



Provided by the author(s) and NUI Galway in accordance with publisher policies. Please cite the published version when available.

Title	Evaluation of pilot health and safety materials for use in post-primary schools
Author(s)	Hodgins, Margaret
Publication Date	2009-06
Publication Information	Hodgins, Margaret. (2009). Evaluation of pilot health and safety materials for use in post-primary schools. <i>National Institute of Health Sciences Research Bulletin</i> , 5(2), 75-76.
Publisher	Health Service Executive
Link to publisher's version	https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/leadership-education-development/national-institute-of-health-sciences/research-bulletin/
Item record	http://hdl.handle.net/10379/15352

Downloaded 2021-01-21T22:19:14Z

Some rights reserved. For more information, please see the item record link above.



Evaluation of Pilot Health and Safety Teaching Materials for Use in Post-Primary Schools

Hodgins, M.

Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI, Galway

INTRODUCTION

Trends across a number of countries including Ireland indicate a high level of part-time employment in post-primary students. Research evidence indicates that such younger workers are at increased risk of non-fatal injury within the workplace, even in sectors traditionally perceived as low risk.¹ There is a case for introducing health and safety awareness at secondary school level.

The Health and Safety Authority has devised a pilot teaching and learning pack for post-Junior Certificate students. The material was piloted in selected schools and evaluated to assess the impact of the programme upon the students' knowledge of health and safety information and upon their safety beliefs and behaviour, to assess the perceived usefulness of the structure and appropriateness of the content of the module material and to assess the operational aspects of the programme.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed consisted of three related strands. A quantitative pre-post survey questionnaire was developed for the students taking the pilot module which measured the change in learning of health and safety information and changes in safety behaviour and beliefs after completion of the module. In addition the students were surveyed on 'process' issues, such as the suitability of the material, their likes and dislikes, etc. with regard to the programme. Three discussion sessions were also held with students who had completed the course to add qualitative perspectives to the quantitative information collected.

A questionnaire was sent to the 56 participating teachers to assess perceived usefulness, enjoyment, ease of use and acceptability of methods and materials.

In total, 64 schools, involving 105 class groups and 56 teachers, were invited to participate in the evaluation. All questionnaire data was analysed using quantitative statistics. Qualitative content analysis was conducted to analyse open-ended questions and discussion group information.

RESULTS

A total of 8 class groups (176 students) acted as a control group. 71 class groups (1,277) students in the intervention group returned pre-intervention questionnaires and 36 groups in total returned post-intervention questionnaires. Therefore, the overall response rate was 46%. Out of the 56 participating teachers a total of 29 completed the post-intervention

questionnaire giving a response rate of 52%. The majority of students completing the pilot health and safety module were in Transition Year and were aged between 15 and 16 years (87%). An employment rate of 44% was reported, with many students engaged in long hours of work e.g. 25% reporting work in excess of 11 hours per week. Only 33% of working students received safety training from their employer.

A significant, positive change in knowledge was demonstrated by the intervention group between the pre and post-intervention questionnaire responses. Completion of the module had little influence on student safety behaviour as measured by two questionnaire subscales and had little influence on safety beliefs. The students were generally positive about material, with more enjoying it than not. However, there were indications from the student feedback sessions that the material may have been under pitched. For example, 28% considered the material too easy.

Teachers enjoyed teaching the pilot module, perceived student interest to be high and that interaction in class was good. Time constraint was the most frequently raised difficulty.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while the pilot version of the health and safety module resulted in significant, positive changes in knowledge, however, minimal changes were observed in student safety behaviour or beliefs. This is consistent with findings in the literature on curriculum-based health education interventions. Programmes that result in changes in behaviour and attitude require multi-component approaches.

REFERENCES

Available on request.

FUNDING

This research has received funding from the Health and Safety Authority.