



PMI Community Demonstration Sites

Guide to Selecting and Adapting a Curriculum

All of the PMI Demonstration Sites anticipate offering skills-building workshops to their target audience, with varying objectives. In keeping with the foundation of social marketing, workshops must be easy, appropriate, and appealing to youth. Careful planning and design is required to create workshops that meet both the program objectives and the youth's needs.

The purpose of this document is to introduce curriculum design to site staff, to help them better plan and manage the curriculum selection and adaptation process.

While this document lays out an extensive process with numerous steps, it should be adapted by site staff depending on the extent of curriculum adaptation needed. Sites may not need to complete all the steps, or may follow the steps only for certain modules or activities. In addition, your local curriculum specialist may suggest alternative ways to reach the same end.

Site staff should also adapt the roles and responsibilities noted for each step. Finally, suggested criteria are listed to help monitor the process.

Step 1. Review existing curricula

Responsibility: Site staff, with assistance from AED

Review available curricula, particularly the four CDC-recommended ones (*Be Proud, Be Responsible; Get Real About AIDS; Reducing the Risk; and Becoming a Responsible Teen*). Start with the Curriculum Summary sheets, and select the curricula that seem best for your site. Copies of curricula are available from AED. Check these curricula against your needs. Assess which are relevant to your audience and program objectives. If an existing curriculum comes close to meeting your objectives — great! The fewer changes, the better.

Assess the curriculum against your program needs

- ▶ Key elements and program objectives
- ▶ Skills
- ▶ Age group
- ▶ Cultural appropriateness
- ▶ Context/setting
- ▶ Resources needed
- ▶ Other

Step 2. Set the workshop parameters

Responsibility: Site staff

Through the site design process and feasibility assessments, site staff may already have a good idea of some of the dimensions of the workshops. Complete this page with the decisions that have already been made. This information should be given to the curriculum designer for guidance.

Context: How will the curriculum fit within the PMI intervention?

Participants: Who is the workshop audience?

Estimated number of participants per session: _____ youth

Implementation: How will these sessions be delivered and by whom (subcontract with one or multiple service providers, CBOs, religious groups, etc.)?

Frequency of sessions: _____ per month/year

Target date for first session: _____

Length of session, if already determined*: _____ hours

Setting: Where will these sessions be held (such as detention centers, youth centers, drop-in/ recreation centers, after school, on the street; same place each time or mobile)?

Social marketing considerations, if developed: What is the key benefit or offering of the intervention?
What is the PMI vision or positioning?

* The length and frequency of sessions may be decided later during the curriculum design process. See **Step 5** (p. 5) to reconsider the workshop time length, using relevant criteria.

Community constraints: Are there any political or community concerns or barriers?

Resources:

Budget limit: \$_____ per year

Materials available (supplies, condoms): _____

Description of trainer/facilitator: peer or adult or adult/peer cofacilitators**

Number of trainers/facilitators available: _____

Step 3. Plan the adaptation process

Responsibility: Site program manager

The remaining steps in this document outline possible upcoming tasks. Site staff should review these and adapt the steps as appropriate depending on the amount of adaptation needed.

Hire a curriculum expert

AED recommends that site staff delegate the adaptation of the curriculum to a specialist (probably a paid consultant). The program manager should be responsible for supervising the consultant's work. AED can assist in writing the scope of work, if needed.

Some criteria to consider when hiring a consultant

- ▶ Knowledgeable about AIDS skills-building
- ▶ Knowledgeable about the age group
- ▶ Experience in curriculum design
- ▶ Experience in teaching strategies
- ▶ Organizational skills
- ▶ Writing skills
- ▶ Other skills

Develop a schedule

Develop a schedule for the design process and for review meetings. The appendix presents an example of such a schedule.

** Although peer educators work well, other influentials can also be highly effective.

Step 4. Define the learning outcomes

Responsibility: Curriculum expert, with input from site staff

Learning outcomes should be directly related to your site's program objectives and key elements.

Review the program objectives

What are the objectives of the workshop? Or, which key elements do you want the workshop to address? These decisions were made during the site design process.

Develop the learning outcomes

List specific learning outcomes that you want the youth to have achieved during the workshop, and that support the overall objectives of the workshop. For example, one way to create the learning outcomes is to break down each workshop objective into smaller steps or tasks.

Learning outcomes can be knowledge, skills, beliefs, norms, attitudes, self-efficacy, or experiential (give the student an experience) outcomes. Learning outcomes should not describe the learning *process* (such as: students will practice putting a condom on a model).

Examples of learning outcomes

At the completion of the skills-building session, youth will:

- ▶ know where to get free condoms (knowledge)
- ▶ correctly apply and remove a condom (skills)
- ▶ have the confidence to initiate a conversation about condom use with a partner (self-efficacy)
- ▶ talk with their peers about using condoms (experiential).

Check each learning outcome against criteria

Is the outcome:

- ▶ consistent with the program objectives (or key elements)?
- ▶ appropriate to the subject of the workshop (that is, not tangential)?
- ▶ precise enough to guide learning?
- ▶ feasible?
- ▶ practical to the learner (both useful and relevant to his/her life)?
- ▶ appropriate for the learner's interest and level?
- ▶ Other criteria you may have.

Prioritize the learning outcomes

Some tasks and exercises will be more important than others for reaching the program objectives. It may be necessary to eliminate some outcomes if you are limited by time or resources.

Review the learning outcomes

Send a draft to AED. Work with AED evaluation staff at this point to ensure that the evaluation plan is consistent with the learning outcomes.

You may also wish to validate the learning outcomes with others. Talk to teachers, trainers, gatekeepers, and youth. Do these learning outcomes make sense? Revise as needed.

Step 5. Define session time lengths

Responsibility: Curriculum expert, with input from site staff

The duration of workshop sessions may change as the curriculum process continues. Session length will be determined by a number of factors:

- ▶ age and development of the participants (how much time will youth give?)
- ▶ the number and difficulty of the learning outcomes (norms and skills may require more time)
- ▶ the content to be covered
- ▶ participant comfort level needed to cover sensitive materials
- ▶ the place and importance of the workshops in the overall PMI intervention.

Multi-session programs are the traditional model (most often used in schools). They are the most often shown as successful interventions in the literature. Multi-sessions allow for longer interventions and thus more learning outcomes.

One-shot sessions are possible, but sites should consider the amount of time needed for ice-breakers, establishing a safe environment, and follow-up questions and answers. A one-hour skills-building session will not achieve much. Sites that wish to develop three- to four-hour sessions must realize that a limited number of learning outcomes will be met.

Another option is to offer one main workshop with several (two or three) short follow-up sessions for building additional specific skills (such as talking with familiar partners, talking with parents, establishing values).

Define the number of sessions

- One session
- One main session with _____ follow-up sessions
- _____ multiple sessions

Number of hours per session: _____ hours

Step 6. Performance criteria

Responsibility: AED and CDC

Most curricula set performance criteria. A performance criterion defines a student action to assess whether a learning outcome has been achieved. AED and CDC will design an evaluation of the workshops with input from site staff. AED will develop performance criteria based on your learning outcomes, and will work with each site through the curriculum design process. The process of developing a workshop evaluation may also contribute to the design, by cross-checking that objectives and activities are logical and consistent.

Thus, site staff do not need to develop performance criteria, and should continue to the next step.

Performance criteria

- ▶ Knowledge performance criteria measure recall or understanding
- ▶ Skills performance criteria require a demonstration or simulation of a situation
- ▶ Changes in norms, attitudes, and self-efficacy require special attitudinal scales
- ▶ Experiential criteria are simply evidence of the experience.

Step 7. Match instructional activities to learning outcomes

Responsibility: Curriculum expert

Develop an outline of instructional activities

Match and sequence possible instructional activities to reach the learning outcomes.

Knowledge is taught primarily through presentation. Retention is enhanced by a variety of questions and examples. Skill development requires skill presentation and demonstration, guided practice, and drill. Norms and attitudes can be developed through information, positive reinforcement, modeling, and involvement in group activities. Experiences can be direct, simulated, or vicarious. Remember that variety enhances learning.

Review and select a variety of instructional activities

Sites do not need to create new instructional activities; activities and modules can be taken from other curricula. We recommend that you draw activities from existing, *evaluated* skills-building curricula. Activities in the draft curriculum should have the source clearly labeled for follow-up by AED. Any non-evaluated curricula used should be clearly flagged. AED will get the necessary approval and permission from authors to adapt their work. AED will make central contact with all authors to gain general approval to use their material. It is possible that some curriculum authors may refuse to have their work adapted in some situations.

Work with AED to begin planning pre- and post-test activities for evaluation.

A good instructional activity

- ▶ Activates the youth's motivation
- ▶ Matches the youth's backgrounds and interests
- ▶ Ensures that the youth know the learning objective
- ▶ Keeps the youth's attention
- ▶ Presents new material clearly and logically, and builds on or connects with previous concepts.

If necessary, include additional activities to ensure ample time for:

- ▶ application, rehearsal, review, and skills practice
- ▶ transfer and generalization to the learners' lives, using a variety of examples and a variety of contexts.

Step 8. Review the curriculum

Responsibility: Site staff and reviewers

Reread the draft curriculum to check for defects and omissions. Send a copy to AED for review.

An option for getting youth feedback is to walk your youth advisory group through the curriculum. Would they come to such a workshop? What activities are appealing?

Revise as needed.

Step 9. Plan the design and printing, or purchase of auxiliary materials

Responsibility: Site staff and vendors

Ascertain what workshop materials are needed to support the curriculum. Allow adequate time and resources for the purchase (or for the design and production) of handouts, workbooks, videos, posters, and other materials and supplies.

Step 10. Pilot test the curriculum

Responsibility: Site staff or implementing agency

Produce pilot copies (final drafts) of the materials. Work with AED to develop tools to evaluate the pilot test.

Use the curriculum in conditions as close as possible to those that will prevail on a regular basis. Plan ahead: Who will handle the logistics? How will youth be recruited? Will the pilot be conducted by the site staff or an implementing agency? The training of a new facilitator can function as a pilot training of trainers. Assign adult and peer observers to record the pilot. (This option often provides more detailed information than a video- or audio-recording.)

Analyze the test results, debrief, and revise the curriculum as needed.

Step 11. Purchase or produce materials

Responsibility: Vendors and site staff

Acquire or print materials, and package the curriculum, workshop materials, and supplies.

Step 12. Implement the curriculum

Responsibility: Site staff and implementing agency

Review your implementation plan; conduct a training of trainers; distribute materials to sites/facilitators; begin workshops.

Step 13. Monitor the curriculum

Responsibility: Site staff and implementing agency

Design and put in place a system to monitor the implementing agency's performance. Work with AED and CDC to incorporate findings from the evaluation process. Assign responsibility for curriculum revisions.

Based on David Pratt, *Curriculum: Design and Development* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980).

Appendix: Sample schedule (total time = approx. 6 months)

<i>Examples of activities and meetings</i>	<i>Date</i>
Recruit and contract consultant	
Initial meeting with consultant, review parameters	
Approach all potential implementors	
Recruit appropriate reviewers	
Meet with consultant: draft learning outcomes	
Meet with consultant: define time and number of sessions	
AED review of draft learning objectives	
Meet with consultant: draft activities outline	
Meet with consultant: review draft of activities	
Review draft curriculum	
AED review of curriculum	
Youth review of curriculum	
Meet with graphic artist for auxiliary materials	
Meet with consultant: review revised draft	
Approach vendors for printing curriculum and materials	
Produce pilot set of materials	
Arrange pilot workshop logistics; recruit youth participants	
Design training of trainers and select facilitator	
Develop pre and post test for pilot	
Pilot test workshop	
Debrief about pilot test	
Consultant revises curriculum	
Revise training of trainers	
Final review and Community Review Panel approval	
Purchase or produce materials	
Train the trainers	
Begin implementation	