

**A new approach to education in safer sex : these three leaflets have been developed in response to a growing awareness of young people's lack of information about safer sex ... / Brook Advisory Centres.**

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**Do you**



**Come**

**he**

**Whatever**



**turns you**

**on!**

AT THE PARTY



**Cool**

**it!**

# A new approach to education in safer sex

These three leaflets have been developed in response to a growing awareness of young people's lack of information about safer sex and the need to encourage non-penetrative sexual practices. They aim to complement the well established and very popular leaflet 'Love Carefully - use a condom!' which highlights the importance of condom use during penetrative sexual intercourse.



### Who are they for?

These three new leaflets are designed to be used with young people who are either establishing a sexual relationship or are contemplating doing so. They raise awareness of the importance of safer sex and reflect the need of young people to confront the issue at three different stages in their sexual development.

During trials, the leaflets were used and welcomed by youth leaders, health educators, social workers, college tutors and clinic staff who saw the need to limit the potentially harmful effects of early, unprotected sexual intercourse.

### What can they achieve?

The leaflets are presented in a comic format and printed in full-colour, with limited text and a slick, easy to read style. It has been found that this formula

- attracts the attention of the less mature, less well educated young person who can be particularly vulnerable if engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse at an early age
- motivates reluctant readers to take on board the messages
- acts as a trigger for discussion, with the help of a facilitator, of the issues raised.

As a consequence of this format, the leaflets give only minimal information and merely highlight the issues involved in early, unprotected sexual intercourse. The role of the facilitator or mediator of the leaflet is very important. During trials, it was found that in every instance where the leaflets were used with an appropriate age group, they provoked discussion and stimulated thought about the issues involved.

Where health educators and youth workers are prepared to raise the subject of safer sex and discuss it honestly and openly with young people, there is a willingness amongst young people to respond. The leaflets can assist in this process and, if they are taken away by the group members afterwards, can reinforce the work undertaken within such a small group.



### 'COOL IT!'

Ideal for use in informal settings, 'Cool it!' emphasizes that there is nothing to be lost in delaying first intercourse and there are many benefits attached to getting to know your partner in other ways first. It indicates that a relationship without penetrative sexual intercourse can still be sexy.

'Cool it!' aims to

- ★ discourage the resort to penetrative sex due to lack of communication about other ways of giving or getting sexual pleasure
- ★ challenge the myth that all young people are having sexual intercourse, when the majority do not do so before the age of 16
- ★ encourage communication between partners about sexual matters, especially in the area of being able to make joint decisions
- ★ raise awareness of the positive link between length of relationship, ease of communication and pleasurable sex.



### 'DO YOU COME HERE OFTEN?'

Designed to be used in youth groups, colleges or clinics, 'Do you come here often?' indicates that there are many ways of



giving and receiving sexual pleasure apart from sexual intercourse. It also highlights the importance for a mutually rewarding sexual relationship of getting to know your partner intimately and finding out what pleases him or her.

'Do you come here often?' aims to

- ★ encourage young people to see giving and receiving sexual pleasure in terms other than through penetrative sex
- ★ challenge the myth that all young people are having sex, when the majority do not have sex before the age of 16
- ★ challenge the myth that non penetrative sex is only for beginners, the less adventurous and the sexually immature
- ★ encourage better communication and assertiveness about sexual matters between young couples.



#### 'WHATEVER TURNS YOU ON!'

Youth groups, colleges and clinics will also find 'Whatever turns you on!' a valuable resource. It has the same format as the other two leaflets, using a cartoon story and lively graphics, but it is aimed at young people in their middle to late teens and demonstrates the range of sexual expression compatible with safer sex. It gives more information about sources of advice about sexual matters and safer sex techniques.

'Whatever turns you on!' aims to

- ★ raise awareness of the consequences of unprotected, penetrative sex
- ★ encourage young people to see giving and receiving sexual pleasure in terms other than through penetrative sex
- ★ inform young people about the different ways this can be achieved
- ★ inform young people about sources of information, advice and counselling about sexual matters.

#### Using the leaflets

It is anticipated that these leaflets will be used by experienced youth leaders, health educators, clinic staff and social workers with small groups of young people as part of a programme of education on sexuality, personal relationships and sexual health.

Care should be taken to select the most appropriate leaflet for use with a particular group, taking into account the age, maturity and personal experience of the young people.

These leaflets are designed to promote discussion, raise young people's awareness of the issues covered and give information about sources of further help and advice. They can most usefully be used to help reduce peer group pressure around sexual relationships and to develop assertiveness.

Group leaders will need to be experienced in sex education and feel comfortable with the subject matter. Participants will need to be at ease with each other in order that discussion about the leaflets may take place at a level that can be of value to all concerned.

In many instances, there are clear advantages to be gained by discussion taking place in mixed sex groups as this gives young people the opportunity to listen to and learn from the experiences and views of the opposite sex. However, group leaders might also like to consider giving participants the opportunity to consider these topics within single sex groups if they feel this would facilitate a greater depth of response.

Group leaders will need to be sensitive about encouraging participants to contribute to the discussion whilst not making them feel under any pressure to do so, and working in a way that protects the confidentiality of all. Participants should be encouraged to discuss any relevant experience but without revealing any personal details. The group leader's own example can act as a model for this process.

*"The direct language went down well and the leaflets provided a good introduction to personal relationships and different attitudes. They stimulated conversation among both the boys and the girls about who'd take responsibility for safer sex. I feel I've now got a lead into teaching about HIV/AIDS."*

(Health educator working with a group of school refusers who participated in the trials.)



## REMEMBER!

- ★ Safer sex includes hugging, kissing, stroking, massage, masturbating each other or any contact which does not involve contact between yours and your partner's body fluids (the man's semen or the woman's vaginal fluids).
- ★ Safer sex lowers the risk of getting HIV (the virus that can lead to AIDS) and other STDs. It also lowers the risk of pregnancy.
- ★ You **CAN** become infected with HIV
  - from having sexual intercourse with an infected person
  - or by sharing needles or syringes with an infected drug user.
- ★ The more people you have unsafe sex with, the higher the risk of becoming infected with HIV (and all sexually transmitted infections).

★ If and when you have sexual intercourse, always (and that means **always!**) use a condom. If you want to avoid a pregnancy, use another reliable method of contraception as well.

- ★ You can learn how to use a condom and get free advice and supplies for all methods of contraception at your local family planning clinic or Brook Advisory Centre.

**Phone THE BROOK HELPLINE  
0171-617 8000 (normal call charge)  
for recorded information - 24 hours a  
day - on:**

- ★ Contraception
- ★ Pregnancy
- ★ Abortion
- ★ Sexually transmitted infections
- ★ Emergency contraception (up to 5 days after sex)

**For information on AIDS (24 hours a  
day) phone the Special AIDS  
HELPLINE (free) 0800 567123**

Price - **30p** each leaflet. (10% discount on orders of 500 or more of each title).

All orders and enquiries concerning these publications should be sent to:

Brook Advisory Centres  
165 Grays Inn Road,  
London WC1X 8UD  
Telephone 0171 833 8488

# Brook

## ADVISORY CENTRES

Education & Publications Unit

Charity registration number 239966

Brook Advisory Centres provide free condoms, birth control advice and supplies, pregnancy testing and counselling for young people.

Brook Centres are in Belfast, Birkenhead, Birmingham, Bristol, Burnley, Edinburgh, Liverpool, London and Milton Keynes.

Ring 0171 713 9000 for details of your nearest Brook Centre or young people's birth control service.

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