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# **Introducing** Choice

# What are Drugs?

A drug can be defined as any chemical substance which alters the way a person's body or mind works. This excludes food, water and oxygen needed to maintain normal health.

Almost everyone takes some drugs. A lot of people depend on taking drugs to keep healthy, but drugs can be harmful if misused.

Because misusing drugs can be harmful, laws have been passed restricting their manufacture, distribution or use.

Alcohol is a drug.

The above definition was based on material from The Centre for Education and Information on Drugs and Alcohol, New South Wales, Australia.

# New Zealand Police's Philosophy on Drugs

New Zealand Police believe all people should respect the legal restrictions that relate to drugs. Drugs that do not have legal restrictions should also be used in ways that are safe and healthy. If these principles are not respected then drug use can lead to abuse, in the form of social impairment, dependency and physical and psychological harm.

The National Drug Policy 2007-2012 guides drug policy and intersectorial decision-making about the best way to address the harms caused by drug use (harm minimisation). It aims to do this by measures that:

- control or limit the availability of drugs (supply control)
- limit the use of drugs by individuals, including abstinence (demand reduction)
- reduce harm from existing drug use (problem limitation)

**Choice** assists with demand reduction and problem limitation through education of young people.



## Choice

**Choice** has been designed to provide students with the skills and confidence to resist pressures to use drugs, and to make healthy, safe choices about their use of drugs. In this way, the decision of a young person not to begin using drugs will be affirmed. Students who are already using will have opportunities to reconsider their drug use.

Responsible choices and decision making about drugs will enable young people to develop healthy lifestyles and fulfil their potential as individuals, taking an active role in their community and behaving in ways that do not compromise the safety of others.

## Criteria on which **Choice** is Based

**Choice** is based on the best practice principles recommended by the Ministry of Youth Development in their publication *Strengthening Drug Education in School Communities: Best Practice Handbook for Design, Delivery and Evaluation, Years 7-13* (MYD 2004)

#### **Key principles of Choice are:**

#### 1 Evidence-based

**Choice** is based on research into what might constitute an effective approach for drug education. Best practice overseas was investigated, including an examination of the life skills training programme of Gilbert Botvin at Cornell University. **Choice** is consistent with other New Zealand drug education and information providers such as the New Zealand Drug Foundation and the Ministry of Health.

#### 2 The social competency (psychosocial) approach

**Choice** focuses on the social interactions of young people and empowers them to manage interactions in positive ways. It teaches them social skills which can help them avoid drug related harm. One example of this is the rehearsal of refusal skills. The use of interactive teaching methods further facilitates such interactions.

#### 3 A needs based programme

**Choice** is designed for all New Zealand young people and aims to give them information which is appropriate to their age, situation and experience. It reflects young people's experience of drug related issues.

#### 4 A coordinated approach

**Choice** is planned, taught and evaluated by the classroom teacher supported by a specially trained Police Education Officer. This partnership strengthens the school based drug education.

#### 5 New Zealand designed

**Choice** has been written by New Zealand teachers and police for New Zealand young people. It has been trialed and evaluated in New Zealand schools. This allows it to be responsive to the needs of New Zealand young people and to different cultural views.



#### **6 Complementary to the National Curriculum Framework**

**Choice** will assist students to acquire the key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum. **Choice** fits within the Learning Area of Health and Physical Education.

#### 7 Clear, realistic objectives

**Choice** has a clear overall goal and eight achievement objectives. Each lesson has stated learning outcomes which relate to preventing and reducing drug related harm, and includes suggestions for assessment.

#### 8 Flexible

**Choice** has been structured to provide maximum flexibility for teachers, to allow them to meet the needs of their students.

#### 9 Presentation over an extended period of time.

**Choice** operates over a sufficiently long period to allow behaviour change of students to occur. The existence of a Year 5-6 and a Year 7-8 programme allow students to build on and reinforce drug related learning.

#### 10 Planning and inservice component

The teacher and Police Education Officer meet prior to teaching to plan the programme. Such planning can assist in the upskilling of teachers.

#### 11 Parent/caregiver and community involvement

Parents/caregivers and community are consulted prior to the programme and take part in some classroom sessions and in evaluation.

#### 12 Harm minimisation

**Choice** aims to minimise the harm that may occur from the misuse of legal drugs (excluding tobacco for which non-use is advocated) and to promote the non-use of illegal drugs. It affirms the abstinence from drug use as a valid, healthy option.

#### 13 Ongoing evaluation

There is provision in **Choice** for constant monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness and outcomes of the programme. Senior management, the teacher, Police Education Officer, students and community are all involved in this process.



# Legal Requirements for Schools to be Safe Places

Schools have an obligation to provide drug-free environments where all students feel safe and able to reach their potential. These obligations are indicated below.

#### **National Education Guidelines**

National Administration Guideline 5 Each Board of Trustees is required to:

Provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students and comply in full with legislation currently in force that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.

#### **National Education Goals**

- 1. The highest standards of achievement, through programmes which enable all students to reach their full potential as individuals, and to develop the values needed to become full members of New Zealand's society.
- 2. Equality of educational opportunity for all New Zealanders by identifying and removing barriers to achievement.

www.minedu.govt.nz



## **Choice** in the New Zealand Curriculum

**Choice** integrates with the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education), both documents sharing the vision that young people will develop values, knowledge and competencies that will enable them to live full and satisfying lives.

Clear links can be seen with the Key Competencies and the Learning Area of Health and Physical Education.

#### **Key Competencies**

Students have opportunities to develop the key competencies in the social contexts in which they find themselves. Many of these social contexts are with their peers and will involve situations where drug use may be an issue.

#### **Thinking**

Students will seek and gather information about drug use and its consequences, which will in turn shape the decisions they make about drug use.

#### **Managing Self**

Students will learn to manage themselves and set personal goals with regard to drug use. They will be able to resist peer pressure and not follow the actions of others mindlessly.

#### **Relating to Others**

Students will interact with a range of other people, both in situations which involve drug use and those that don't. They learn to respect the views and actions of others, including those who choose to use drugs and those who choose to abstain. They will not pressure others into drug use.

#### **Participating and Contributing**

Students who make sensible and safe choices about their use of drugs will be better placed to contribute effectively in the communities of which they are a part.

#### **Using Language, Symbols and Texts**

Students discuss and debate issues around drug use and its consequences and formulate questions to define what they want to know about drug related situations. They analyse the language of media. They use words and body language to practise refusal skills.



#### **Health and Physical Education Learning Area**

Choice meets the requirements of the Learning Area Health and Physical Education.

'Students learn about their own well-being, and that of others and society, in health-related and movement contexts."

**Choice** reflects the concepts of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum:

- Total Well-being/Hauora
- Attitudes and Values
- Health Promotion
- Socio-ecological Perspective.

**Choice** also provides an opportunity for students to explore, clarify and understand their own personal attitudes, values and beliefs, with particular regard to drug use, and to understand those of others.

Learning activities in **Choice** will help teachers deliver the four strands of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum and their achievement objectives, as shown in the chart on the next page, and the following key areas of learning:

#### **Mental Health**

- knowledge, understandings, and skills to make informed, health-enhancing decisions in relation to drug use and misuse

#### **Body Care and Physical Safety**

- recognising and minimising harm, for example from passive smoking



Strand	Achievement Objectives
Personal Health and Physical Development	Personal growth and development  simple health care and safety procedures with regards to drugs  Regular physical activity  self care and well-being; having fun; relaxation  taking responsibility for own recreation and physical activity  Safety management  managing drug related risks  making and actioning safe drug related choices  identifying risks associated with drug related behaviour  Personal identity  developing a sense of self-worth
Movement Concepts and Motor Skills	Positive attitudes  • enjoying physical activity
Relationships with Other People	Relationships  Interacting positively with peers and family  Interpersonal skills  demonstrating assertiveness skills in drug related contexts  communicating ideas, opinions and feelings
Healthy Communities and Environments	Societal attitudes and values  exploring attitudes, values and actions with regard to drug use  examining media influences  Community resources  identifying and approaching those who can help with drug related problems  Rights, responsibilities, and laws  examination of the laws related to misuse of drugs  People and the environment  exploring health practices and policies in their school





# **Implementing** Choice

# The Whole School Approach

Drug education will be most effective when it is supported by a comprehensive school-wide approach. Drug education should enhance the school's existing structures, programmes and policies. It should also enhance links between the school, the parents and caregivers and the wider community. Adequate training needs to be provided for school staff and resourcing made available for drug education. There is also an opportunity to review school policies and practices to ensure they support the objectives of drug education.

The whole school approach to drug education would include such things as:

- details of the drug education approach or programme to be used
- the safe handling and administration of prescription drugs
- use of drugs, legal or illegal, on school grounds or school camps, by school staff or Board members as well as visitors
- how drug related incidents will be handled
- community resources and support for those with drug related problems
- ways of involving parents and caregivers in drug related decisions

Refer to the Drug Education Guidelines:

www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/PublicationsAndResources/ResourcesForEducators/AQuickGuideToExtraSupport/WhatToDoInACrisis/DrugEducationInSchools. aspx

# The Implementation Steps

#### **Step 1 Getting Prepared**

If the school has not previously taught Choice...

Police Education Officers work with senior management, and, if appropriate, representative of Board of Trustees.

**Choice** Memorandum of Understanding completed and signed (see page 11).

If the school has taught Choice before...

Choice Memorandum of Understanding (page 11) reviewed.

#### **Step 2** Preparing for Teaching

Police Education Officer plans teaching programme with teachers, either individually or in syndicates;

Teacher/Police Education Officer Checklist (page 12) completed with each teacher.

#### **Step 3** Parent/Caregiver Consultation

Parents and caregivers consulted by letter or meeting (pages 18 - 20). Dates set for the parent/caregiver meeting.

#### **Step 4** Teaching

Choice programme taught with all Year 5-6 and/or 7-8 classes (according to the school type).

#### **Step 5 Programme evaluated**

Post programme evaluation carried out to see if the stated learning outcomes have been met (see teaching guides).



# Police/School Memorandum of Understanding

Choice		YES	NO
1	Will the Police Education Officer (PEO) be available for the agreed sessions of <b>Choice</b> ?		
2	Is the school prepared to accept that the PEO may be unavailable in times of emergency?		
3	Is the PEO prepared to accept the culture of the school whilst in the school?		
4	Is the school prepared to publicly support the harm minimisation approach? (see page 2)		
5	Does the school's drug policy and/or guidelines support the aims and objectives of <b>Choice</b> ? (see pages 14 - 15)		
6	Has the PEO seen the school's drug policy and/or guidelines?		
7	Have all parties present agreed on the way in which disclosures and/or information about illegal drugs is to be handled? (see page 16)		
8	Is there a planned place for <b>Choice</b> within the school's Health and Physical Education Curriculum?		
9	Is the whole school prepared to commit to <b>Choice</b> being taught?		
10	Are the resources required for both the teacher and PEO available?		
11	Will the teacher/s be available to plan with the PEO?		
12	Is the school prepared to consult and involve parents and caregivers? (see pages 18 - 21)		
13	Will <b>Choice</b> be implemented according to Treaty of Waitangi obligations and the school's policy relating to multi-cultural learning?		
	/School Memorandum of Understanding ems above have all been answered in the affirmative.		
School:	Police Education Officer:		
_			

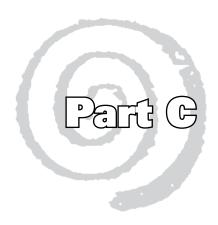


# Teacher/Police Education Officer Agreement

The items below should be discussed and/or actioned. All questions must be answered in the affirmative before the agreement is signed.

Teacher/Police Education Officer Agreement			NO
1	Are you both committed to the successful completion of <b>Choice</b> ?		
2	Have you both agreed on strategies for working in a positive partnership?		
3	Will you both publicly support the harm minimisation approach?		
4	Have you identified and planned for the specific needs of the students who will undertake <b>Choice</b> ?		
5	Do you both agree to the interactive teaching approach, the use of the trust circle and the necessity for relevant displays of <b>Choice</b> work?		
6	Has a planning meeting been held and the <b>Choice</b> programme planned to meet the specific needs of the class?		
7	Do you have an agreed timetable for the planning, teaching and evaluation of <b>Choice</b> ?		
8	Has the input of the local community and resource people been discussed and planned for?		
9	Have pre-programme requirements been discussed and a suitable timeline agreed to?		
10	Have you both seen the school's policy on drugs?		
The items in the <b>Teacher/Police Education Officer Checklist</b> have all been answered in the affirmative.			
Teacher	Police Education Officer:		
Date:			





# Additional Information to assist with Implementation

# The Partnership

**Choice** is taught by the classroom teacher working in partnership with the Police Education Officer. Each partner brings their own range of knowledge and experience to the classroom.

#### The teacher:

- knows the students and the school;
- is familiar with classroom routines and culture;
- has responsibility for handling classroom outcomes;
- is able to select appropriate activities for students;
- is able to reinforce **Choice** messages in an ongoing way;
- can establish positive connections with students.

#### **The Police Education Officer:**

- is familiar with community values and organisations;
- knows laws and factors related to drug use;
- can answer student questions about drug issues;
- represents police as a positive, educative model;
- is seen as a credible person to tell students about drug use in society.

**Choice** is enriched by this partnership, which provides two significant others who can influence and act as role models for students. The partnership between students, teacher and Police Education Officer also allows a whole new set of positive relationships to be built up. This contributes to the effectiveness of the school's health and physical education programme.

# School Policy

When **Choice** is being taught in the school, it is a great oppoprtunity for the school and its Board of Trustees to review its policies on drugs. This should include issues such as handling medicines brought to school, the use of alcohol at school functions, procedures relating to the use of illegal drugs and the specific drug education curriculum initiatives to be used. Such a review could lead to the development of changes in a school's policy on drugs which will better reflect the objectives of the Health and Physical Education Learning Area and the goals of the school charter.

All staff should be involved in this policy making, so that they are all prepared to support and carry out the decisions made. The school policy should also canvas opinion from, and be available to, parents/caregivers and students. The Police Education Officer is available to assist schools with this task. A sample school policy is included on page 14 - 15.

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# Sample School Policy on Drug Use and Misuse

#### Rationale

XXX School is committed to providing a drug-free environment for students to learn and staff to teach. It aims to provide students with the knowledge and skills to make healthy, safe and sensible choices in relation to drugs, both now and in the future. It is also committed to providing a safe physical and emotional school environment (NAG 5) in which drugs, other than those used as prescribed for a medical condition, or those permitted lawfully and with specific permission from the Board of Trustees, are not permitted.

In this policy-

'drugs' are defined as chemicals that alter mood and/or behaviour. They include nicotine, alcohol and cannabis

'school' is used for any occasion at school in which students are present representing the school

#### **Purpose**

The outcomes of this policy are:

- **1** appropriate education for all members of the school community (students, staff, parents/caregivers) will be in place;
- 2 appropriate procedures will be developed for the storage and distribution of medications;
- intervention strategies will be in place for students and staff should they be affected by their own or other's drug use.



#### **Guidelines**

- The drug education programme **Choice** will be integrated into the school's Health and Physical Education programme and will be used in all senior classes.
- **1b** Opportunities will be given for staff to become aware of relevant drug related issues through workshops and education sessions.
- 2 Appropriate intervention strategies will be made available should there be concerns regarding drug use by any member of the school community.
- All members of the school community will be expected to follow the Board of Trustees' guidelines in relation to drug use:
  - 'XXX School A Drug-Free School' signage will be obvious around the school, and all enrolment forms and job application forms will contain an appropriate statement.
  - Those accompanying students on any school outing will be informed of the school's policy regarding drug use in these situations, namely non use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.
  - Medications will be secured in a locked cupboard and will be administrated by designated personnel on receipt of a letter with full instructions from the parent/caregiver.
- Adults using drugs at staff or school functions should be aware of the school's policy and statements on drug use, and the role models they present. On such occasions non-alcoholic drinks, and food should be available.
- The review of the school policy is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, who can seek the assistance of the Principal, Health Co-ordinator, Public Health Nurse and Police Education Officer.
- Any information about illicit drug use should be referred to Police (see *Drug Education Guidelines:* www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/PublicationsAndResources/ResourcesForEducators/AQuickGuideToExtraSupport/WhatToDoInACrisis/DrugEducationInSchools.aspx
- 7 This policy will be made available for parents, caregivers, community, staff and students to view.

Date ratified by Board of Trustees:	 Review Date:
Date ratified by Board or fractions.	 NOTION Date.

# Handling Information about Illicit Drug Use

Police and schools need to agree on how any information about illegal drug use or possession that comes to notice during or as a result of teaching **Choice** will be handled.

The following principles should be considered:

- 1 The approach in **Choice** is one of preventative education, not enforcement. The Police Education Officer is primarily involved in a support role to the school.
- To be successful **Choice** requires an atmosphere of trust and openness being established between the school staff, the parents/caregivers, the students and Police.
- **3** Both teacher and Police Education Officer will respect the confidentiality of students' comments in the classroom unless these statements contain information that threatens the safety, welfare and best interests of students.
- If information about illegal drug use or misuse comes to notice, then both the school staff and the Police Education Officer have a responsibility to take action. Schools should refer to Drug Education Guidelines:

www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/PublicationsAndResources/ResourcesForEducators/AQuickGuideToExtraSupport/WhatToDoInACrisis/DrugEducationInSchools.aspx

Police Education Officers will abide by the provisions of New Zealand legislation, together with Police policies and procedures and will exercise informed discretion and sound judgment at all times. The nature and seriousness of the drug information gained will determine what action needs to be taken and when.

Police recognise the authority of Principals and the Boards of Trustees in whose school they are visitors. Police members should not take unilateral action without advising and involving a school's authorities.



# Timetabling of **Choice**

**Choice** is divided into two separate programmes, one for Years 5-6 and the other for Years 7-8. Each programme will be tailored to the needs of the students, and the involvement of the Police Education Officer will be decided during planning.

Ideally students will undertake **Choice** in both Years 5-6 and Years 7-8. This will require careful planning and record keeping on the part of both teachers and Police Education Officers.

Local planning will decide when **Choice** is scheduled in the school year.

Detailed information on planning a classroom programme is provided in the teaching guides. These are available online at www.police.govt.nz/service/yes

# Reflecting Different Cultural Views and Realities

Because New Zealand communities vary in their ethnic composition, each school will need to look at making its **Choice** programme appropriate to its cultural mix. This could be achieved by inviting input from cultural leaders or advisors who can help students understand social and environmental factors that affect drug use in their community. Such involvement could include:

- consulting with Board members, parents and caregivers representing different ethnic communities to find their priorities for **Choice** for their students;
- taking cognisance of any particular cultural views that might affect what is done in class;
- involving cultural members in classroom lessons as appropriate;
- holding separate meetings to consult with different cultural groups.

For specific advice on ensuring that Maori perspectives are considered, schools should refer to *Drug Education - a Guide for Principals and Boards of Trustees* (Ministry of Education 2000) pages 27-28.



# Parent/Caregiver and Community Involvement

A school's health programme, including drug education, will be most effective when the interest and support of parents/caregivers and community are valued, they are involved in the programme and they reflect the same choices and decisions as their children. The New Zealand Police encourages such involvement, as it reinforces student learning and ensures that school and home are giving the same messages about drug use. It is also a time for parents/caregivers and community to consider their own use of drugs and the role models they present to young people.

Parent/caregiver and community involvement is included as an integral part of the classroom activities. This includes helping with homework tasks and being resource people. The community can also provide help for students with drug related problems.

Because of their particular ethnic composition, some schools may need to consider appropriate ways of consulting and involving parents/caregivers and community.

Examples of text to form the basis of letters to send home to parents and caregivers follows.

An outline for a parent/caregiver consultation meeting is given on page 21.



#### Sample text for letters home to parents/caregivers

#### **English**

Over the next month or so your child will be working on the **Choice** programme, which is a New Zealand Police Youth Education Service programme. The programme aims to help young people make responsible choices about their use of drugs and to give them the skills to carry out these choices.

The module will be taught by your child's teacher and the local Police Education Officer, working together in the classroom. The Police Education Officer has had special training to work with the teacher in this way.

To be most successful, the activities your child does in the classroom and at home will need to be supported by you. We would like to invite you to a parent/caregiver meeting to be held on at We will begin with a cup of tea at

At this meeting you will find out more about **Choice** and how you can help your child.

#### Māori

I roto i te marama e heke mai nei, tata atu ranei kei te whakauru a koutou tamariki ki roto i te rarangi mahi a nga Pirihimana, ara, te kaupapa **Choice**.

Ko te awhina i te rangatahi ki te kowhiri tika i te ahua o ta ratau rawekeweke i nga rongoa kino, a, ki te hoatu i nga tohu hei whakahaere enei kowhiri, te whainga a te kaupapa nei.

Ka riro ma te mahita raua tahi ko te Apiha Pirihimana Matauranga A-Rohe e whakaako **Choice** i roto i te ruma ako ki a koutou tamariki. Kua whankangungua motuhaketia te Apiha Pirihimana Matauranga mo te mahi penei i te taha o te mahita.

Ma o koutou tautoko i nga mahi a a koutou tamariki i roto i te ruma ako, i te kainga hoki e puta ai te tino hua o aua mahi.

He inoi tenei na matau kia haere ake koutou ki t	etahi hui mo te iwi ka whaka	ıturia a te
o nga ra o te marama o	19	ki
Ka timata te hui i tetahi kapu ti a te	o nga haora. I tenei	hui ka rongo
koutou i nga korero mo te kaupapa Choice, a i	nga korero me pehea o kou	tou awhina i a
koutou tamariki		



#### Samoan

I se taimi o le masina o i luma o le a galulue fa'atasi ai le vaega o leoleo o lo'o latou a'ao'oina le tagofia o fuala'au o'ona ma inisi o au tamaiti mo le polokalame ua ta'ua o le **Choice**.

O le a'ano moni o lenei polokalame o le **Choice** a le fesoasoani atu lea i tupulaga laiti i le faia lea oni a latou lava fa'aiuga e fa'atatau i le latou fa'aaogaina o fuala'au o'ona atoa fo'i ma le tu'uina atu ia i latou o le atamai ma le iloa ona latou tauaveina o ia filifiliga.

O le polokalame o **Choice** o le a a'oa'oina lava e le faiaogo o lau tama i le a'oga fa'atasi ai ma le ali'i leoleo mo a'oa'oga o le a galulue fa'atasi i totonu o le potu a'oga. O le ali'i leoleo mo a'oa'oga ua uma ona a'oa'oina lkelei mo lea tulaga ina ia galulue fa'atasi ma le faiaoga i le a'oga i le fa'ataunu'uina o le polokalame.

Mo le gasolosolo manuia o lenei fa'amoemoe ua manatu ai ina ia e lagolago atu i lau tama mo aiga uma e faia i totonu o le potu a'oga atoia fo'i ma totonu o lou aiga.



#### **Sample Parent/Caregiver Consultation and Information Meeting**

The parent/caregiver meeting should be run by the school's health coordinator, assisted by the Police Education Officer. Other staff involved in the programme should be present.

#### 1 Welcome and introductions

#### 2 The need for drug education

Put parents and caregivers into small groups. Give each group a large sheet of paper and felt pens. They divide the paper in half. On one side they write a definition of 'Drugs'. On the other they write reasons why a drug education programme is important for Year 5-8 students.

Ask some groups to share their definitions. Show the definition from page 2. Ask groups to share reasons why drug education is important. Record these on the board. Talk about harm minimisation, and how **Choice** is designed to affirm students in non use of drugs (apart from medicines) and to help them make safe, sensible choices about their future use of drugs.

#### 3 The whole school approach

Ask parents and caregivers to brainstorm in small groups what role they think they can have in **Choice**. Invite groups to share this information.

Discuss the importance of the whole school approach (see page 9). Talk particularly about the importance of adults as positive role models and of children getting the same messages about drug use at home as at school.

#### 4 Programme overview

Show the overview of either the Year 5-6 or Year 7-8 **Choice** programme, as appropriate. Go over this and take questions. Either show and discuss the resources in the programme, or indicate a display of these set up in the room.

#### 5 Sample activity

Run a short activity from either the Year 5-6 or Year 7-8 programme, as appropriate.

Ask how parents and caregivers found the activity, and share success stories of the activity as done with students.

#### **Question and answer session**

#### 7 Wind up

Have refreshments and invite parents and caregivers to view the display and ask on- on-one questions of the school staff and/or Police Education Officer.



