The procedures in this staff training manual are meant to be used by agency staff, as part of the broader services they provide, or under supervision of agency staff.
Dedication
I would like to dedicate this thesis to all of my family and friends. None of this would have been possible without your unwavering support over the past four years.
Abstract
At-risk youth may face considerable struggles in overcoming barriers to achieving their educational and career goals. The present thesis sought to identify ways for clients of a community agency to overcome barriers to goals through self-efficacy training. Agency staff noted that many of their youth lacked the self-efficacy needed to further apply themselves to school or work. The areas targeted were: motivation and goals, education and employment, mental health, and behaviour. Bandura’s sources of self-efficacy were determined to be the crucial ways for at-risk youth to build self-efficacy in all of these areas of need. Agency staff suggested that a facilitator’s training manual would be the most effective way to implement self-efficacy training, as it would be adapted into an already existing program at the agency. The training manual was compiled from literature on all of the areas of need identified above, with a focus on Bandura’s sources of self-efficacy, including: enactive mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal/social persuasion, and physiological and affective states. The training manual incorporated these sources of self-efficacy into a 5-session program of training and activities. The training manual consists of various assessments spread out over the 5 sessions. The major assessment was a pre/post general self-efficacy scale designed to assess how successful the manual was in increasing youth self-efficacy. The other assessments used throughout the sessions include: the Big 5 Inventory, the stress symptoms checklist, thought record handout, and a job search activity handout. The final assessment for completion after the 5 sessions is the manual feedback form. This is filled out by both participants and the facilitator in order to determine strengths and areas in need of improvement for the manual. Due to time constraints, the manual could not implemented and pilot testing is recommended to determine whether improvements are needed.
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Chapter I: Introduction

The growing rate of unemployment among Canada’s youth is becoming particularly alarming. Ontario has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in the country. In 2013, Ontario’s youth unemployment rate hovered between 16% and 17.1% (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2013), as compared to the national rate (13.5%-14.5%). Unemployment continues to be a significant risk for all youth growing up across the country. Recent growth in the youth unemployment rate in the Kingston area is particularly distressing. From February 2013 to February 2014, the unemployment rate for youth jumped from 6.6% to 9.6% (Government of Canada, 2014). This dramatic rise in youth unemployment over the course of one year is by far the highest in Ontario. While many youth are experiencing the difficulties of unemployment, these difficulties may be greatly magnified for at-risk youth. There has been no consistent definition for at-risk youth (Moore, 2006). Scholars have used the term “at-risk youth” to describe youth who may face either or both of individual barriers, such as a disability, and environmental barriers to employment, such as living in a remote area. (Moore, 2006). At-risk youth may be described as young people whose’ potential to become responsible and productive adults may be limited by a number of challenges (J. McWhirter, B. McWhirter, E. McWhirter & R. McWhirter, 2012). Today’s at-risk youth may face multiple barriers to employment, which arguably contribute to the high rate of youth unemployment. Canada’s Youth Employment Strategy defines barriers to employment as: high school non-completion, a disability, drug and/or alcohol related problems, street involvement, contact with justice, child welfare or social assistance systems, homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, poor self-and/or behaviour-management abilities, etc.

The purpose of this thesis was to develop a training manual for youth project coordinators that complements programming to build self-efficacy in at-risk youth as a coping strategy for barriered youth who may also be unemployed. The training manual was designed to be incorporated into an existing program that works with at-risk youth. The goal of the training manual is to help increase at-risk youths’ self-efficacy, which in turn could assist them to develop the skills and behaviours needed to overcome individual employment/education barriers that reduce their ability to become responsible and productive adults.

The centrality of self-efficacy in many aspects of individuals’ lives has been the focus of considerable research, as seen in the work of Albert Bandura (1997, 1993 & 2003). Research on self-efficacy among at-risk youth has shown that it is a prominent issue in their functioning, and in the decisions they make in their lives. Self-efficacy is defined as people’s beliefs concerning their own capabilities in determining the control they have over their own lives when it comes to how individuals think, behave, feel, and motivate themselves (Bandura, 1993). Self-efficacy is responsible for whether people have positive or negative thoughts about themselves. Among at-risk youth, self-efficacy can determine what effects their individual barriers may have on their lives and how much power these barriers have over the individual’s life. In addition it plays a critical role in how well individuals are able to show resiliency and motivate themselves in difficult situations. Self-efficacy also influences: choices that are made during important points

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1 “The Youth Employment Strategy is the Government of Canada’s commitment to help young people, particularly those facing barriers to employment, get the information and gain the skills, work experience and abilities they need to make a successful transition into the labour market” (Government of Canada, 2014)
in one’s life, whether a person is more susceptible to stress and depression, and the overall emotional wellbeing of an individual (Bandura & Locke, 2003). The qualities of self-efficacy described above are crucial for at-risk youth to develop in order to successfully procure and sustain employment. The higher the sense of self-efficacy an individual possesses, the more likely he or she is to successfully complete educational requirements and job functions. Furthermore, he or she is more likely to pursue jobs and find interest in their work (Bandura, 1997). A high sense of self-efficacy is essential in anyone’s life; however, for youth who are at-risk, lack of self-efficacy can be particularly detrimental. It is important for at-risk youth to have the motivation and goal setting abilities to successfully transition into new phases of their lives, such as adulthood, education, and employment. Increasing self-efficacy may not eliminate barriers in these youths’ lives. However, it can assist these youth in coping and overcoming various barriers to obtaining a productive adult life. Alberta Bandura (1993 p. 133) outlines the critical role that self-efficacy may have for an individual in his or her situation once equipped with the right coping methods; “[…]ou cannot prevent the birds of worry and care from flying above your head. But you can stop them from building a nest in your head” (Bandura, 1993 p. 133).

KEYS Job Centre

The KEYS Job Centre (KEYS) is a federally funded agency, with branches in Kingston, Gananoque, Elgin, and Westport, that offers a variety of employment services for a number of populations including at-risk youth, adults searching for work, as well as employment counselling for job searchers. The clients in the Jumpstart Skills Link Program at KEYS are at-risk youth between the ages of 15 and 30. The Jumpstart Skills Link Program (Jumpstart) is funded by the Government of Canada’s Youth Employment Strategy to help youth develop skills and find employment. Jumpstart is a three-week Group-based Employability Skills (GBES) training complemented by 12 weeks of Employability Skills through Work Experience (ESWE). The first three weeks of the program consists of GBES training and workshops. The program expects youth to be in workshop 7 hours a day for pre-employment training. Youth involved in the second, ESWE- part of the program must be highly motivated and be able to set goals. They are responsible for their own job search and maintaining their employment once on placement. Placement goals are outlined at the beginning of placement. Therefore, a high level of self-efficacy would make it far more likely that clients are able to carry through with their set goals and successfully complete their job placement.

Youth taking part in Jumpstart should greatly benefit from self-efficacy training that is incorporated into the GBES they are already taking. Self-efficacy training goes hand-in-hand with the purpose and goals of GBES training, and is hypothesized to increase the likelihood of obtaining and maintaining employment. After the GBES program portion, participants then begin a 12-week job placement. Self-efficacy training would likely increase the skills of at-risk
youth so they are better able to overcome barriers in their personal lives and carry on with education and/or employment. Adding self-efficacy training in the first section of the program should be associated with an increased probability of clients maintaining themselves in employment or educational settings. These are the rationales for the creation of a self-efficacy training manual for coordinators of the GBES.
Chapter II: Literature Review

Self-efficacy training can be beneficial for all people. However, at-risk youth face significant barriers that many others do not have to go through. They may come from different backgrounds, skill levels, and have different barriers affecting them. Self-efficacy is not concerned, in particular, with the number of skills an individual possesses; instead, it is based on what an individual believes he or she can do with the skills he or she has in many different circumstances (Bandura, 1997). For at-risk youth to function effectively, they must combine their skills with the belief that they can use those skills effectively (Bandura, 1997). An individual’s self-efficacy determines the belief one has that they will be successful in a variety of circumstances and tasks. High levels of self-efficacy in youth have been shown to predict higher levels of performance in work, academics, and sports. It has also been shown to lead to increased happiness, job satisfaction and perseverance (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, self-efficacy training has been found to increase safe sex practices and smoking cessation and prevention among youth (Morton & Montgomery, 2010). Increasing the self-efficacy of at-risk youth can play a critical role in psychological adjustment, physical health, behavioural change, and psychological problems (Maddux, 2000).

Self-efficacy can be defined and measured as an individual’s beliefs about their own ability to coordinate skills and abilities in order to achieve sought after goals in specific circumstances and domains (Maddux, 2000). Self-efficacy is often measured through self-evaluations based on an individual’s thoughts about his or her own ability. Self-efficacy is a crucial aspect of an individual’s life due to its influence on how a person motivates him or herself, thinks, feels, and, most importantly, behaves (Bandura, 1993). Bandura (1993) argues that self-efficacy produces these various effects through cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection processes. High self-efficacy allows people to set more challenging goals for themselves, and as an individual’s self-efficacy increases so does his or her commitment to those goals (Bandura, 1993). People who have high self-efficacy for a particular skill in a particular situation are able to visualize success scenarios, as opposed to failure scenarios, supporting their desired performance (Bandura, 1993). Eliminating self-doubt increases confidence in the ability to perform a behaviour, which in turn contributes to increasing the ability to achieve valued goals. (Bandura, 1993). At-risk youth face a number of pressures from all aspects of their lives. Strong self-efficacy is crucial to remain task-oriented when confronted with challenging situational demands and failures that may have social consequences (Bandura, 1993). There are many different ways to perceive one’s own ability to succeed at a certain task. Bandura found that youth who are able to view their abilities as skills that can be developed and practiced over time had higher self-efficacy and achieved higher achievements. Thus, much importance lies in teaching the important skills needed for employment so that at-risk youth gain experience and learn to believe in their own skills. Positive verbal reinforcement is crucial when building a youth’s self-efficacy. Feedback that is positive and focuses on successes highlights the individual’s personal capabilities (Bandura, 1993). Bandura stressed the necessity for youths to have some control over their environment. A firm belief in individual efficacy leads to a belief that one can have some control over one’s environment, even when it consists mainly of limited opportunities and perceived barriers. Resilience and the ability to persevere through difficult situations is essential to the growth of an individual in key transition periods in their lives.
Building up the skills of at-risk youth creates resilient self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993), which in turn creates a higher likelihood of a youth overcoming barriers and achieving their goals.

**Motivation and Goals**

There is strong empirical evidence that self-efficacy has both direct and indirect effects on an individual’s performance based on goal choice and goal commitment (Seijts & Whyte, 2000). Self-efficacy is a strong determinant of individual goals, personal motivation, effort shown in various tasks, and task performance over a variety of circumstances (Gully, Incalcaterra, Joshi & Beaubien, 2002). A review of nine large-scale meta-analyses concluded that motivation and performance are significantly influenced by an individual’s level of self-efficacy (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Thus, self-efficacy determines a youth’s ability to persevere when facing barriers, and increases his or her core belief in the ability to produce the skills needed for a desired result (Bandura & Locke, 2003). There is a big difference between, on the one hand, having the necessary skills and knowledge, and on the other, being able to demonstrate them with competence and stay with them. Youth require the motivation to stick with their goals and be persistent in the face of difficulties (Caprara et al., 2008). Based on the researcher’s experience, at-risk youth may have a tendency to give up on tasks and think negatively about themselves, believing they do not possess the skills and knowledge to successfully complete a task. Individuals who have low levels of self-efficacy are far more likely to reinforce these negative beliefs as a result of ending their efforts prematurely (Regenold, Sherman & Fenzel, 1999). A person with high self-efficacy is able to be resilient in such situations and is far more likely to have successful results in the long run. Human motivation and goal setting are largely cognitively generated. Individuals are able to form beliefs about their own abilities and exercise forethought to anticipate likely outcomes (Bandura, 1993). Youth with high self-efficacy levels are more likely to attribute their failures to lack of effort rather than their lack of ability (Bandura, 1993). This is a significant finding, as a person who perceives themselves as making an insufficient effort is far more likely to be motivated to try again with more effort. Self-efficacy increases an individual’s overall motivation and goal-setting ability; motivation and goals give persistence and direction to behaviour that is needed to fulfill life tasks (Bandura, 1993). Bandura (1993), stated that self-efficacy not only increases motivation and goal setting behaviours, but also academic and employment related aspirations.

**Education and Employment**

Transition periods can be a demanding time in any youth’s life. One of the most important transitions for young people today is the transition they make after high school, ideally to post-secondary education or into the workforce. It has shown that employment for youth is a critical transition into adulthood, making the effects of youth unemployment particularly detrimental (Albion, Fernie & Burton, 2005). Today’s western society puts a great deal of emphasis on being independent and employed, which can put significant pressure on youth. High levels of self-efficacy in employment and education skills are crucial at these transition periods. Efficacy levels tend to be evaluated negatively at significant transition points in life (Bandura, 1997 as cited in Albion et al., 2005). A youth’s negative self-thoughts paired with unemployment or difficulty finding employment during this critical transition phase in their lives can be detrimental (Albion et al., 2005). A successful transition period for at-risk youth is a major indicator of increased self-efficacy. A considerable amount of an individual’s self-efficacy is derived from work, which makes unemployment particularly detrimental to any
youth’s self-efficacy (Eden & Aviram, 1993). Youth who become unemployed can be caught in a cycle wherein their beliefs in finding a job continues to decrease, which in turn leads to lower job searching activity (Eden & Aviram, 1993). Increasing self-efficacy for education and job skills in unemployed youth has been shown to have positive effects and has shown to increase job-search activity (Albion et al., 2005). Another study conducted by Lightsey et al. (2014) yielded similar results, finding that increased levels of self-efficacy led to more intense job-search effort and also raised the chances of an individual being re-employed. Evidence suggests that individuals who are unemployed and who have low self-efficacy will benefit from interventions that target cognitive and behavioural modifications that increase personal control, coping strategies, self-efficacy, and overall wellbeing (Albion et al., 2005). Studies have shown that high self-efficacy significantly increases work-related performance, while low self-efficacy is associated with depression, anxiety and substance abuse in at-risk youth (Morton & Montgomery, 2010). An intervention that targets youth self-efficacy should trigger positive processes, which in turn intensify job search activity, leading youth to find work quicker (Eden & Aviram, 1993).

**Mental Health**

Evidence shows that self-efficacy can serve as a significant protective factor against various mental health disorders. Self-efficacy is seen as a substantial psychological resource to buffer against the severe effects of depression and various types of psychological distress. Self-efficacy has also been shown to enhance overall psychological well-being in youth and adults (Lightsey et al., 2014). Automatic thoughts, which are negative thoughts that arise immediately and spontaneously after a certain situation (Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy, n.d.), are a major component of many mental health disorders including depression and anxiety. Positive automatic thoughts and positive outcomes have been shown to be predicted by an individual’s positive beliefs (Lightsey et al., 2014). An individual’s beliefs in his or own capabilities directly correlates with how much stress and depression is experienced in a variety of challenging situations (Bandura, 1993). Bandura (1993) also states that an individual’s ability to exercise control over threats and stressors plays a direct role in their level of anxiety. Individuals who are able to exercise this control are better able to control their automatic thoughts and anxiety (Bandura, 1993). When faced with threats and stressful situations, individuals with low self-efficacy experience a fast heart rate, rising blood pressure, and a decline in immune functioning (Bandura, 1993). A person who has developed a strong sense of self-efficacy is able to cope through these difficult situations without feeling the adverse stress response (Bandura, 1993). Bandura goes on to suggest that people’s actions are not based on anticipated anxiety arousal, but rather an individual’s coping efficacy. A low sense of self-efficacy produces symptoms of both anxiety and depression (Bandura, 1993). A person’s route to depression can go many directions, including unfulfilled aspirations and a deprived sense of social efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy has the ability to both encourage social support and foster the beneficial effects on an individual’s overall functioning and psychological well-being (Bandura, 1993). Efficacy is crucial because it directly correlates with the duration, occurrence, and recurrence of a person’s depressive symptoms (Bandura, 1993). Self-efficacy determines how resilient a person, how vulnerable they are to mental health disorders, and influence youth’s important decisions in life (Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Gerbino & Pastorelli, 2003). A youth equipped with a sense of self-efficacy is better able to cope with stress, pursue desired activities, and resist a variety of antisocial conduct (Bandura et al., 2003).
SELFC- EFFICACY IN AT- RISK YOUTH

Youths’ beliefs about their own efficacy significantly influence the course of their development throughout life, and especially during adolescence and early adulthood (Caprara, Scabini, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Regalia & Bandura, 1998). At-risk youth may be more vulnerable to subject themselves to risky behaviours such as unprotected sex, aggressive and/or antisocial conduct, and substance abuse. Involvement in these risky behaviours may negatively impact a youth’s personal development (Caprara et al., 1998). A high sense of self-efficacy increases the likelihood that youth will refrain from antisocial and delinquent behaviours, while focusing on prosocial relationships and being involved in the emotional lives of others (Bandura et al., 2003). Efficacy allows youth to create a buffer from peer pressure and transgressive behaviours that may create challenges and barriers for them in the long run (Bandura et al., 2003). Many at-risk youth are already displaying these risky behaviours stated above. With training aimed at appropriate levels of self-efficacy, these risky behaviours can be unlearned and replaced with successful behaviours (Albion et al., 2005). Self-efficacy can promote higher levels of social skills and emotional intelligence in youth, which in turn helps develop coping and problem solving skills (Morton & Montgomery, 2010). The ability to cope and problem solve can be the difference in how an at-risk youth decides to act and behave in various situations. Increasing self-efficacy has been found to reduce violent behaviours in at-risk youth throughout adolescence and young adulthood (Caprara, Regalla & Bandura, 2002). Negative behaviours can have devastating, lasting effects on a young person’s life. However, if a person has a high sense of self-efficacy and believes that he or she can make a change; those behaviours can be phased out and replaced with appropriate, productive social behaviours.

Sources of Self-efficacy

In Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control, Bandura (1997) introduces the critical sources of individual self-efficacy: enactive mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. Studies by Eden and Aviram (1993) and Maddux (2000) also back up Bandura’s theory of the sources of self-efficacy. The above sources are listed in order of importance and how much influence each has on an individual’s self-efficacy. This information is drawn from Bandura (1997), unless otherwise cited.

Enactive mastery experience has the greatest influence on an individual’s level of self-efficacy. Mastery experience provides a person with concrete evidence that they can succeed at a certain task. Each success a person has continues to build a positive belief in one’s individual efficacy. Failure to master a skill can significantly undermine a person’s self-efficacy, particularly in that efficacy has not yet been established. Experience with success and overcoming failure is important in order to build a resilient sense of self-efficacy. Youth must learn that sustained effort must be exerted to overcome and persevere with setbacks and barriers. Persevering in the face of setbacks teaches youth how to turn failures into positive scenarios, reinforcing the idea that they have the skills needed to succeed. A resilient sense of self-efficacy will withstand difficulties and youth will be able to quickly recover from positive scenarios, reinforcing the idea that they have the skills needed to succeed. A resilient sense of self-efficacy will withstand difficulties and youth will be able to quickly recover from future setbacks and overcome future barriers. The development of self-efficacy for taking action in changing life circumstances requires a combination of cognitive, behavioural, and self-regulatory skills. A crucial way to develop self-efficacy through mastery is to break down a complex skill into a number of more easily mastered skills for the youth to accomplish. The most important feedback a person can receive when performing a task is his or her own. Self-appraisal significantly influences a person’s level of self-efficacy. People can build efficacy beliefs through fictitious...
success. When people are told that they have the skills needed to succeed they are able to pull on past experiences and persuade themselves that they have the necessary capabilities. In order to eradicate a low sense of self-efficacy a person must be provided with sufficient, convincing feedback that is able to dispute a person’s disbelief. Selective self-monitoring can be used with this source of self-efficacy as a person can increase their self-efficacy if their successes are noticed and remembered. It is important to construct a timeline of success and failures, as a person is most likely drawing some self-efficacy belief from their most recent experience, whether it be a success or failure. Mastery experience provides the concrete evidence to develop high self-efficacy in at-risk youth.

The second most powerful source of self-efficacy comes from *vicarious experience*. Modeling serves as an effective source of influencing individual self-efficacy. Vicarious experiences can be facilitated with modeled attainments. Social comparison is also a significant part of vicarious experience. Youth strongly judge their own capabilities based on the attainments of their peers around them. Seeing a peer who is similar to oneself be successful is likely to raise efficacy beliefs that the individual can also perform that skill. Performing better than the perceived group norm can also raise personal efficacy. Seeing others around them succeed, people can persuade themselves that they have the necessary skills to perform successfully. Self-efficacy can also be strengthened through self-modeling, in which people are successful when placed in specially arranged conditions. Modeling effective coping strategies can significantly influence positive self-efficacy growth, particularly in individuals who are at-risk with substantial barriers and have had experiences that back up their negative thoughts of self-efficacy. Vicarious experience can, in some circumstances, overpower negative direct experience. Modeling can promote the positive behaviours needed to achieve a given task. Convincing people of their efficacy can limit the negative effects of direct failure and supports perseverance in the face of barriers and difficulties. Modeling can be used to successfully teach a variety of things, including knowledge and various effective skills for handling challenging environments. Modeling becomes highly important when a person’s perceived inefficacy is caused by significant skill deficits. Self-efficacy can be most efficiently increased by minimizing comparative factors that youth are likely to use and by maximizing the modeling’s instructive function. Self-comparison of skill development paired with the anticipation of moving forward helps to build up a person’s self-efficacy despite any skill deficiencies.

The next source of self-efficacy is *verbal, or social, persuasion*. It is much easier to believe in one’s own capabilities if others express faith in their skills and knowledge rather than in deficiencies. People who are verbally motivated to persevere when trying to master tasks are more likely to put in extra effort and sustain that effort. Verbal persuasion is most effective when the individual already has reason to believe their skills can produce the desired outcome. Social persuasion is most commonly and effectively used paired with one of the stronger self-efficacy sources. Youth should be encouraged to measure their self-efficacy development in terms of self-improvement as opposed to triumphs over peers. Everyone feels good when they are told they are doing a good job or are skilled at something. This kind of reinforcement may be rare for at-risk youth who may not have experienced the verbal persuasion needed to overcome barriers in life.

An individual’s *physiological and affective state* is the final source of personal efficacy, according to Bandura. Individuals often rely on physiological and emotional states when assessing their capabilities. Being able to cope with stressors, physical accomplishments and
overall health functioning are all somatic indicators of personal efficacy. Physiological states can be assessed by an individual as a vulnerability in a stressful or difficult situation. People tend to overthink their stress reactions, which in turn can lead to debilitating aversive thoughts. These reactions can be limited and controlled through both mastery experience and by using effective coping strategies. The main aspect of this source of self-efficacy is to enhance a person’s physical status, correct and be able to identify false interpretations of bodily states, and to reduce stress and negative emotions.

The literature reviewed above has made it clear that self-efficacy is a crucial component of a young person’s life. Self-efficacy training can be extremely effective with at-risk youth, because it helps them learn skills in how to help themselves (Eden & Aviram, 1993). Youth’s beliefs about self-efficacy can determine life courses through their influence on activities and environments they choose (Bandura, 1993). Youth with a high sense of self-efficacy will learn to partake in more challenging activities and learn what they are capable of handling (Bandura, 1993). At-risk youth who have not developed a sense of self-efficacy are less likely to overcome barriers and to successfully transition into employment or further education. The given information has provided evidence that a facilitator’s manual, focusing on increasing self-efficacy in at-risk youth, may be effective for increasing youths’ likelihood of employment and/or further education.
Chapter III: Method

Description of Setting and Services

KEYS Job Centre (KEYS) is a non-profit organization which provides a variety of employment programs and services. KEYS’ main focus is to assist individuals in achieving their employment goals by working with various populations including youth, mature workers, students, immigrants, and persons with disabilities. KEYS offers a range of services to meet employment needs, including: resume and cover letter assistance, job search techniques, mock interviews, and funding to increase the chances of clients reaching their employment goals. KEYS offers general resource assistance, employment counselling, and targeted programs for both youth and adults. The manual developed for this thesis is intended to be used in the KEYS workshop room or another similar environment, depending on availability of space, to ensure the best possible learning environment for youth.

Target Users and Participants

The target users for this manual are KEYS program coordinators, project managers, and/or facilitators who are involved with a pre-employment program designed for at-risk youth. The manual is designed to be implemented by KEYS staff to a group of seven to ten at-risk youths aged between 15 and 29. These youth must be enrolled in a pre-employment program, such as Jumpstart, and meet the criteria for the program. These criteria may include significant employment or educational barriers that provide a rationale for entering the program, and an intake interview, for selecting the appropriate participants. The chosen participants then complete a three-week Group-based Employability Skills (GBES) training program complemented by 12-weeks of Employability Skills through Work Experience (ESWE).

Design

A training manual (Appendix A) was chosen as a best fit for this agency because it allows for flexibility in working with the existing programs that KEYS offers. The manual was broken down into sections, allowing each to be used on different days at various times throughout the existing program, wherever the facilitator finds it most useful. The manual used a variety of delivery methods, including handouts, role-playing activities, individualized assessments for participants, and demonstrations. The manual content is organized into five sessions, each with a different goal, but all combining collectively to increase participants’ self-efficacy. Each session has an outline for its goals, objectives, and activities. The overall goals for this manual are to provide a resource for coordinators that assist youth to (i) discover more about their personalities and tendencies, (ii) become educated on prevalent disorders, coping strategies, and resilience, (iii) increase their coping skills, (iv) increase their prosocial behaviour and decision making, and (v) identify their job and/or educational goals. This training manual is designed so that each session can be done separately; however, they are related and are placed in an order that will benefit the participants’ learning and development.

Evaluation

It is proposed that this training manual should be evaluated in a variety of ways. The main evaluation may consist of administering a pre-and post-test General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES; Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). The purpose of this evaluation is to assess an individual’s perceived sense of self-efficacy and how he or she may cope with daily struggles. The scale consists of 10 items rated on the following 4-point rating scale: (1) not true at all, (2)
hardly true, (3) Moderately true, and (4) exactly true. The GSES uses a 4-point scale to avoid the common tendency to choose the midpoint of the scale in 5-point scales (Eden & Aviram, 1993). The General Self-Efficacy Scale has been used around the world for many years and has shown to be effective with a wide population range. Other studies, including a study done by Freund, Gensichen, Goetz, Szecsenyi, and Mahler (2011), have found the General Self-Efficacy Scale to have high reliability and validity, and stressed how this scale would be effective with many populations. The scale scores will give the facilitator a good idea of each participant’s perceived self-efficacy before and after implementation. Participants will fill out the GSES on the first day of the program and then again on the last day. This evaluation is used to assess the impact of the training in raising self-efficacy levels in at-risk youth.

Throughout the program, evaluations are used during the sessions. These evaluations, used in different sessions, include: the Big 5 Inventory (Oliver, 2000), the Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire, the Stress Checklist, a self-report for job search activity and the Manual Feedback Form. The Big 5 Inventory measures what is widely considered to be the five main dimensions of personality. This brief inventory has been found to give a reliable and valid assessment of the five main personality domains: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Feldt, Lee & Dew, 2014). The Big 5 Inventory consists of 46 statements, which are each on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Each participant’s personality score will be given upon completion of the questions. This will allow each participant to gain insight into his or her own personality and possibly find out new things about what kinds of education or employment his or her personality might lead him or her toward.

The Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire (Vivyan, 2010) is a seven-column chart that each individual will fill out about his or her own personal thoughts. The chart is used to identify negative automatic thoughts and helps people identify new thoughts to replace these negative thoughts. The columns are as follows: situation/trigger, feelings, unhelpful thoughts/images, facts that support the negative or intrusive thought, facts that provide evidence against the unhelpful thought, alternative and more realistic perspective, and outcome. This questionnaire, found to have high reliability and validity (Chioqueta & Stiles, 2004), will be used to help participants recognize what kind of negative thoughts and behaviours are brought on by particular events or stressors. The Stress Checklist (Baylor University) consists of a checklist of 27 physical and 25 psychological symptoms. The total number of symptoms checked off is associated with varying levels of stress, from low (0-7 symptoms) to very high (22 or more symptoms). Participants will fill out a self-report for job search activity on their job search days, including where, when, how, and with whom they job searched. At the end of the training, both the agency facilitator and the participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire on the usefulness of the manual and areas for further improvement. It is anticipated that by the end of the training sessions, participants will report significant increases on the General Self-Efficacy Scale. It is also expected that the self-evaluation tools used during the training sessions will help participants become more self-aware and more likely to use what they have learned to increase their employment and educational self-efficacy.
Chapter IV: Results

The results were compiled into a training manual, which is presented in Appendix A. The manual was designed to address the needs of at-risk youth by incorporating Bandura’s sources of self-efficacy into interactive activities and education. This 5-session training manual was created to offer facilitators the necessary tools to guide and build the participants’ self-efficacy as they develop their career and/or educational goals. The manual is broken down into 6 chapters: Facilitator Introduction, Discover Your Personality, Educating Youth, Increasing Coping Skills, Social Skills, and Career and Educational Opportunities.
Chapter V: Conclusion/Discussion

Thesis Summary
This thesis sought to identify different areas in which at-risk youth may struggle and develop self-efficacy training to help them through barriers to achieving their educational or career goals. KEYS staff noted that many of the youth who come through the agency lack the self-efficacy needed to further apply themselves to school or work. Therefore, the areas of need that were the focus of the literature review included: motivation and goals, education and employment, mental health, and behaviour. Bandura’s (1997) sources of self-efficacy were determined to be the crucial ways for at-risk youth to build self-efficacy in all of these areas of need.

Staff at KEYS and the behavioural psychology student together identified that a facilitator’s training manual would be the best way to implement self-efficacy training because it could be easily incorporated into an existing program at the agency. The training manual was compiled using literature from all of the above areas of need, with a focus on Bandura’s sources of self-efficacy. The training manual addressed these sources of self-efficacy through activities and training over 5 sessions.

The training manual also included various self-assessments spread out over the 5 sessions. The major assessment was a measure of general self-efficacy that was proposed to be administered before and after the training, to determine whether the training was successful in increasing participants’ self-efficacy. Other assessments that could be used throughout the sessions included: the Big 5 personality inventory, a stress symptoms checklist, a thought record handout, and a job search activity handout. There was an end-of-session questionnaire, to be completed by both the participants and the facilitator to determine strengths and areas in need of improvement for the manual.

Strengths
A strength of this thesis is that it provides a concise outline of the sources of self-efficacy and how these sources can be implemented with at-risk youth. The manual incorporates training on these sources of self-efficacy through activities and education. Another strength of this thesis is that it has the potential to benefit the staff at the agency and the youth who they work with. The manual can be used to complement the existing programs at the agency in order to better serve at-risk youth. The manual and the activities it uses are able to be adapted toward individual clients and were designed so that each individual client can benefit fully. Finally, this manual provides staff and clients with outlines of self-efficacy, its importance for youth, activities to build self-efficacy in youth, and provides youth and staff with important information about mental health. The training in the manual can provide youth with the skills and knowledge needed to further their education or enter the work force.

Limitations and Challenges
Although the manual should benefit to the agency’s clients, it does have some limitations. A major limitation is that, due to time constraints, feedback on the final product from clients and the agency was not possible. The impact of the training and the manual on increasing self-efficacy in at-risk youth will remain unknown until it is assessed. A challenge for implementation of the manual may be the unwillingness of youth to participate in the activities
and see the valued goal, which is an increase in individual self-efficacy. Another significant limitation to this study is the use of self-report measures. Participants may rate themselves higher on the scale because it is more socially acceptable, as opposed to what they are actually feeling.

**Contributions to the Behavioural Psychology Field**

The field of Behavioural Psychology is focused on the development of youth in various ways. This thesis will aid in the healthy development of at-risk youth, teaching them to believe in themselves and feel confident that they have the skills and abilities to succeed at school and in the workforce. The activities and educational information outlines in the thesis manual has the potential to benefit clients in pursuing their educational and career goals. Furthermore, this thesis provides staff with an outline of self-efficacy and where self-efficacy comes from so that they can take that information and apply it to other client populations. The manual takes the resources from the current literature and combines the important aspects into activities for youth.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

As noted earlier, the manual could not be implemented due to time constraints. For future research it would be beneficial to implement training using the manual with a group of at-risk youth who are seeking further education or employment. The completion of the manual feedback form will give some idea as to where the manual could improve on and what its strengths are right now. It would also be beneficial to adapt this manual to work with adult populations who are seeking similar goals. Further research might conclude different activities and sources of self-efficacy for work with adults.
References


Appendix A: Training Manual

SELF-EFFICACY TRAINING
BELIEVING IN YOU!

Welcome to the Idea Library

*I CAN!* I WILL!*

*All images used with the permission of Microsoft*

Jonathan Oosterman
(2015)
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Chapter I: Facilitator Introduction

The goal of this facilitator training manual is to increase self-efficacy in barrierd, at-risk, youth in order to increase the likelihood of employment or further education.

Structure

Session 1: Discovering Personality Traits
Session 2: Mental Health Education
Session 3: Coping Skills
Session 4: Prosocial Behaviour
Session 5: Career and Educational Opportunities

What is Self-Efficacy?

Self-efficacy is defined as people’s beliefs concerning their own capabilities, determining the control they have over their own lives when it comes to how an individual thinks, behaves, feels, and motivates themselves. Self-efficacy is responsible for whether people have positive or negative thoughts about themselves. Specifically in at-risk youth, self-efficacy can determine what effects their individual barriers may have on their lives and how much power these barriers have over the individual’s life.

Self-efficacy and Self-esteem Compared

Efficacy, combined with self-worth, make up self-esteem. Self-esteem is often seen as too vague as self-worth is a more global feeling of having the right to live, exist, and that one is basically good. Efficacy is tied to more specific activities and has the power to generalize to similar circumstances. Efficacy, opposed to self-esteem, is subject to modification through experience.

Definitions

Negative Automatic Thoughts

Negative automatic thoughts are negative thoughts that arise immediately and spontaneously after a certain situation; they are a major component of many mental health disorders including depression and anxiety.

Depression

Depression is a state of emotion that is recognized by great feelings of sadness, worthlessness and guilt. Recognizing the symptoms of depression can be the first step in preparing for treatment or getting help for yourself, an intimate partner, or family member. The symptoms of depression include: withdrawal from others, neglect of personal hygiene, complaints of somatic symptoms (pain) with no apparent physical cause, recurrent thoughts of suicide or death, and loss of sleep, appetite, sexual desire, and interest or pleasure in regular activities.
Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety disorders can come in many shapes and forms, all of which can be debilitating to service members and their families. Anxiety disorders consist of: phobias, the fear or avoidance of situations or objects that pose no real danger; panic disorder, which consists of recurrent panic attacks and include symptoms such as dizziness, rapid heart rate, trembling, and terror; generalized anxiety disorder, which is persistent and uncontrollable worry, often about minor things; obsessive compulsive disorder, which is the experience of uncontrollable thoughts, impulses, or images (obsessions) and repetitive behaviours or mental acts (compulsions); and PTSD which is experienced in the aftermath of a traumatic event and involves the re-experience of a traumatic event, avoidance of stimuli associated with the event, numbing of responsiveness, and symptoms of increased arousal.

Substance Abuse Disorder

Substance related disorders can come in two forms, substance dependence and substance abuse, both of which can have serious impacts on health. Substance dependence can be recognized by the following symptoms: tolerance, withdrawal, inability to reduce usage, much of a person’s time is spent on the substance (or recovering from its effects), and usage continuous despite negative effects. Signs of substance abuse are equally important to recognize; symptoms of substance abuse include: failure to carry out daily responsibilities (neglect of children or missing work), exposure to physical danger (impaired driving), legal problems, and consistent interpersonal problems, such as arguments with co-workers or spouse.

Resilience

Resilience is an individual ability to resist the psychological effects of stress and also bounce back after being overwhelmed. Building resiliency is a crucial factor as resiliency acts as a protective factor against negative outcomes after a traumatic event. Coping strategies can enhance an individual’s resilience.

Bandura’s Sources of Self-Efficacy

In Albert Bandura’s 1997 book, The Exercise of Control, he outlines what is widely believed to be the four crucial sources of individual self-efficacy. The main ways that a person develops self-efficacy, in order of effectiveness, are: enactive master experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states.

Enactive mastery experience has the greatest influence on an individual’s level of self-efficacy. Mastery experience provides a person with concrete evidence that they can succeed at a certain task. Each success a person has continues to build a positive belief in one’s individual efficacy. Failure to master a skill can significantly undermine a person’s self-efficacy, particularly is that efficacy has not yet been established. Experience with success and overcoming failure is important in order to build a resilient sense of self-efficacy. Youth must learn that sustained effort must be exerted to overcome and persevere with setbacks and barriers. Persevering in the face of setbacks teaches youth how to turn failures into positive scenarios, reinforcing the idea
that they have the skills needed to succeed. A resilient sense of self-efficacy will hold up and youth will be able to quickly bounce back from future barriers and setbacks. The development of self-efficacy for taking action in changing life circumstances requires a combination of cognitive, behavioural, and self-regulatory skills. A crucial way to develop self-efficacy through mastery is to break down a complex skill into a number of more easily mastered skills for the youth to accomplish. The most important feedback a person can receive when performing a task is his or her own. Self-appraisal significantly influences a person’s level of self-efficacy. People can build efficacy beliefs through fictitious success. When people are told that they have the skills needed to succeed they are able to pull on past experiences and persuade themselves that they have the necessary capabilities. In order to eradicate a low sense of self-efficacy a person must be provided with sufficient, convincing feedback that is able to dispute a person’s disbelief. Selective self-monitoring can be used with this source of self-efficacy as a person can increase their self-efficacy if their successes are noticed and remembered. It is important to construct a timeline of success and failures, as a person is most likely drawing some self-efficacy belief from their most recent experience, whether it be a success or failure. Mastery experience provides the concrete evidence to develop high self-efficacy in at-risk youth.

The second most powerful source of self-efficacy comes from vicarious experience. Modeling serves as an effective source of influencing individual self-efficacy; vicarious experiences can be facilitated with modeled attainments. Social comparison is also a significant part of vicarious experience. Youth strongly judge their own capabilities based on the attainments of their peers around them. Seeing a peer who is similar to oneself be successful is likely to raise efficacy beliefs that the individual can also perform that skill. Performing better than the perceived group norm can also raise personal efficacy. Seeing others around them succeed, people can persuade themselves that they have the necessary skills to perform successfully. Self-efficacy can also be strengthened through self-modeling, in which people are successful when placed in specially arranged conditions. Modeling effective coping strategies can significantly influence positive self-efficacy growth, particularly in individuals who are at-risk with substantial barriers and have had experiences that back up their negative thoughts of self-efficacy. Vicarious experience can, in some circumstances, overpower negative direct experience. Modeling can promote the positive behaviours needed to achieve a given task. Convincing people of their efficacy can limit the negative effects of direct failure and supports perseverance in the face of barriers and difficulties. Modeling can be used to successfully teach a variety of things, including knowledge and various effective skills for handling challenging environments. Modeling becomes highly important when a person’s perceived ineffectiveness is caused by significant skill deficits. Self-efficacy can be most efficiently increased by minimizing comparative factors that youth are likely to use and by maximizing the modeling’s instructive function. Self-comparison of skill development paired with the anticipation of moving forward helps to build up a person’s self-efficacy despite any skill deficiencies.

The next source of self-efficacy is verbal or social persuasion. It is much easier to believe in one’s own capabilities if others express faith in their skills and knowledge rather than in deficiencies. People who are verbally motivated to persevere when trying to master tasks are
more likely to put in extra effort and sustain that effort. Verbal persuasion is most effective when the individual already has reason to believe their skills can produce the desired outcome. Social persuasion is most commonly and effectively used paired with one of the stronger self-efficacy sources. Youth should be encouraged to measure their self-efficacy development in terms of self-improvement as opposed to triumphs over peers. Everyone feels good when they are told they are doing a good job or are skilled at something. This kind of reinforcement may be rare for at-risk youth who may not have experienced the verbal persuasion needed to overcome barriers in life.

An individual’s **physiological and affective state** is the final source of personal efficacy, according to Bandura. Individuals often rely on physiological and emotional states when assessing their capabilities. Being able to cope with stressors, physical accomplishments and overall health functioning are all somatic indicators of personal efficacy. Physiological states can be assessed by an individual as vulnerability in a stressful or difficult situation. People tend to overthink their stress reactions, which in turn can lead to debilitating aversive thoughts. These reactions can be limited and controlled through both mastery experience and by using effective coping strategies. The main aspect of this source of self-efficacy is to enhance a person’s physical status, correct and be able to identify false interpretations of bodily states, and to reduce stress and negative emotions.

**Barriers to Employment**

- high school non-completion
- person with a disability
- Aboriginal origin
- visible or ethnic minority
- health, drug and/or alcohol-related problems
- residing in a rural or remote location
- single parent
- low levels of literacy and numeracy
- language barriers
- street involvement
- contact with justice, child welfare or social assistance systems
- homelessness, or at risk of becoming homeless
- lack of social supports (family, friends or community supports)
- poor self-and/or behaviour-management abilities
SESSION

Chapter II: Discover Your Personality

DISCOVER YOUR PERSONALITY

Remember: Verbally praise participants for a job well done!

SESSION OVERVIEW

- APPROXIMATELY 30-40 MINUTES TO COMPLETE
- PARTICIPANTS WILL IDENTIFY AND EXAMINE THEIR PERSONALITY TRAITS AND DETERMINE IF THEY’RE ACCURATE
- EACH PARTICIPANT WILL REQUIRE A LAPTOP/COMPUTER WITH INTERNET CONNECTION
- PARTICIPANTS ARE GIVEN THE GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY SCALE TO COMPLETE

SESSION OUTLINE

- FACILITATOR WILL INITIATE DISCUSSION ABOUT PERSONALITY
- EACH PARTICIPANT SHOULD NAME SOME PERSONALITY TRAITS THEY BELIEVE THEY POSSESS
- EXPLAIN TO THE PARTICIPANTS THAT THEY WILL NOW COMPLETE A SURVEY TO DETERMINE PERSONALITY TYPES
COMPLETE THE BIG 5 INVENTORY ONLINE
(http://www.outofservice.com/bigfive/)

DISCUSS PARTICIPANT RESULTS AS A GROUP. ASK PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER THEIR RESULTS

ASK THE PARTICIPANTS IF ANYONE DISCOVERED SOMETHING THAT SURPRISED THEM ABOUT THEIR RESULTS OR SOMETHING THAT THEY ALREADY KNEW

HAVE EACH PARTICIPANT PICK OUT ONE PERSONALITY TRAIT FROM THEIR RESULTS AND EXPLAIN HOW IT COULD BE BENEFICIAL TO FUTURE EMPLOYMENT
### GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

1= Not at all true   2= Hardly true   3= Moderately true   4= Exactly true

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I can usually handle whatever comes my way.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*KEEP THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS*
Chapter III: Educating Youth

**EDUCATING YOUTH**

Remember: Verbally praise participants for a job well done!

SESSION OVERVIEW

- **APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES**

- PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN ABOUT PREVALENT MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

- PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN ABOUT COPING STRATEGIES AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE RESILIENT

- PARTICIPANTS WILL IDENTIFY STRESSORS IN THEIR OWN LIVES

- FACILITATOR WILL NEED A COPY OF THE STRESS CHECKLIST AND EDUCATIONAL HANDOUTS FOR EACH PARTICIPANT

SESSION OUTLINE

- PARTICIPANTS WILL READ THROUGH AND KEEP THE EDUCATIONAL HANDOUTS

- FACILITATOR WILL LEAD THE PARTICIPANTS THROUGH PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION
PARTICIPANTS ARE GIVEN THE STRESS CHECKLIST TO FILL OUT

PARTICIPANTS DISCUSS WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNED FROM THE HANDOUTS AND STRESS CHECKLIST

PARTICIPANTS CAN SHARE THEIR STRESS CHECKLIST RESULTS AND DISCUSS IF ANYONE WAS SURPRISED BY THEIR RESULTS. WHY/WHY NOT

*Stress Checklist can be found on the next page*
Stress Symptom Checklist

Check each item that describes a symptom you have experienced to any significant degree during the last month; then total the items checked.

**Physical Symptoms**
- Headaches (migraine or tension)
- Backaches
- Tight Muscles
- Neck and shoulder pain
- Jaw tension
- Muscle cramps, spasms
- Nervous stomach
- Other pain
- Nausea
- Insomnia (sleeping poorly)
- Fatigue, lack of energy
- Cold hands/feet
- Tightness or pressure in head
- High blood pressure
- Diarrhea
- Skin condition
- Allergies
- Teeth grinding
- Digestive upsets (cramping, bloating)
- Stomach pain, ulcer
- Constipation
- Hypoglycemia
- Appetite change
- Colds
- Profuse perspiration
- Heart beats rapidly or pounds, even at rest
- Use of alcohol, cigarettes, or recreational drugs when nervous

**Psychological Symptoms**
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Confusion or spaciness
- Irrational fears
- Compulsive behaviours
- Forgetfulness
- Feeling overloaded or overwhelmed
- Hyperactivity- feeling like you can’t slow down
- Mood swings
- Loneliness
- Problems with relationships
- Dissatisfied/unhappy with work or school
- Difficulty concentrating
- Frequent irritability
- Restlessness
- Frequent boredom
- Frequent worrying or obsessing
- Frequent guilt
- Temper flare-ups
- Crying spells
- Nightmares
- Apathy
- Sexual problems
- Weight change
- overeating

**Number of items checked**  
0-7  Low  
8-14  Moderate  
15-21  High  
22+  Very High
COMMON MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS AND SYMPTOMS TO RECOGNIZE

**Depression**

Withdrawal from others
Neglect of personal hygiene
Complaints of pain (with no apparent physical cause)
Recurrent thoughts of suicide or death
Loss of: sleep, appetite, sexual desire, and interest or pleasure in regular activities

**Anxiety**

*Phobias*
Fear and/or avoidance of situations or objects that pose no real danger

*Panic Disorder*
Recurrent panic attacks
Dizziness, rapid heart rate, trembling, and terror

*Generalized Anxiety*
Persistent and uncontrollable worry (often about minor things)

*Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)*
Uncontrollable thoughts, impulses, or images (obsessions)
Repetitive behaviours or mental acts (compulsions)

*Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*
Re-experience of traumatic event
Avoidance of stimuli associated with event, numbing of responsiveness, and increased arousal
Substance Abuse Disorder

Substance Dependence

Tolerance
Withdrawal
Inability to reduce substance usage
Much of a person’s time is spent on the substance (or recovering from it)
Substance usage continues despite negative effects

Substance Abuse

Failure to carry out daily responsibilities (going to school, work, etc)
Exposure to physical danger (impaired driving)
Legal problems
Consistent interpersonal problems (arguments with family/friends)
Resilience

An individual’s ability to resist the psychological effects of stress

The ability to bounce back after being overwhelmed

Building resiliency is a crucial factor as resiliency acts as a protective factor against negative outcomes after a traumatic event

Coping strategies can enhance an individual’s resilience

Coping Strategies and Stress Management

Social support- having someone to talk to (friends/family)

Nutrition

Exercise; physical fitness

Sleep

Physical, mental, and social well being

Anticipating a difficult task/situation and preparing for it

Meditation (examples on following page)

Progressive muscle relaxation (following pages)
**Meditation**

Effective in decreasing anxiety, panic, substance abuse, and anger

Shown to produce increased happiness, alertness, concentration, joy, fearlessness, optimism, and overall well-being

Practice on a regular basis

**Mindfulness**

Paying strict attention to what is happening in the moment

Withholding judgement

Does not seek to challenge the negative thoughts

Present awareness

Negative thought enters and is allowed to pass through without judgement

Arguing with negative thoughts strengthens the thought; allowing the thought to flow through reduces its effect

**Mantra Meditation**

Mentally (not out loud) repeating a word or phrase

Words such as “one” and “calm” have been used effectively
Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This can be done when experiencing anxiety or when feeling normal
Should be practiced without feeling anxious
Find a quiet, comfortable spot

Step 1: Tension

Applying muscle tension to a specific area of the body
Focus on the targeted muscle group (ex. Toes)
Take a slow deep breath and tense that muscle group for 5-7 seconds
Make sure to really FEEL the tension
Try to ONLY tense the targeted area

Step 2: Relaxing the Tense Muscles

Quickly release the tensed muscles after 5-7 seconds
FEEL the tension leave the muscle
Exhale while releasing the tension- feel muscles become loose and limp
FOCUS on the DIFFERENCE between the muscles when they are tensed and relaxed
Stay in the relaxed state for about 15 seconds before moving onto the next muscle

Muscle Groups

Systematically move through each muscle group (toes to head)
Foot (curl your toes downward)
Lower leg and foot (tighten your calf muscle by pulling toes towards you)
Entire leg (squeeze thigh muscles while doing above)
(Repeat on other side of body)
Hand (clench your fist)
Entire right arm (tighten your biceps by drawing your forearm up towards your shoulder and “make a muscle”, while clenching fist)
(Repeat on other side of body)
Buttocks (tighten by pulling your buttocks together)
Stomach (suck your stomach in)
Chest (tighten by taking a deep breath)
Neck and shoulders (raise your shoulders up to touch your ears)
Mouth (open your mouth wide enough to stretch the hinges of your jaw)
Eyes (clench your eyelids tightly shut)
Forehead (raise your eyebrows as far as you can)

Chapter IV: Increasing Coping Skills

**Coping Skills**

**SESSION 3**

Remember: Verbally praise participants for a job well done!

**SESSION OVERVIEW**

- **APPROXIMATELY 60-90 MINUTES**
- **PARTICIPANTS WILL IDENTIFY BARRIERS IN THEIR OWN LIVES**
- **PARTICIPANTS WILL FILL OUT AN AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS QUESTIONNAIRE**
- **PARTICIPANTS DEMONSTRATE EFFECTIVE COPING SKILLS LEARNED**
- **MATERIALS: AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS QUESTIONNAIRE, STICKY NOTES, PENS**

**SESSION OUTLINE**

**ACTIVITY 1**

- **BRIEFLY GIVE EXAMPLES OF BARRIERS YOUTH MAY HAVE IN THEIR LIVES (FINANCIAL, MENTAL HEALTH, ADDICTIONS, TRANSPORTATION) – ASK PARTICIPANTS TO GIVE MORE EXAMPLES**

- **PARTICIPANTS WILL NOW BE IDENTIFYING BARRIERS IN THEIR OWN LIVES (REMINd PARTICIPANTS THAT THEIR BARRIERS WILL REMAIN...**
CONFIDENTIAL UNLESS THEY CHOOSE TO SHARE THEM)

- HAND OUT 3 STICKY NOTES TO EACH PARTICIPANT AND ASK THAT EACH PERSON WRITE DOWN ONE OF THEIR OWN BARRIERS ON EACH STICKY NOTE

- UNDERNEATH EACH BARRIER ASK PARTICIPANTS TO WRITE DOWN SOME FEELINGS THAT ACCOMPANY THAT BARRIER (ANGRY, DEPRESSED, ANXIOUS)

- ASK EACH PARTICIPANT TO CRUMPLE UP THEIR STICKY NOTES AND THROW THEM INTO A PILE

- EXPLAIN THAT LEARNING EFFECTIVE COPING SKILLS CAN HELP ELIMINATE SOME OF THESE BARRIERS AND THE FEELINGS THAT ACCOMPANY THEM
ACTIVITY 2

BEGIN BY EXPLAINING WHAT NEGATIVE AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS ARE:

NEGATIVE AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS ARE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS THAT ARISE IMMEDIATELY AND SPONTANEOUSLY AFTER A CERTAIN SITUATION; THEY ARE A MAJOR COMPONENT OF MANY MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS INCLUDING DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

EXPLAIN TO PARTICIPANTS THAT EVERYONE EXPERIENCES THESE AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

THESE AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS ARE OFTEN UNTRUE AND ARE HIGHLY DETRIMENTAL

EXAMPLE: “I’M NOT GOOD ENOUGH”

ASK PARTICIPANTS TO COMPLETE THE AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS QUESTIONNAIRE (remind participants that whatever they write will be confidential)

ASK IF ANYONE WANTS TO SHARE WHAT THEY LEARNED FROM THIS ACTIVITY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation / Trigger</th>
<th>Feelings Emotions – (Rate 0 – 100%) Body sensations</th>
<th>Unhelpful Thoughts / Images</th>
<th>Facts that support the unhelpful thought</th>
<th>Facts that provide evidence against the unhelpful thought</th>
<th>Alternative, more realistic and balanced perspective</th>
<th>Outcome Re-rate emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What happened? Where? When? Who with? How?</td>
<td>What went through my mind? What disturbed me? What did those thoughts/images/memories mean to me, or say about me or the situation? What am I responding to? What ‘button’ is this pressing for me? What would be the worst thing about that, or that could happen?</td>
<td>What are the facts? What facts do I have that the unhelpful thought/s are NOT totally true? Is it possible that this is opinion, rather than fact? What have others said about this?</td>
<td>What facts do I have that the unhelpful thought/s are NOT totally true? Is it possible that this is opinion, rather than fact? What have others said about this?</td>
<td>STOP? Take a breath…. What would someone else say about this situation? What’s the bigger picture? Is there another way of seeing it? What advice would I give someone else? Is my reaction in proportion to the actual event? Is this really as important as it seems?</td>
<td>What am I feeling now? (0-100%) What could I do differently? What would be more effective? Do what works! Act wisely. What will be most helpful for me or situation? What will the consequences be?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ACTIVITY 3**

1. **Ask Participants if They Can Remember Any Coping/Stress Management Skills They Learned in the Previous Session**

2. **Review the Coping Skills That Were Taught Last Session**

3. **Ask Participants Why These Coping Skills Might Be Useful to Them**

4. **Ask Participants to Break into Groups of Two and Practice Different Coping Skills in Role Plays**

5. **Ask the Participants to Name Things That They Learned During the Session and If They Found the Session Useful**

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*Practice Makes Perfect!*

*walk the talk.*
SESSION

Chapter V: Social Skills

REACTING OR RESPONDING?

Remember: Verbally praise participants for a job well done!

SESSION OVERVIEW

- APPROXIMATELY 40-60 MINUTES
- INCREASING PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN PARTICIPANTS
- PARTICIPANTS LEARN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REACTING AND RESPONDING
- PARTICIPANTS ARE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE, THROUGH ROLE PLAYS, BOTH REACTING AND RESPONDING

SESSION OUTLINE

ACTIVITY 1

- PARTICIPANTS WILL BREAK INTO PAIRS
- EACH PAIR WILL THINK ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE AND COME UP WITH A COMMON ISSUE TO ROLE PLAY BETWEEN: PARENT/TEENAGER, TEACHER/STUDENT, OR TWO FRIENDS
PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE 10 MINUTES TO PRACTICE THEIR ROLE PLAY ABOUT A CONFLICT BETWEEN THESE TWO PEOPLE

PAIRS WILL THEN TAKE TURNS PRESENTING THEIR ROLE PLAY TO THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY WHETHER THEY THINK THE ROLE PLAY IS AN EXAMPLE OF RESPONDING TO CONFLICT OR REACTING TO CONFLICT AND WHY

ACTIVITY 2

PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN HOW TO RESPOND TO CONFLICT RATHER THAN REACT

**THINK THE BIG PICTURE:** THINK ABOUT YOUR OVERALL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AND HOW THIS SITUATION MAY AFFECT THOSE. IT WILL BE EASIER TO RESPOND AFTER LOOKING AT THE BIG PICTURE

**PUT THE SITUATION IN CONTEXT:** THINK ABOUT WHAT CONTEXT YOU ARE IN AND HOW YOUR NEXT STEP WILL BEST SERVE YOU AND EVERYONE AROUND YOU
**BLEND LOGIC AND EMOTION:** THE BEST DECISIONS ARE A RESULT OF COMBINING FACTS AND EMOTIONS. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DENY YOUR EMOTIONS; JUST BALANCE THEM WITH THOUGHTS AND FACTS. THIS LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL RESPONDING.

**ASK YOURSELF THE KEY REACTION QUESTION:** ASK THE YOURSELF THE QUESTION: AM I REACTING? BY STOPPING AND ASKING YOURSELF THIS YOU CAN GIVE YOURSELF THE TIME TO HAVE A MENTAL BREAK AND MAYBE MAKE A DIFFERENT DECISION.

**RECOGNIZE CHOICES:** REACTING OFTEN COMES WHEN YOU DON’T THINK YOU HAVE ANOTHER OPTION. REALIZING YOU ALWAYS HAVE CHOICES WILL MAKE YOU CONSIDER THESE CHOICES AND THE CONSEQUENCES THEY HAVE BEFORE YOU ACT.

**CREATE 20/20 VISION:** EVERYONE KNOWS HINDSIGHT IS 20/20. THE GOAL OF RESPONDING IS TO MAKE THE MOMENT 20/20 AS WELL. MENTALLY PUT YOURSELF INTO THE FUTURE AND LOOK BACK AT THE SITUATION. THIS WILL HELP DETERMINE THE BEST RESPONSE FOR THE CURRENT SITUATION.

**RESPONDING DOES NOT MEAN YOU WILL BE SLOW, IT MEANS YOU WILL BE THOUGHTFUL.**
Remember: Verbally praise participants for a job well done!

SESSION OVERVIEW

- APPROXIMATELY 45-60 MINUTES
- PARTICIPANTS WILL RESEARCH POTENTIAL CAREERS AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS
- PARTICIPANTS WILL RESEARCH WHAT FINANCIAL AID IS AVAILABLE TO THEM
- JOB SEARCH ACTIVITY HANDOUT IS PROVIDED FOR JOB SEARCH DAYS
- PARTICIPANTS WILL NEED LAPTOPS AND ACCESS TO THE INTERNET
- PARTICIPANTS COMPLETE THE SECOND GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY SCALE
- PARTICIPANTS AND FACILITATOR WILL COMPLETE MANUAL FEEDBACK FORM
SESSION OUTLINE

ACTIVITY 1

- Participants will use online resources to search for careers and educational programs of interest.

- Participants should record 2-3 careers and educational programs of interest (including where the program is held and the cost).

ACTIVITY 2

- Participants will do research on financial assistance for post-secondary school.

- Research may include: OSAP, line of credit, grants, bursaries, and scholarships.

- Each participant should determine how much funding he/she may be eligible for.

Possible online resources:

- Career Cruising
- Ontario Colleges
- St. Lawrence College
- Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)
- Individual College/University Website
- Government of Ontario
- Service Canada Job Bank

Career Choices are Life Choices
Take them Seriously...
Do it Right!
ACTIVITY 3

PARTICIPANTS WILL FILL OUT A JOB SEARCH ACTIVITY HANDOUT WHEN THEY GO OUT ON THEIR INDEPENDENTLY JOB SEARCH (FOUND ON NEXT PAGE)
JOB SEARCH ACTIVITY

NAME: ___________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>WHERE DID YOU APPLY/JOB SEARCH</th>
<th>HOW? (IN PERSON, ONLINE, PHONE)</th>
<th>WHO DID YOU TALK WITH AT THE AGENCY</th>
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# GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

1= Not at all true  2= Hardly true  3= Moderately true  4= Exactly true

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.</td>
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<td>1  2  3  4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.</td>
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<td>1  2  3  4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.</td>
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<td>1  2  3  4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.</td>
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<td>1  2  3  4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I can usually handle whatever comes my way.</td>
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<td>1  2  3  4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*KEEP THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS*
Manual Feedback Form

Please rate overall usefulness of this manual (circle one), 1 being not useful at all and 10 being very useful

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Please comment on some areas of the manual that you enjoyed/found useful

Please comment on some areas of the manual that could be improved on

Thanks!
Manual References


