

TTE co-ordinates drugs Focus Fortnight across West Oxfordshire schools



Background

The Training Effect (TTE) has recently worked with schools in the West Oxfordshire Learning Partnership (WOLP) to deliver drugs awareness education to pupils and parents alike.

The WOLP comprises the seven secondary schools and one College in West Oxfordshire:

- Bartholomew School
- Burford School
- Carterton Community College
- Chipping Norton School
- The Henry Box School
- The Marlborough CE School
- Wood Green School
- Abingdon & Witney College

The Partnership works collectively to share teaching and education best practice and experiences. The Headteachers and College Principal meet up on a regular basis, and a number of specialised groups have been established within the Partnership to support and enhance specific areas or subjects. Department Heads also work together to organise inter-school events in their specialist subject areas.

One of these events was a co-ordinated 'Focus Fortnight' on the topic of drugs awareness. The aim was to promote a collective and consistent message

across the WOLP schools taking part, deliver co-ordinated PSHE sessions on drugs for all Key Stage 3 to 5 pupils, follow up sessions with the School Nurse for those who wanted one-to-one discussions and three drug awareness evening events for parents.

Solution

Ben Lovatt, Lead Consultant at The Training Effect (TTE), had worked previously with several of the schools that make up the WOLP, delivering student workshops. TTE was drafted in to co-ordinate the Focus Fortnight and work alongside Gillian Cradock, WOLP Administrator.

An important part of the programme was to ensure consistency of message being delivered across all WOLP schools. The PSHE lesson and assembly programmes were replicated across all schools and year groups. The district data collected from the school-wide sessions demonstrated a positive message, in that most teens do not engage in drug use. This contributed to challenging false perceptions around young people whilst building positive social norms. This message was also presented at the parents' evening sessions.

Ben played a pivotal part in putting together the Focus Fortnight alongside Aaron Bowes, Project Support Officer who oversees all aspects of administration of our services in Oxfordshire. Ben was involved from the start of the initiative, attending planning meetings, providing resources and PSHE lesson plans.



Gillian said: “WOLP has been ably supported in the planning and implementation of the Focus Fortnight by Ben. Not only has he visited most of our schools to talk to the students, he also attended all our planning meetings, giving support, advice and guidance and provided all the resources we needed (plus presentation slides and notes).”

Three evening sessions for parents were organised throughout the fortnight. The aim of these workshops was to educate and advise parents on how to raise the

subject of drugs with their children and understand the influence of peer pressure on young people’s decision making. Ben attended all three parents’ events, delivering the main presentation and offering advice to individual parents and carers about any concerns they may have.



Outcome

As a result of Focus Fortnight, more than 7000 pupils were communicated with about drugs awareness.

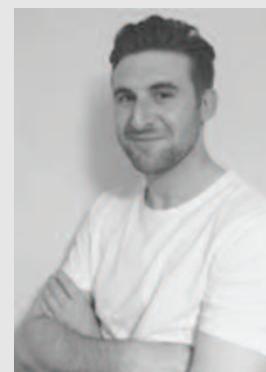
Gillian Cradock, WOLP administrator commented: “The work carried out by TTE has been incredibly supportive to our schools and we would strongly recommend that Oxfordshire County Council continues to use their services to help educate young people on how to handle the numerous risks and dangers they will face as they are growing up.”

Feedback forms were made available at the end of each evening event for parents to complete. Comments received about the initiative were positive and encouraging:

- Very well done to speaker, Ben, who made the session informative, easy to understand and interesting. Thank you!
- Made me re-think how I deal with my child and has given me lots to think about. Very useful – principle of not preaching teen perception of risk and peer pressure.

- Totally different perspective of how to consider / deal with the subject. Feel very well equipped to start the conversations
- Very helpful to see the points of view of the child / young adult.

Ben Lovatt, TTE’s Lead Consultant said: “It was important that during this campaign, both pupils and parents were involved to ensure a coherent message about drugs and risk was being delivered.



Ben Lovatt,
Lead Consultant, TTE

“The workshops taught parents and carers how best to raise the subject with their children and advice on what to do next if further intervention is required.

“The feedback has been brilliant and it’s great to see first-hand what a difference the sessions have made to parents and students.”

