conferences. Because of the inherently exciting nature of these activities, there are generally more youth who want to participate than there are spots available or than the organization can afford. For this reason, it is important to establish a clear profile, requirements and selection criteria of participants and to share this information with all of the youth in the program. One strategy for selecting youth to participate in special activities is to allow the youth themselves to choose their representatives based on the profile and criteria given. Another alternative is to hold a competition, in which case it is important to include representatives from the organization in addition to the youth program as judges. If there are two openings, try to have one participant of each sex to ensure a gender balance in participation.

After the activity, the peer educator who participated should share and discuss the information he or she learned with the rest of the youth in the program. We recommend maintaining a record of the peer educators’ experiences in these types of activities.

The type of activity you choose to implement for reaching your objectives will depend on a number of factors, for example, the target population’s specific needs and characteristics, the resources available, and the place where the activity will be held.

Once an activity has been chosen to meet a specific objective, the project team will need to answer a series of questions in designing the activity and planning the details for its implementation, including:

- What need (identified in the needs assessment) will this activity address and which objective will it support?
- Who is the target population? (Note that this group will probably be a subset of the target population for the entire project.)
- Where will the activity be held (i.e. school, street, prison)?
- When (date, day of the week, time) will the activity take place?
- What resources will be needed (i.e. flyers, flipcharts)?
- What is the main message to be communicated?
- How much time will need to be dedicated to the activity?
- Who will be responsible for the activity?
- How many peer educators will participate? If more than one, will the group be mixed in gender, or will it be all male or female?
- How will the activity be evaluated?

In this process, it is important to establish clearly what is expected of each peer educator participating in the activity, as well as what are the expected outcomes for the activity. The peer educators and the coordinator should evaluate each activity, using feedback forms, group discussions, or other evaluation methods. The coordinator should also select some activities for carrying out field observations. (For more information about evaluating peer education programs, see Chapter IV, Monitoring and Evaluation.)

The project team should organize all of the activities chosen into a work plan. Develop both an annual work plan for the entire program, as well as more detailed monthly work plans. Youth should also prepare a personal work plan for the duration of their work based on the program’s general and monthly plans; this is another way to reinforce their understanding of what is expected of...
them over the course of the project. Peer educators should schedule follow-up activities, including meetings with the coordinator, in their work plans. The program coordinator should review each peer educator’s plan to ensure that the activities are appropriate, to avoid duplication of efforts within the group, and to offer assistance to the educators as needed, for example in planning, logistics, expenses and materials.

Before implementing the activity, the project coordinator should evaluate whether the peer educators selected are the right people for the activity and if the materials are appropriate for the group with which they will be working. For example, consider carefully whether the gender of the peer educators will influence the effectiveness of the activity. One study found that “young women were more able to ‘express an opinion and ask questions in girls-only HIV/AIDS peer education groups as compared to mixed-gender groups,’ a finding that highlights the importance of special learning environments and messages for women.”

**Step 2: Develop and Review Educational and Promotional Materials**

It is essential that peer educators have access to the materials and equipment they need to conduct their activities. These materials can range from flipcharts, flyers, posters, contraceptive methods, models, pamphlets, and reference information to multimedia materials, such as videos, CDs and games.

The materials used should be appropriate for reaching the target population considering the beneficiaries’ age, literacy, gender, culture and needs. Avoid materials that are heavy on technical or medical jargon; rather, find or develop materials that use language that is both understandable and “hip” for the target youth. It is also important that your materials incorporate a gender perspective and avoid stereotypes.

You can produce materials in house or you can adapt materials developed by other organizations. In either case, peer educators should be involved throughout the process of developing and testing the materials to be used. This creative process can empower them and give them an outlet for their creativity.

To ensure that the materials are appropriate, seek feedback from the target group and adapt the educational materials accordingly. This can be done through feedback questionnaires at the end of sessions, opinion groups or other mechanisms.

Often, the materials can be shared among peer educators; but although most peer educators understand the need to share, in almost all programs, the young people ask for individual sets. It is a good idea to at least give each of the participants support materials on the issues covered in training so they can keep them as a reference.

In addition to the materials intended for distribution and use within the project, it is helpful to create a guide for the peer educators to use in making referrals. This reference guide would consist of a list of other youth-friendly organizations in the community, particularly those that deal with specific issues that may come up when working with youth but that your program does not address, such as violence and drug use.

**Materials Development for Youth Program – INPPARES, Peru**

For the YES!! Project, which is part of the youth program of INPPARES, the IPPF member association in Peru, youth peer educators worked with beneficiary youth to develop a number of educational games. These games were a fun way for youth to learn about their rights, make a life plan, and get information on sexuality and other issues. Now, these materials have been so successful that they are not just used within the project but are also shared with other organizations.

**Step 3: Plan Logistics and Transportation**

There are a number of logistical details that need to be planned before implementing activities. For example, you will need to coordinate transportation for the peer educators to get to and from the activity. Also, determine whether food or other types of support will be needed. Generally, it is best if the program coordinator is the person responsible for dispensing petty cash to cover small expenses.
Step 4: Plan Support for and Supervision of the Peer Educators

Ongoing support and supervision are essential for any peer education program as these create the opportunity both for peer educators to express their thoughts and concerns about the program, as well as for addressing the peer educators’ performance.

More specifically, support and supervision mechanisms are ways of providing peer educators with updated information, giving them feedback about their activities, providing technical support for creating new activities, ensuring that the group dynamic is working, and helping the educators resolve problems. The support of the project coordinator can be particularly helpful in offering suggestions, encouragement and emotional support when there are obstacles or problems between peer educators and intermediaries or guardians.

The frequency and methods of providing support and supervision will depend on the peer educators’ activities, the depth of the training they receive, and their age and maturity. Program coordinators should consider the fact that individual peer educators in the same program may need different types of support. UNICEF points out that male and female educators might have different needs, for example, because “there may be different social expectations about how girls should behave and what they should talk about in public.”

There are a variety of mechanisms for providing support and supervision. The most common would be to set up periodic meetings with individuals and with the group where peer educators report about their work and address issues that have come up. This can be accomplished in short, regular meetings or in longer retreats for planning and training. If the group is large, it may be useful to have the peer educators meet in smaller teams or committees. The South-South Project, a project of PROFAMILIA/Colombia that has provided technical assistance on the implementation of peer education programs, recommends that these meetings take place twice a month to serve the dual purpose of creating opportunities for planning and implementation as well as for support.

One way to systematize the supervision of peer educators is to have peer educators review their work plans on a regular basis with the program coordinator. This is an excellent opportunity to see whether the peer educator is meeting the goals set forth in his or her work plan, and to address any questions or problems the peer educators may have. If the program requires that peer educators fill out written reports, these can also be an opportunity for discussion with the program coordinator.

Observing activities and making field visits are another good way to supervise and provide support to peer educators. While the peer educators are conducting the activities, the coordinator can identify whether they need additional training related to specific information or skills. Reviewing and analyzing data, as established in the monitoring and evaluation plan, can also be an effective means of supervision.

Other less formal ways to offer support to peer educators include:

- A friendly team environment and atmosphere among peer educators
- Additional didactic materials for the use of peer educators (i.e. a peer educator manual)
- A network of adults who provide additional information and respond to questions
- Help with presentations and activities
- Financing for activities and supplies
- Emotional support
- Opportunities for personal and professional development and for goal-setting
- Availability of supervisors to help peer educators handle difficult experiences
- Social support from communities in maintaining ties with project collaborators and other peer educator programs
- Assistance negotiating with adults and help in resolving problems between peer educators and intermediaries, guardians and parents

In addition to the support of the program coordinator and of the organization, peer educators need the support of the community. This can be accomplished by holding periodic meetings with a coalition of direct stakeholders. The community can also show its support by making money or in-kind donations to the program.
Strategies for Retaining Peer Educators

There are a number of reasons why peer educators may leave the program, including aging out, changing needs and priorities, and burnout; as a result, retention and continuity of peer educators is a serious concern for most programs. Providing incentives is one way to promote peer educators’ ongoing participation and commitment to the program. Just as important, perhaps, is ensuring that peer educators feel ownership of the project by including them in decision-making processes.

One way to identify strategies for retaining peer educators is to conduct an exit interview when a young person withdraws from the program. This will help to determine if the peer educator is leaving for personal or programmatic reasons. If it is for programmatic reasons, the information he or she provides can help to identify problems and possible solutions. Ongoing support and communication can also help to identify these problems and resolve them before a peer educator leaves the program. Many projects regret losing peer educators from their programs, especially after investing considerable resources in their training. However, it is interesting to note that youth often continue to perform their role as a peer promoter years after their formal affiliation ends.

When youth age out of the program but are still interested in the work, it may be possible to find other positions for them in the organization, create volunteer opportunities within the organization, or help them to find another job. If you decide to hire young people to work with the project, it is important to know the labor laws about hiring youth.

Step 5: Establish Ties with Other Youth Programs

Peer educators should not work in isolation from other related activities in the community. Rather, they should visit and know about similar organizations and their activities so they can combine forces, share experiences, and avoid duplicating activities. This also facilitates the building of effective referral networks.

There are many steps you can take to encourage collaboration with other organizations, including:

- Exchanging experiences and information
- Planning joint activities
- Creating interdisciplinary activities around a common objective
- Developing inter-personal relationships
- Engaging in inter-institutional projects (health fairs, etc.)
- Conducting meetings with staff, including clinic staff

Issues to Consider for Program Implementation

- Peer educators' participation in the process of planning and developing activities is essential to a program's success. Not only does it give the peer educators a sense of ownership of and responsibility to the program, but it also increases their autonomy and management skills.

- Establish clear expectations for the peer educators and for the project as a whole. Develop and integrate individual and project work plans that outline activities, responsibilities and goals. These work plans should be shared, reviewed and used for supervision and follow-up.

- Each activity should directly support the project's objectives and goals.

- The educational materials used should be appropriate to the target population's particular needs and characteristics. This includes considering language, education/literacy, gender, and cultural issues. Peer educators should be involved in choosing, adapting, developing and testing materials.
### Tool 1: Activity Planning Form with Functions and Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Target Population</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Educators Responsible</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve knowledge, attitudes and practices related to HIV and pregnancy prevention among youth in two schools in Community X</td>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Distribute condom use brochures and condoms</td>
<td>First year-students</td>
<td>School A/ School B</td>
<td>First Monday/ Thursday of each month between 12-1pm</td>
<td>STI/HIV flyers Condoms</td>
<td>Maria Cristina</td>
<td>Baseline/End line survey (% of sexually-active youth reporting condom use at last sex)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Contraception</td>
<td>EC presentation and activity</td>
<td>Second year-students</td>
<td>School A School B</td>
<td>Jan. 15, 22, 29 Feb 2, 9, 16</td>
<td>EC activity EC flyers Dedicated product</td>
<td>José and Alejandra</td>
<td>Pre- and post-test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase SRH clinical service utilization among youth aged 15 to 19 in Community X</td>
<td>Clinical services</td>
<td>Refer 10 youth to clinical services</td>
<td>Peer educator groups</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Each month</td>
<td>Referral forms</td>
<td>All peer educators</td>
<td># of youth who were referred; # of youth referred who received services in clinics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and promotion</td>
<td>Distribute promotional materials</td>
<td>Youth ages of 15 to 19</td>
<td>Shopping mall</td>
<td>Jan. 20, Feb. 15, Mar. 15</td>
<td>Promotional flyers</td>
<td>Felipe</td>
<td># of flyers distributed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen skills of peer educators</td>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>Group meeting</td>
<td>Peer educators</td>
<td>Youth center</td>
<td>First Saturday of each month</td>
<td>Coordinator All peer educators</td>
<td>Feedback form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>Individual meeting with coordinator</td>
<td>Peer educators</td>
<td>Youth center</td>
<td>See schedule for each peer educator</td>
<td>Peer educator supervision form</td>
<td>Coordinator Peer educators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tool 2: Sample Referral Coupon

REFERENCE NO. 16               DATE: JUNE 2002

DEAR DOCTOR FERNÁNDEZ:

BY THIS MEANS, I WOULD LIKE TO REFER

MARCELA RODRIGUEZ FOR A GYNECOLOGICAL EXAM AND COUNSELING

ABOUT CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Ana Diaz  
Peer Educator

Please keep this reference card in the client’s file and make any relevant notes for follow-up care. The peer educator will pick up this card.
III. Implementing a Peer Education Program

Tool 3: Form to Document Activities or Take Field Notes

Date:

Name:

Activity/session:

Briefly describe the training session or activity:
(issue, population, place, date and time, objective, resource, educator responsible and evaluation)

Number of participants: (women, men)

Number of peer educators:

What worked?

What did not work?

Why?

What should be revised to be more successful in the future?

Other comments/notes:
### Tool 4: Activity Supervision Form

**Peer Educator's Name**

**Zone**  
**Date**  
**Time**

**Issue Addressed**

**No. of Attendees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect to be Supervised</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of issue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description of objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of content</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group’s level of participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group’s level of understanding of content</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation and enthusiasm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer educator’s leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Resources on Implementing Peer Education Programs


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2 UNAIDS 1999 (p. 31, citing Busayawong 1996).
3 UNICEF.
4 Judith Senderowitz. *Reproductive Health Outreach Programs for Young Adults*. Washington, DC: FOCUS on Young Adults, Mayo 1997 (p. 42).
Introduction

Monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensuring that the program is implemented according to plan, and they allow you to make adjustments as needed. These stages also serve to demonstrate whether the program is having the desired effect on the target population. Supervision, monitoring, and evaluation are closely linked, but each has a unique role.

- **Supervision** focuses on the peer educators. It is the process of overseeing and providing ongoing support to them.
- **Monitoring** focuses on the activities. It helps to assess whether the activities are carried out as planned to ensure that the program is on track to meet its objectives.
- **Evaluation** focuses on the results of the peer education program. It seeks to measure whether the objectives have been achieved.

Monitoring is the routine tracking of program activities by measuring on a regular, ongoing basis whether the activities planned are being carried out. Monitoring may also look at the quality of activities, as this is instrumental in whether the program achieves its objectives. It is therefore closely related to the process of supervision and support, as it serves as a “check” that the number and type of activities planned are being conducted with sufficient quality, thus enabling the team to troubleshoot when needed. (See Chapter II, Recruiting and Training Peer Educators and Chapter III, Implementing a Peer Educators Program).

In contrast, evaluation is the process of determining what the results of the program are – that is, whether the program has achieved its objectives. It is important to note that peer education programs will likely have effects on two levels: on the peer educators themselves and on the beneficiaries. In fact, evaluations show that the effects of these programs are often greater on the peer educators themselves. However, since the main goal of peer education programs is to create a change in the target population, it is important that the evaluation focus primarily on the changes in the beneficiaries.

Impact evaluations determine how much of an observed change is due to the program’s efforts and they require rigorous design, specific expertise and significant resources. Although impact evaluations are not within the scope of the majority of peer education programs, outcome evaluations – which we call “evaluations” in this guide – are feasible for any peer education program with a little planning. Remember to include resources for monitoring and evaluation in the budget.

**Step 1: Review the Logical Framework**

It is important to review your logical framework one more time to make sure the objectives are clear. Ask yourself which aspects of the objectives can be measured; if they are not measurable, redesign the objective so that they are. Consider the intensity of the activities the educators will conduct with their peers and make sure the objectives are realistic.
When reviewing the indicators selected, make sure the indicators reflect the program’s objectives and think about how you would define success. To monitor the program you will need to use process indicators that are related to the number and type of programs presented; to evaluate the outcomes of the program, you will need to use results indicators that can reflect a change in the target population’s knowledge, attitudes and practices (see Tool 1, “Common Indicators for Peer Education Programs”).

Quantitative methodologies:
Quantitative methodologies are based on measurement. They primarily refer to quantity, as in “how many?” “what percentage?” and “how many times?” Since they must be precise, the measurement should be controlled and the design should be determined and structured before the field work begins. The best-known tools for quantitative evaluation are surveys and registries of users by type of consultation.

Sources for quantitative data include:
- Point-of-comparison and follow-up studies
- Quantitative surveys of peer educators and beneficiaries
- Quality surveys
- Baseline and follow-up surveys
- Pre- and post-tests in peer education workshops

Qualitative methodologies:
Qualitative methodologies are useful for learning in-depth how people think, how people feel, and what are their motivations. All of these factors can help to identify, explore and understand the issues and problems at hand. Essentially, they answer the question: Why? The most well-known techniques for qualitative evaluation are conducting focus groups and in-depth interviews, and seeking out individual life stories.

Sources for qualitative data include:
- Field registries and activity reports
- Field supervision visits and observations
- Focus groups with beneficiaries
- Focus groups with other stakeholders
- Focus groups with peer educators’ parents
- Focus groups with peer educators
- Focus groups with service providers from services realted to the program
- In-depth interviews with peer educators, beneficiaries, and other program staff
- Qualitative surveys with peer educators and beneficiaries
- Supervisory support and meetings

NOTE: A common problem is to have too many process indicators and not enough results indicators, making it impossible to evaluate the program. Think beyond the number of activities presented and the number of youth who have been reached and consider what are the desired changes in the target population.

When planning the sources for data collection, make sure that there is a balance between qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

When planning the frequency of data collection, keep in mind that data should be collected with often enough to monitor the progress of the program and to be useful in providing supervision and support to the peer educators. However, it should not be collected with such frequency that it overwhelms the program. Remember that the data must be analyzed, and this takes time and staff resources.

Finally, it is important to define who is responsible for collecting this information. All of the team members have a responsibility in this area and the evaluation department (if there is one in the organization), the program coordinator and the educators must recognize and understand their individual role in successful program monitoring and evaluation.

(For more information on the development of logical frameworks, see “Guide for Designing Results-Oriented Projects and Writing Successful Proposals”, IPPF/WHR.)
Step 2: Establish a Data Collection System and Train the Team

It is essential that the program have a system in place for collecting information, including the necessary formats and tools, as well as designated persons responsible for collecting and keeping the information. Develop simple and easy-to-use formats for collecting information before starting the program so that they can be included in the trainings for the coordinator and the peer educators. Discuss the importance of maintaining confidentiality in all data collection efforts.

NOTE: Always refer to the program’s objectives and indicators when developing surveys, formats and other data collection tools. Verify that the data that will be collected with these tools responds to the program’s objectives by ensuring that there will be data for every indicator in your logical framework.

If the organization does not have an evaluation department that participates in the peer education program, it may be necessary to train the program coordinator in basic data analysis methods. A basic course in using Excel course should be sufficient, and the coordinator should receive support throughout this process. Data analysis does not need to be more complex than entering numbers and disaggregating them by age, gender and type of service. It is important to keep the data collection forms simple and to test how they will be analyzed before implementing them.

Peer education activities should be supervised not only by the program coordinator, but also by the peer educators themselves. Peer educators and members of the support coalition for the program can also participate in monitoring programs.

NOTE: The program coordinator, peer educators, and other interested parties should know from the beginning that data collection is an important component of their work. They should be trained in how to fill out the data collection forms with an emphasis on how the data will be used by the peer education team to strengthen the program.

Seriously consider how peer educators and other young people can participate in program monitoring and evaluation. Involving youth will give them ownership of the results, empower them to make the changes necessary to strengthen the program, and teach them new skills. It will also facilitate sharing responsibility for all of the components of the peer education program. Some ideas for how to involve youth in monitoring and evaluation include:

- **Involve peer educators in reviewing data collection tools.** Peer educators can make sure the language used in the surveys, the program’s pre- and post-tests, and the forms will be understood by youth. They can do a pilot test of the instruments to determine if the tool is easy-to-use or if it needs revision.

- **Involve peer educators in data entry.** Provide access to a computer and training in basic computer skills. Include data entry from surveys, formats and other collection tools as one of the activities that peer educators can incorporate into their work plans.

- **Include peer educators in data collection activities.** Peer educators can be trained to administer surveys, conduct focus groups or interviews, and complete forms. Consider confidentiality and potential bias when the instruments request information about the work of peer educators. There are times when people who are not directly associated with the program are more appropriate for collecting data.

- **Allow peer educators to lead discussions to disseminate and interpret data.** Peer educators can present data at meetings and facilitate discussions for interpreting what the data mean for the program. Adults can act as models for how to conduct these discussions. Some young people may feel more comfortable developing this activity in pairs or teams.

- **Include peer educators in the development of action plans to strengthen the program.** Young people can brainstorm about new and innovative strategies for overcoming obstacles and barriers. They should also participate in periodic evaluations of the action plans to determine if the strategies have been implemented and are effective.
• **Peer educators are an important source of data.** The peer educators themselves will have a good sense of what works well in the program and what areas need to be strengthened, and their opinions and feedback should be solicited. The program coordinator plays an important role in creating an atmosphere where the young people know that their input is valued.

When appropriate, consider compensating youth for the work they do in monitoring and evaluating the program. Include this in the program budget.

**Step 3: Collect Data on Peer Educators’ Activities**

Data should be collected throughout the course of the project. This way, the coordinator, staff and peer educators can identify problems or unexpected benefits of the program and make appropriate changes. Data can also be used to prepare reports. Peer educators can collect data through the registry.

In order to guarantee quality and detect problems in data collection in a timely manner, the program coordinator should review the data collected by peer educators regularly. Problems and obstacles encountered in collection should be discussed during regular supervisory meetings, and set aside time in each meeting for this purpose.

Peer educators’ input to this process is extremely valuable, but they need opportunities and encouragement to talk about both their success and problems. The IPPF Vision 2000 Program notes that “part of the monitoring and evaluation process is the ability of peer educators to communicate with, and report their successes and difficulties to the project staff. ‘Youth friendly’ management style and working environment contribute significantly to efficient monitoring and evaluation.”

**Step 4: Collect Baseline and Follow-up Data**

An important aspect in evaluating a peer educator program is evaluating the effect it had on the peer educators’ ‘beneficiaries’ or ‘contacts’—in other words, the target population. To measure change in the beneficiaries, baseline as well as follow-up data are needed.

Baseline data should be collected before the educators begin their activities with their peers. Although the data can be collected after the activities have begun, the findings probably will not be as clear and strong although they still may be useful. Since peer educators often recruit new beneficiaries on a continuous basis, baseline data can be gathered from the new participants to evaluate the program even if evaluation was not initially part of the program.

Plan how and when follow-up data will be collected. The follow-up study should include the same questions as the baseline study in order to be able to compare results and measure the level of change. When you develop the questions, refer to the program objectives to make sure the data will provide information about whether the objectives are being met. Verify that data for each of the indicators will be collected.

It is important to collect data that relate not just to the target population’s knowledge and attitudes, but also to their practices (behavior). The intensity (the number and frequency of time dedicated to a beneficiary) and the quality of the peer educators’ activities will probably have an effect on the degree of change. Remember that change in behavior is a process that occurs over a long period of time and is unlikely to be seen in a short time frame.

Sometimes it is difficult to identify the individuals who have been contacted by a peer educator or who have attended a peer educator activity after it is over. It is therefore very important to plan before the program begins how data about beneficiaries will be collected. One solution is for peer educators to keep a record of the name of and how to contact each of the beneficiaries for follow-up. Consider issues of confidentiality and privacy if you use this strategy. Other strategies include:

**Use pre- and post-activity surveys:**

- When peer educators conduct activities with groups, ask the participants to complete a short survey before and after the activity.
- Do not ask participants to write their names on the survey to ensure that the survey is confidential and anonymous. Place a box or envelope where participants can comfortably leave the completed survey.
- In order to measure an individual’s level of change, you will need to be able to match pre- and post-activity responses. A simple way to do this is to copy...
the pre- and post-surveys on the same sheet of paper and ask the participants to fill out the pre-survey before the activity begins and the post-survey after it finishes. Ask them not to change their initial responses and remind them that the surveys are anonymous.

- The survey can be similar to the pre- and post-tests used in training peer educators. The post-survey can also include questions about how participants will use the information they learned.

Provide pre-stamped envelopes with surveys:

- Give the peer educators copies of a short survey to give to their beneficiaries. Ask the beneficiaries to complete the survey shortly after the educator begins to work with them (before the activities begin) so that it serves as baseline data.
- Include a stamped envelope with each survey so the beneficiary can return the survey to the program coordinator. This way the survey can be completed in private and the beneficiary can feel more confident in confidentiality being maintained.
- Repeat the process when an educator presents the final activity to their beneficiary group. This version of a follow-up survey can include questions about the types of activities that he or she participated in and the frequency of contact with a peer educator. It can also include questions about the beneficiaries’ opinion about the quality of the activities presented by the peer educator.
- Remember to include the cost of postage in the budget.

Offer incentives for completing follow-up surveys:

- At the beginning of the program, the coordinator and peer educators should ask the program beneficiaries to fill out a short survey.
- The educators tell the beneficiaries that the people who complete the survey both at the beginning and at the end of the program will receive some type of incentive after the second survey.
- When the activities are completed, remind the beneficiaries to speak with the coordinator to fill out the second survey.
- The coordinator should keep a record to determine who completed the two questionnaires.
- If you use this strategy, it is important to include the cost of incentives in the budget.

NOTE: Planning how data on the program beneficiaries will be collected must be done at the outset to ensure that follow-up can be completed. Make sure to include in the program’s budget the cost of the strategies you choose for collecting baseline and follow-up data.

Step 5: Analyze, Share and Use the Data

The idea that data are only useful when they are used may seem like an obvious truth, but it is important to emphasize that data collection is not an end in itself; rather, to be useful, data must be analyzed and the findings must inform the program’s development. Data collected during the program can be used in many ways to strengthen your program. For example, it can help you to make necessary adjustments to your program as well as to determine which activities should be changed or strengthened to reach the proposed objectives. In addition, data can be used to increase community support, report to donors, publish articles, redirect the program’s efforts, educate the public, raise the awareness of the staff of the organization, and for advocacy activities.

To demonstrate the importance of data collection and motivate the group to collect data, you will need to show how it will be useful to them. The peer educators will only feel ownership of monitoring and evaluation if the data are constantly shared and discussed with them.

Establish a time for periodic meetings (perhaps quarterly) with the project team, including peer educators, to review and interpret data and develop action plans. Continually reflect on the program’s objectives: Are the number and type of activities related to the objectives? Are they appropriate and sufficient for reaching the objectives? Determine and document plans to make changes where needed; the progress and efficacy of these action plans should be reviewed at established periods.

Data should be summarized periodically (perhaps once or twice a year) so other stakeholders, including other colleagues within the organization and service providers, can see how the project is progressing. Action plans should be reviewed to strengthen the program based on data.
NOTE: Monitoring and evaluation data are collected to strengthen the program and determine if the strategies being used are achieving the program's objectives. This can only be done if the data are analyzed and interpreted; data are useless unless they are used.

**Issues to Consider for Monitoring and Evaluation**

- It is important that youth are involved in the different stages of evaluation, including reviewing data collection tools, data collection, analysis and interpretation of data, and development of action plans to strengthen the program.

- Train the program coordinator and peer educators in basic data analysis methods so they feel like they are a part of program monitoring and evaluation rather than see these activities as solely the evaluation department's responsibility.

- Data collected for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation should be compiled, analyzed and disseminated systematically. It is important to review the program achievements regularly and make sure the program is going in the right direction.

- Make sure the program budget includes the resources necessary to monitor and evaluate the peer education program.
Tools for Monitoring and Evaluation

Tool 1: Common Indicators for Peer Education Programs
Tool 2: Format for Monitoring Activities

Tool 1: Common Indicators for Peer Education Programs

Below are some indicators commonly used in peer education programs. Data should be broken down by sex in order to determine if the interventions are more or less effective with males or females. It is also important to compile the data by age.

The indicators should specify the population for which the data will be collected. Many indicators can be collected at various levels: among peer educators themselves, among beneficiaries/target population, and among other stakeholders. Remember that to show the results of your program you will need to collect some data at the target population level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Possible Levels of Data Collection</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer Educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of specific issues (for example, gender)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes about specific issues (for example, premarital sex)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of group debates (concerns, recommendations)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback from people reached</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions on quality and relevance of training</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions on quality and relevance of activities conducted by educators</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions on social norms</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Possible Levels of Data Collection</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer Educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of support from parents, teachers and others</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion with correct understanding of specific issues (for example, contraception, HIV/AIDS infection)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of certain types of behavior (for example, condom use, sexual activity without risk)</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of sexual and reproductive health services sought by youth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of youth with adequate skills in specific areas (for example, condom negotiation)</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of contacts with youth via peer educators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of youth in a school who say they have spoken with a peer educator about SRH issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of contraceptives distributed by peer educators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people who attended an activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of referrals made by peer educators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of referrals by peer educators that were followed through</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of youth reached</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of the program (per person reached, per peer educator, per referral, per contraceptive user)</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative

- ✔: Available
- ☑: Available
- ✓: Available
Additional Resources for Monitoring and Evaluating Peer Education Programs


2 Ibid
5 This section draws from PPFA (p. 8).
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Description of Peer Education Programs of IPPF/WHR Member Associations

Bahamas Family Planning Association, Bahamas

Youth peer educators from the Bahamas Family Planning Association, Bahamas, organized the Youth Advocacy Movement (YAM) to become the youth arm of the organization. The role of YAM’s members is to help youth make informed decisions in their lives about positive sexual responsibility, including abstinence, human sexuality, self-development and family relations. Youth between the ages of 12 and 24 who receive information from their peers are invited to join the club. The club’s objectives are to: provide counseling and education about sexual and reproductive health; offer a place where the members and other adolescents can meet socially and receive information about life planning, human sexuality, and sexual and reproductive health; involve youth in the design and implementation of programs directed at this population; and facilitate networks among youth throughout the region that share an interest in reducing the rate of adolescent pregnancy. The Bahamas organization has two young people who participate on the Board of Directors; they have a voice and a vote in order to guarantee that a youth perspective is present in all of the decisions the association makes.

Contact Information:
Bahamas Family Planning Association
PO Box N-9071
Nassau, Bahamas.
Telephone: 242-323-6338
bahfpa@batelnet.bs

Belize Family Life Association (BFLA), Belize

BFLA began a peer education project using theater and dance to reach youth outside the school system, giving them the knowledge and skills they need to improve their sexuality. In the BFLA program, the peer educators receive training in leadership and health education. The entertainment group formed for this project (ASTRAL) communicates positive messages and provides information related to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, and contraceptive methods through dance and theater. Peer educators provide individual advice and use a system of referral cards to send youth who do not attend school to clinics and other reproductive health services at the BFLA Youth Center. The project reaches almost 3,000 youth each year through a range of activities, including theater and dance presentations for the community, rap sessions and education.

Contact Information:
Belize Family Life Association (BFLA)
2621 Caribbean Shores, Mercy Lane
PO Box 529
Belize City, Belize, CA
Telephone: 501-203-1018
bfla@btl.net

Sociedade Civil Bem-Estar Familiar no Brasil (BEMFAM), Brasil

BEMFAM uses youth peer educators between the ages of 10 and 24 years old as part of a school-based sexual education project in the states of Recife and Natal that provides information about sexual and reproductive health (SRH), particularly the transmission and prevention of STIs/HIV. BEMFAM selects students to be trained as peer educators and to lead both classroom and extracurricular activities, such as educational campaigns in the school for events like World AIDS Day, theater performances, science fairs, and other events during which they distribute information about SRH. Educators promote make referrals to BEMFAM clinics for sexual and reproductive health services and promote the use of condoms, offering free condoms to everyone who participates in activities. Since 1998, BEMFAM has also run two Youth Centers (in João Pessoa, Paraíba and São Luís de Maranhão) where youth and staff together developed an education guide for peer educators.
Contact Information:
Sociedad Civil Bem-estar Familiar no Brasil (BEMFAM)
Av. República do Chile, 230/17 andar
Centro, Rio de Janeiro RJ
CEP: 20031-170 Brasil
http://www.projovem.org.br

Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana (PROFAMILIA), Colombia

An important part of PROFAMILIA’s youth program is training youth between the ages of 15 and 21 years old in sexual and reproductive rights and sexual and reproductive health issues so that they can become peer educators. Youth promoters advocate for sexual and reproductive health as personal, familial and community well-being and are agents of social change among their peer groups. The promoters have created a national network with representatives in 27 cities throughout the country; through this network, they organize their work plans, share experiences, strengthen training, and influence local and national policies relating to youth. The peer educators also participate as members of PROFAMILIA, which means they can participate in the General Assembly, the highest decision-making body of the organization. Since 2002, PROFAMILIA has also had a youth representative on its Board of Directors. The participation of a young woman in this position of equality, with the right to a voice and a vote, seeks to incorporate a youth perspective in all decisions that affect the organization.

Contact Information:
Asociación Pro-bienestar de la Familia Colombiana (PROFAMILIA)
Calle 34 # 14-52
Santafé de Bogotá, DC. Colombia
http://www.profamilia.org.co/ProfamiliaJoven

Asociación Demográfica Salvadoreña (ADS), El Salvador

ADS’s youth program uses peer educators to provide sexual and reproductive health education to youth in communities, schools, factories and youth groups. ADS developed an integrated course to train youth as health peer educators. The course covers a range of issues on youth development, including: adolescent sexuality, gender, pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, contraceptive methods, decision-making and leadership. Each year, ADS trains about 300 youth promoters between the ages of 15 and 19. The promoters facilitate 3,000 discussion groups a year and reach approximately 22,500 young men and women. In order to reach youth who do not attend school, ADS places two or three youth peer educators in factories in the capital where many out-of-school youth work. These educators are trained to not just to provide information about reproductive health, but also to distribute condoms and birth control pills, to administer hormonal injections, and to make referrals to medical clinics.

Contact Information:
Asociación Demográfica Salvadoreña (ADS)
25 Avenida Norte No. 583 Edificio Profamilia
Apartado Postal 1338 San Salvador, El Salvador
http://www.ads.org.sv

Fundación Mexicana para la Planeación Familiar (MEXFAM), Mexico

MEXFAM’s youth program began in 1986 with the establishment of 13 centers for adolescents that provided information and services to youth. When MEXFAM evaluated these programs, it found that the centers reached relatively few youth at a high cost, and MEXFAM sought to remedy this situation by instituting a peer education program. As one study noted, “The program has changed its perspective from trying to make youth come to MEXFAM, to bringing the program to the places where they are – places the adolescents choose, that reflect who they are and what they want to be.” The youth program (Gente Joven) provides training in SRH education in schools, workplaces, and communities all over Mexico. The Gente Joven community network includes 900 youth promoters who organize activities that educate adolescents and youth about family communication, puberty and reproductive processes, sexuality and youth, AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, adolescent pregnancy and contraception, gender,
sexuality and youth, and gender violence. For each session the organization designs educational materials, videos, slides, flip-charts and pamphlets that facilitate dialogue between participants. The program was awarded a United Nations Population award in 2002.

Contact Information:
Fundación Mexicana para la Planeación Familiar
Juárez # 208
Colonia Tlalpan 14000, DF, México
http://www.gentejoven.org.mx

Instituto Peruano de Paternidad Responsable (INPPARES), Peru

The projects and services for youth at INPPARES have varying characteristics according to the location or city where they are developed, but they all share the common thread of youth involvement. The earliest project, established in 1986, is the Futuro Youth Center (Centro Juvenil Futuro), which focuses on promoting youth participation in different social spaces. It has an extensive peer educators program; more than 100 new peer educators are trained each year, and the Future Youth Center supports this large network of educators who provide information to their peers. Promoters reach youth in schools, in the community, in the street, and on the beaches during the summer. Public and private schools request peer educators for educational workshops. Another important project is Health Services for youth (since 1991), which offers youth-friendly, integrated health services with an emphasis on sexual and reproductive health, providing an average of 18,000 consultations annually. Youth with more experience collaborate with counselors in this setting. Youth volunteers from the Street Friends Project (Proyecto Amigos de la Calle), which was founded in 1998, are youth who previously lived on the street and now help other youth get out of the same situation. The newest project is Yes! (since 2000). Through this program educational stations designed and run by youth are set up in peripheral neighborhoods of Lima. Here, youth provide information via counseling, multimedia materials, group activities and games. At these stations, youth who are seeking services are referred to INPPARES clinics. In a period of only ten months, the stations have reached more than 20,000 youth.

Contact Information:
Instituto Peruano de Paternidad Responsable (INPPARES)
Gregorio Escobedo 115, Jesús María
Casilla Postal 2191
Lima 11, Perú
http://www.inppares.org.pe

Asociación Puertorriqueña Pro-Bienestar de la Familia (PROFAMILIA), Puerto Rico

PROFAMILIA operates three projects to educate and inform youth about SRH using a different model of peer educator program for each age group it works with. PESA is an education program for HIV/AIDS prevention and SRH focusing on 11 to 18 year-olds. In this program, peer educators hold workshops, informal conversations, individual interventions and theater presentations in schools and communities. ESPERA is a program for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy and also uses peer educators to communicate its message of safe sex, including abstinence. Every year ESPERA moves to a new area of the country. PESPE is a sex education program based in the schools for students in grades 4 through 6 (9 to 11 year-olds). Schools request visits from PESPE educators who present age-appropriate information on SRH to the students.

Contact Information:
Asociación Puertorriqueña Pro-Bienestar de la Familia (PROFAMILIA)
Urbanización El Vedado Calle Padre las Casas No. 117
PO Box 192221
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00919-2221
http://www.profamiliapr.org

Asociación Dominicana Pro-Bienestar de la Familia (PROFAMILIA), Dominican Republic

PROFAMILIA’s youth program supports a network of more than 600 volunteer youth peer educators and trains 150 additional people each year. Using a community-based peer education model, the program trains youth volunteers to provide information about SRH; sell condoms, spermicides and birth control pills; and make referrals to clinics. Peer educators form teams to plan and present activities on SRH in more than 60 neighborhoods in Santo Domingo, at the Universidad Nacional, and in three states along the border with Haiti. Each peer
A peer educator is expected to work in-depth with ten youth in his or her community (the direct beneficiaries), as well as to give presentations to larger groups of youth (the indirect beneficiaries). Some youth participate in a variety of additional activities, such as by performing in a theater group that communicates messages about SRH, HIV prevention, and contraceptive methods, or as guest speakers on popular radio and television programs. Additionally, peer educators make referrals to the Youth Health Center and other PROFAMILIA clinics. The Youth Health Center provides medical and psychological services to adolescents and youth between the ages of 13 and 20. Evaluation results show that in 2000 “peer educators worked with 6,879 direct beneficiaries..., reached 48,641 youth through group presentations and referred 1,363 young people to PROFAMILIA’s youth clinics or to clinics administered by the government.” This program was featured in the UNFPA publication *State of the World Population 1999*.

Contact Information:
Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia (PROFAMILIA)
Calle Socorro Sánchez No. 160
Gazcue, Apartado Postal 1053
Santo Domingo, Republica Dominicana
http://www.profamilia.org.do/profajoven

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3 IPPF/WHR, “YES! Youth Empowerment System” IPPF/WHR Spotlight on Youth, No. 6, New York, 2002.02
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Peer to Peer:
Creating Successful Peer Education Programs