

## Delivery of normative education:

### Key points for practitioners

Some important issues about the delivery of normative education in schools include:

- The impact of normative education depends on the students being convinced of the validity and reliability of drug use prevalence data and taking on board that drug use is not as widespread as they think. Teachers need to be prepared for the kinds of doubts that are most likely to be expressed by students and to discuss the steps that are taken when conducting surveys (a) to ensure anonymity and confidentiality and (b) to design questions that will encourage respondents to give honest answers.
- The impact of normative education also depends on teachers finding the time to discuss any clear discrepancies between students' estimates of drug use prevalence and survey data or government statistics.
- The normative education approach needs preparation time. It may be rather ambitious to assume that it can be covered through activities in just two drug education lessons.
- Since it has potential relevance for all areas of PDHPE, but particularly bullying, sex education, healthy eating, exercise and use of leisure time, there is a strong argument for incorporating the approach into all PDHPE teaching. Students would then have more opportunities to think about the prevalence of different kinds of behaviour in a wider range of contexts.
- Students' confidence in the validity and reliability of survey data could be enhanced by direct experience of planning and conducting prevalence and life style surveys. This need not necessarily be a survey about drugs. It could focus on any other potentially sensitive issue being covered in PDHPE or be a general lifestyle survey.

