Less than a quarter of teachers made use of each of the methods of written work, structured questionnaires, and feedback sheets at the end of teaching.

Implications of the findings for policy and practice

Many of the findings from the survey carry clear implications for schools' policy and practice in providing AIDS education.

1. Schools should formulate policies which provide a positive and constructive framework for education on HIV/AIDS. Guidelines on when and where within the curriculum teaching on AIDS should take place are also desirable.

2. Co-ordination of teaching on AIDS is needed across the curriculum. This ideally should be the task of a teacher of staff with a broader responsibility for co-ordination of health education.

3. Given the number of complex and sensitive issues raised by HIV/AIDS, teachers should receive specific in-service training before embarking on teaching in this area, and should have the opportunity for continuing support and updating.

4. Schools and teachers should establish and develop their links with potential sources of support for AIDS education (and health education in general) — particularly local health education or promotion units.

5. Up-to-date and appropriate teaching resources are needed to assist teachers in providing education on AIDS. Local health education units are likely to be a very good source of information on what is currently available.

6. Year 10 is too late to introduce teaching on AIDS for the first time. It is important that HIV/AIDS education is provided from years 7 or 8 and returned to at intervals on a spiral curriculum model.

7. Teachers need to give particular attention to their objectives in teaching about AIDS; and in particular give greater emphasis to promoting appropriate skill development and understanding of safer sex practices.

8. Teachers need to explore the possibility of giving greater emphasis to participatory and active forms of learning rather than relying too heavily on classroom teaching, showing videos, and general classroom discussion.

9. Wherever teaching on AIDS is provided, some attention should be given to assessing pupils' learning and evaluating the effectiveness of the lessons given.

Contact: David Steers, The HIV/AIDS Education Research Unit, Christ Church College, North Holmes Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1QU (0227 762444, ext 207).

A report giving full details of the survey and results obtained is available from AVERT, PO Box 91, Horsham, West Sussex (0403 840010).

Special offer!

We Teach Them How To Drink
(price 2.50)

plus

School Children and Drugs
(price £2.50)

now you can buy the two together for only

£4.00

Contact: Sam at the Schools Health Education Unit
Tel: 0392 264722

This autumn will see the launch of 'sexy drinking' materials for 11-14 year olds. They will recognise the importance of peer influence in this age group, as well as the need to involve parents. The following account is based on a report by John Lloyd, Senior Officer at TCADE.

Did you know that under-age drinking of alcohol starts surprisingly young? By the age of 10, 82% of boys and 77% of girls in England and Wales have had their first 'proper drink'.

Most young people have high levels of knowledge about the health risks associated with alcohol, but seriously underestimate the amount of alcohol that can be drunk safely.

Peers are more often than not cited as a major influence by young people in their decision to drink alcohol.

Alcohol is a socially acceptable and accepted drug. The Peer Led Alcohol Project is therefore not about promoting non-use, but more about encouraging sensible and responsible attitudes and behaviour towards the use of alcohol.

The Peer Led Alcohol Project —
An approach to alcohol education for young people

The format of the project is likely to be:

- Pupil material, probably a 'flyer' giving information, raising awareness generally and alerting young people to the need to consider the issue of alcohol in more depth.

- Pupil material in the shape of five or six lessons using a peer-led approach in the classroom.

- A teacher training manual which will enable teachers unfamiliar with peer-led teaching to use the pupil material effectively and enable them to involve parents in alcohol education. It would especially address such issues as the need to raise parents' own awareness of their own behaviour in relation to alcohol, the influences on children and how young people's drinking behaviour might be addressed if there are causes for concern on an individual or community basis.

- Parent material using a 'flyer' to raise awareness of the importance of alcohol education in school and the contribution that parents can make through their support and involvement.

The pupil and parent 'flyers' are intended for all those children entering secondary schools, and their parents.

In September 1991. It is intended that the materials will be launched on Drinkwise Day in June 1991.

Successful education

There is much evidence to suggest that successful education is that which involves and gives the learner some responsibility for their own learning and is enhanced by parental involvement, not as passive receivers but as co-contributors and partners in the learning process. Through the approach described, the Peer Led Alcohol Project seeks to develop alcohol education which is relevant and appropriate to the needs of young people in the 1990s.

Ideas welcomed

I am very aware of a number of exciting projects which are making use of peer-led approaches in other areas of health education and I of innovative work being undertaken by teacher colleagues and others: in schools on the subject of alcohol. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who can offer examples of good practice or who would like to put forward suggestions or ideas based on their practical experience.

Contact Sandra Jones, TCADE, 1 Halme Place, The Crescent, Salford M3 4QA (061 745 8925)

INVOLVED IN SCHOOL NURSING? Note this date

NATIONAL SCHOOL NURSE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

A national conference is to be held on October 30th at Wolverhampton Polytechnic for School Nurses, Managers and teachers of School Nursing.

The aims of the conference are:

1. To explore ways in which mandatory training can be attained;

2. To establish a national forum for the development of School Nursing.

DATE: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 30TH 1991
VENUE: WOLVERHAMPTON POLYTECHNIC

Further details will be published later.

contact: Elaine Cutting Cheltenham & Gloucester College of H.E. Dept of Education Health & Community Studies PO Box 220 The Park Campus Cheltenham GL50 2GF Tel: 0242 553816

Carol Bailey School of Health Sciences Wolverhampton Polytechnic 62-68 Linfield Street Wolverhampton Tel: 0020 295525 Ext. 1139