Module D: Managing and Evaluating Change
Unit D2: Conducting a Needs analysis: Consultation and Evaluation

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Objectives of Unit D2

- To illustrate how difficult it is to change our perspectives and behaviour
- To emphasize the significance of multiple perspectives and the legitimacy of multiple perceptions of a problem
- To enable participants to generate issues, topics and questions in preparation for a needs analysis and set priorities for the initial consultation
- To encourage participants to think critically about the possible application of different methods for carrying out their needs analysis
- To encourage participants to adopt good interviewing techniques

Facilitation skills to be developed through this Unit

Knowledge and understanding of:

- how to design improvement plans for individual pupils, groups and the school as a whole
- the range of underlying causes of challenging, aggressive and anti-social behaviour
- how to monitor and evaluate pupils' behaviour and the effectiveness of the school in improving behaviour
- how to include pupils' opinions in any decision about their education
- how to include parents/carers in decisions about their child

Personal qualities and attributes include:

- the ability to co-ordinate a range of interventions to promote non-violence to support pupils
- being able to deal with conflicting viewpoints and being an effective communicator
- being an effective trainer of and adviser to staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils
- being a good observer and astute in analysing and monitoring behaviour when assessing pupil needs
- having the ability to facilitate and value pupils' opinions about their own education

Pre-unit reading

Cowie, H., Boardman, C., Dawkins, J., & Jennifer, D. (2004). *Emotional health and well-being: A practical guide for schools.* London: Sage Publishing. Chapter 1.6 (pp. 4-52), Chapter 3.1 (pp. 193-202), and Chapter 3.2 (pp. 203-213).

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Sharp, S., Arora, T., Smith, P. K., & Whitney, I. (1994). How to measure bullying in your school. In P. K. Smith & S. Sharp (Eds.), *Tackling bullying in your school* (pp. 8-21). London: Routledge.

Summary of current thinking and knowledge about carrying out a needs analysis: consultation and evaluation

The aim of Unit D2 is to provide participants with some ideas and tools for carrying out a needs analysis in order to gain a full understanding of the problem of bullying and violence in your school (see Unit D1 regarding a school's readiness to address change).

Why carry out a needs analysis? Firstly, the benefits of carrying out a needs analysis include raising awareness of the problem amongst all members of the school community, including pupils, staff and parents, and motivating individuals to take action. Secondly, the results of a needs analysis will confirm the nature and extent of the problem of bullying and violence and establish a baseline measure against which to measure the effectiveness of your chosen intervention. Finally, the results will provide information upon which you can base your decision about which intervention, or range of interventions, is most suited to your situation.

What information will you need?
Cowie, Boardman, Dawkins and Jennifer (2004) offer a practical strategy for carrying out a needs analysis and a comprehensive list of the types of issues that you might want to find out about (see Appendix 1). Galvin (2006) suggests that information should be drawn from four main areas:

- Documentary evidence relevant to the prevention and reduction of violence, such as, copies of the School Development Plan, the curriculum and copies of School Policies (such as, behaviour management, anti-bullying, communication, equal opportunities, child protection, PSHE and Citizenship);

- School-based data, such as, bullying and violent incident records, annual absence records, annual exclusion records and the percentage of pupils on the Special Educational Needs register;

- Observations in a variety of settings including, classrooms, entrance hall and corridors, outside spaces at break and lunchtime, inside spaces at break and lunchtime, dining hall, toilets and assembly;

- Questionnaires, interviews and focus groups with representatives from all sections of the school community, that is, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents/carers and governors.

What measures could you use to collect such information?
There is a wide range of methods available to measure bullying and violence in schools including questionnaire surveys, interviews, task-based activities, and focus group discussions.

Questionnaire surveys are a useful way of providing a broad picture of the nature and scale of the problem of bullying and violence in your school. For example, they can be used to find out how frequently pupils have been the perpetrators or victims of bullying and violence, the nature of bullying and violence, what coping strategies pupils use, what action was taken and by whom, and where it takes place (DfES, 2006). If the questionnaires are essentially the same for all representatives of the school community (i.e., pupils, teachers and non-teaching staff, parents/carers and governors), comparisons of the results from each group can be meaningfully made and the variations in responses examined.

Either schools can choose to use previously published questionnaires, or they can decide to design their own (see Galvin, 2006). The advantage of designing your own questionnaire is that pupils can be involved at an early stage of the needs analysis. Not only will this help to raise awareness about bullying and violence it enables young people to appreciate the effects of the survey and to take it more seriously (Sharp, Arora, Smith, & Whitney, 1994). A second advantage is that the questionnaire can be tailor-made to meet the specific needs of your school. However, the main disadvantage of designing your own measure is the need to pilot it and test it out, which can be very time-consuming. On the other hand, there are several tried and tested questionnaires available, the use of which enables you to compare the results easily with those of other schools (see also Further Reading and Additional Materials).

The most commonly used measures for studying the incidence and prevalence of school bullying include self-report, peer nomination and teacher nomination questionnaires. For example, the *My Life in School* checklist (Arora & Thompson, 1999) has been used to gauge the extent of bullying behaviours, other aggressive behaviours and friendly behaviours in a school during the preceding week. The *Olweus Revised Bully/Victim Questionnaire* (1996) provides a measure of the incidence of bullying, and others' reactions to bullying, with children of 8 years old and over. For younger participants, a pictorial questionnaire has been devised by Smith and Levan (1995) for use with children aged 6 to 7 years old, to explore their perceptions and experiences of bullying. Whereas the self-report measures mentioned above focus only on the bully-victim relationship, peer nomination scales have been developed to collect information about children who are being victimized or who are bullying others. For example, the *Participant Role Scale* has been designed for use with 12- and 13-year olds to investigate participant roles in the bullying process (Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Björkqvist, Österman, & Kaukiainen, 1996).

On the other hand, interviews will allow you to obtain more detailed and richer information about certain aspects of school life that may have been identified during the questionnaire analysis. A second advantage is that interviews enable children, young people and adults with moderate or severe learning disabilities to be involved meaningfully in the consultation process (Sharp et al., 1994). Group interviews, or focus groups, are also advantageous as they offer participants the opportunity to develop their ideas through collaborative discussion and encourage a greater openness. Robson's (2002) chapter entitled *"Interviews"* offers some extremely practical advice for designing and conducting interviews and focus groups (see References).

The actions and behaviour of pupils and adults in your school is central to gaining an understanding about the problem of violence in school. Observations, therefore, provide a useful opportunity to watch what is happening in your school (Robson, 2002). Direct observations can usefully complement, or contrast with, the information gathered using questionnaires or interviews, whilst unstructured observations can be used as an exploratory means of finding out what is going on, for example, whether adults are modelling positive behaviour, prior to designing and administering a questionnaire. Again, Robson (2002) offers some useful advice on designing and carrying out observations.

In the spirit of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the European Charter for Democratic Schools without Violence (2004), Cowie et al. (2004) recommend that opportunities should be given to young people to express their views and opinions in a variety of ways including interviews, focus groups and class discussions to provide a more in-depth perspective. For example, interviews can be conducted with children, either individually or in pairs, and are a useful way of obtaining richer and more detailed information (Sharp et al., 1994; Williams, Chambers, Logan, & Robinson, 1996). Interviews have been used in combination with narrative strategies such as stories, drawings and cartoons, to stimulate discussion about school bullying. For example, in combination with semi-structured interviews, cartoons have been used to elicit children's views on a range of issues, including knowledge about bullying and violence in school and coping strategies (Almeida, del Barrio, Marques, Gutiérrez, & van der Meulen, 2001). The advantage of a narrative task such as this is that participants are provided with a safe context within which to produce a personal account of such events. Cartoons have also been used in combination with semi-structured interviews with children as young as four-years-old to elicit information about roles in victimisation (Monks, Smith, & Swettenham, 2003). Drawing and self-complete activities are useful for gathering information from younger children. For example, the 'draw and write technique' can be productively used during an interview with children as young as six-years-old to help them focus on a particular research issue (Mauthner, 1997).

Focus groups are particularly appropriate for use with children. They offer an effective and versatile means of exploring experiences and perceptions of a wide range of issues with children as young as 8 years old; they replicate group work typical of the school experience; they encourage open discussion of sensitive issues and allow for the exploration of unanticipated issues as they arise in the discussion in a safe environment; and, the presence and contribution of other children may encourage individuals to express their own opinions (Cowie & Wallace, 2000; Hennessy & Heary, 2005; Hill, Laybourn, & Borland, 1996; Mauthner, 1997). An effective method of carrying out research with children is to combine the focus group discussion with task-based activities (Punch, 2002). For example, stick cartoons have been used as a stimulus with 8- and 14-year-olds to explore the usage and the understanding of the different terms used to define bullying (Smith, Cowie, Olafsson, & Liefooghe, 2002). Stimulus materials such as these not only generate words currently used to describe anti-social and aggressive behaviours and situations at school, they also engage children in a debate in a fun and focused way.

Other methods that enable young people to take a more active role in the consultation process include visual methods such as mental maps and photo diaries (Young & Barrett, 2001). For example, through drawing mental maps of the school and identifying areas where bullying and violence occurs, in subsequent discussion, children can provide a perspective of the phenomenon that adult observations might otherwise miss. Photo diaries of school life and the school environment also provide children with the opportunity to represent aspects of life at school without the effect of adult influence. Alternatively, the Quality Circle method described by Cowie and Sharp (1994) offers a curriculum-based, participative problem-solving approach, which provides pupils with the opportunity to explore the issues of bullying and violence in their school meaningfully and a clear structure to formulate and implement their own solutions.

However, attention needs to be paid to the ethics of consultation with children in respect of their rights such as privacy and confidentiality. Using a child's rights based approach to show how the ethics of justice and respect relate to projects with children of all ages, Alderson and Morrow (2004) offer a practical book on the ethics of consulting with children and young people.

Why is review and evaluation important? The major purpose of review and evaluation processes is to determine whether the intervention has made a difference. Prior to asking "Does it work?" it is important to establish what "it" is and that "it" has actually been implemented. Therefore, before evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention, it is important to review its implementation. The aim of the review is to determine the extent to which the intervention has been put into practice, including those aspects of the intervention that are working well and those aspects of the intervention that need attention. The results of the review process will provide information that will enable you to make amendments to the intervention, prior to its being evaluated for effectiveness. In addition to providing information about implementation and effectiveness, review and evaluation also provides the opportunity for supplying information to potential funders and for sharing and disseminating good practice.

Evaluation should therefore have three major purposes

- To review the implementation of the intervention
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention
- To evaluate key characteristics of the intervention (adapted from Riley & Segal, 2002).

Responsibilities of the Unit facilitators

Your tasks within this Unit are to:

- send to all participants information about when and where the session will be held and details of preparatory reading to be done
- familiarise yourself with the Unit text and the facilitators' notes
- plan the session to meet the needs of the participants
- ensure that all relevant resources/materials are copied and/or prepared
- lead the session and all the activities

Sequence of activities for Unit D2

Note that all of the activities are appropriate for use with colleagues, young people and parents. All activities are adapted from Pretty et al. (1995). This Unit represents a one-day training of five hours plus breaks.

Activity 1 Arm folding (5 minutes)

Purpose

- To illustrate how difficult it is to change ingrained behaviour
- To demonstrate how forced change may cause discomfort and therefore resistance
- To break the ice

Materials

None

Procedure

Ask participants to fold their arms. Each person will have a preferred arm on top. Now ask them to fold their arms again, this time with their arms in a different position, with the other arm on top.

Debrief

For the debriefing, you can ask them:

- *"How did it feel to have your arms in a different position?* (weird, unpleasant, etc.)
- *"People resist change. Do you agree? What is the relevance of this for your needs analysis?"*

The main learning points to make are that change is uncomfortable and we all resist change, therefore we should not expect changes to happen automatically or that a new type of behaviour will be sustained immediately.

Activity 2 Map reversals (15 minutes)

Purpose

- To highlight how we have very specific and rigid perspectives
- To illustrate how difficult it is to change our perspectives and behaviour

Materials

Map of the country in which the training is being held without any writing on it (on a flipchart and one copy for each participant)

Procedure

Put up the map with the south pointing up and ask the group what they see. Distribute copies of the map to each participant and ask them to indicate the main cities of the country on it, giving them a list of the names. Tell them they have one minute to do this. Discuss the difficulties they encountered.

Debrief

Some debriefing questions could be:

- *"Why do we think the map is upside down?"* (We have been taught a particular perspective)
- *"What is wrong with holding the map upside down?"* (Nothing – it depends on what you have learnt/been taught)
- *"What did you feel when you had to keep your map upside down?"* (Irritation, confusion, tried to tilt head or turn map slightly)

- "What is the relevance of this for carrying out a needs analysis and interaction with other groups within the school community, for example, children, parents?"

This activity can be used to emphasize the significance of multiple perspectives and the legitimacy of multiple perceptions of a problem. *What are the implications of these multiple perspectives and perceptions for conducting a needs analysis?*

Activity 3 Brainstorming and Delphi Technique (60 minutes)
Purpose

- To generate issues, topics and questions in preparation for a needs analysis
- To group, sort, rank ideas in order to set priorities for the initial consultation
- To demonstrate a method of reaching consensus
- To help in team building

Materials
Flipcharts, flipchart pens, Post-it notes
Procedure
In small groups of three to four participants, use brainstorming to generate issues, topics and questions that they want to address in their needs analysis. Encourage the groups to think adventurously. Everything must be included, even the most outlandish, and wild ideas! Encourage quantity rather than quality: the more ideas the better. Each member of the group writes down a series of ideas, issues and questions on Post-it notes and places on the flipchart. The Post-it notes are clustered either by one or by a number of volunteers or by all of the participants in each group. Exact duplicates may be removed but all other Post-its must remain, even the most outrageous. Each group must agree on how the Post-its are to be clustered; this can form the basis for the sub-division of a needs analysis into theme areas. The group writes the themes on the flip chart.
Debrief
Participants find it very difficult not to comment or evaluate others' ideas generated in a brainstorming activity. Emphasize that all judgements must be ruled out until after all ideas have been generated. This method is quite flexible and can be used for a variety of purposes, including developing and revising an interview checklist or a focus group schedule, comparing the strengths and weaknesses of various consultation methods, preparing a working group contract, etc.

Activity 4 Matching issue and method (80 minutes)
Purpose

- To encourage participants to think critically about the possible application of different methods for data collection in their needs analysis
- To help participants plan their needs analysis
- To enhance group dynamics

Materials
Checklist of questions/issues generated in the Delphi Technique activity.

Procedure
Before conducting a needs analysis, each working group must discuss how it plans to explore the issues highlighted in the checklist generated in the Delphi Technique activity. This will happen at every stage of the needs analysis when new questions and issues arise. To encourage a diverse use of a range of methods, a Matching Issue and Method session is very useful. Divide the group into small groups, preferably participants from the same organization. Take the checklist developed in the Brainstorming and Delphi Technique activity and divide the issues among the small groups. Ask each group to identify, and make a note of, what kind of information they would need to collect that would be effective for exploring each issue/topic/question on the checklist, who or where they would need to collect the information from, and which method, or variation of it would be the most appropriate/effective. Ask each small group to present their findings, inviting other small groups to add their ideas and inspire each other.
Debrief
The activity on linking issues to methods can be a very important turning point in the training course as it compels participants to start making links between what they have learnt and putting it into practice. After exposing participants to a wide range of methods in this Unit, they can then explore how to use them to address real world issues. It is a good time to get participants to reflect upon the rich variety of methods available and to realize that a variety of methods (triangulation) can be used to address each issue, topic and question. Conversely, particular issues or questions demand specific methods.

Activity 5 What's wrong with the question? (80 minutes)
Purpose
- To illustrate to participants the different types of questioning
- To encourage participants to word their questions carefully

Materials
Resource 1 *Ambiguous and leading questions*
Notebooks and pens
Procedure
With the whole group ask participants if they understand what an ambiguous question is, what a leading question is, what a negative question is and what a double-barrelled question is, and try to reach agreement on this. Divide the participants into small groups of four or five people and hand out Resource 1 *Ambiguous and leading questions*. Ask participants in their sub-groups to identify what is wrong with each question and to rephrase it in a more appropriate manner. If there is time, ask participants to word some of their own questions based on the issues raised in previous activities. After about 40 minutes ask each group to report to the main group, the facilitator should write the key issues raised on a flipchart.

Questions with answers in brackets for the facilitator!

- *How do you find the school?* (Ambiguous. Avoid ambiguity by taking care with sentence structure)

- Are records of violent incidents kept and is a regular survey carried out to inform policy? (Double-barrelled. Double-barrelled questions ask two questions at once. Split into separate questions.)

- Do you agree that bullying and violence are a big problem in your school? (Leading. Be aware that leading questions encourage a particular answer, i.e., yes or no)

- Violent language and name-calling are not encouraged: Agree/disagree? (Negative; negatively framed questions are difficult to understand; "Violent language and name-calling are discouraged" avoids the problem)

- Staff disagrees on standards of behaviour: Agree/disagree? (Negative)

- Is it true that overcrowding in the corridors is avoided? (Leading)

- Is expert advice on school security sought and are security measures in operation? (Double-barrelled)

- How do you teach about violence through the curriculum? (Ambiguous)

Debrief

This activity usually leads to some debate about whether an ambiguous or a leading question is always inappropriate or is sometimes suitable. This is a good opportunity to stress that there is no absolutely correct or incorrect way to word a question, and that it will depend on the stage of the needs analysis, the topic under investigation and the context. Emphasise that leading questions lead the respondent to answer yes or no, whereas an open-ended question that uses what? when? where? who? why? or how? opens up the response. There may be occasions, however, when closed questions are appropriate and necessary (such as, "Have you been bullied?"). Emphasize that negative questions and double-barrelled questions should always be avoided. Also, point out that questions should be kept short as they are easier to understand and the language should be kept simple with jargon avoided.

Activity 6 Role-play (60 minutes)

Purpose

- To generate a discussion on the merits of adopting good interviewing techniques
- To summarise the main good and bad elements of semi-structured interviewing
- To energise the group

Materials

None, although groups can find props from around the training room

Procedure

Divide the participants into groups of 4 or 5 people. Ask half of the groups to develop a 'bad' interview sketch and half to develop a 'good' interview sketch. Suggest that they reflect upon the types of questions that they can ask. After 15 minutes preparation, ask the 'bad' interview role-plays to present their sketch first. These are much easier to do and provoke many laughs. After the 'bad'

interview, ask the audience if there were still any good elements. Ask the 'good' interview role-plays to present their sketch next. After the 'good' interview, ask if there were any bad elements.

Debrief

The role-play groups can concentrate on different types of interview. For example, one group can role-play an individual interview, another a group interview, etc. In the discussion afterwards, highlight key points raised by the role-plays and get participants to discuss their own experiences. You might need to tone down criticism of the attempted 'good' interviews by stressing how difficult it is to do a good interview.

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Further reading and additional materials

Books and Articles

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Websites

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National College for School Leadership http://www.ncsl.org.uk

http://www.stick2gether.com

Teachernet http://www.teachernet.gov.uk

UK Observatory for the Promotion of Non-Violence http://www.ukobservatory.com

Evaluation Studies

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Evaluation Tools

The Hertfordshire Framework for School Self-Evaluation http://www.thegrid.org.uk/leadership/sse/

Confronting Conflict in Schools Audit. Leap Confronting Conflict, 8 Lennox Road, London, N4 3NW. +44 (0) 20 7272 5630 http://www.leaplinx.com/youth/schools.htm

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Resource 1 Ambiguous and leading questions

- How do you find the school?
- Are records of violent incidents kept and is a regular survey carried out to inform policy?
- Do you agree that bullying and violence are a big problem in your school?
- Violent language and name-calling are not encouraged: Agree/disagree?
- Staff disagrees on standards of behaviour: Agree/disagree?
- Is it true that overcrowding in the corridors is avoided?
- Is expert advice on school security sought and are security measures in operation?
- How do you teach about violence through the curriculum?