

**STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HEALTH PERSONNEL THROUGH
AMPHETAMINE PREVENTION TEACHING LIFE SKILLS IN SCHOOLS :
A CASE STUDY IN PHANATNIKHOM DISTRICT**



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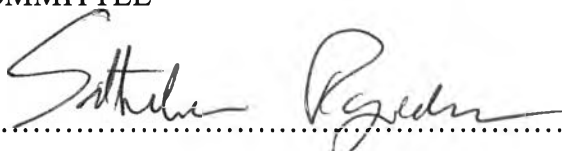
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This research studied the effectiveness of a capacity-building program for sub-district public-health personnel teaching junior-high-school students in Phanat Nikhom District, Chonburi Province, Thailand, to decline the use of amphetamines.

The study groups used in this investigation, selected by purposive sampling, consisted of 21 sub-district-level public-health personnel in public-health centers in Phanat Nikhom District, 2 classes of 1st-year junior-high-school students, and 1 class of 2nd-year junior-high-school students from 3 different schools, a total of 87 students. During the study, the group of sub-district-level public-health personnel underwent 5 days' theoretical training and 15 weeks' field practice with junior-high-school students in a life-skills training program focusing on interpersonal-relationship and communications skills. The study data were gathered by questionnaire and analyzed using arithmetic mean, standard deviation, percentage, and t-test.

The findings of the study were as follows:

1. The sub-district-level public-health personnel had acquired improved knowledge, understanding, and skills to become life-skills training instructors, with statistical significance (0.05). No statistical difference was found between pre- and post-training attitudes among these public-health personnel.

2. Post-training by the public-health personnel, the junior-high-school students had acquired improved knowledge and life-skills regarding interpersonal-relationship and communications skills, with statistical significance (0.05).

The study found that the public-health personnel had improved understanding and skills after the 5-day theoretical training and 15 weeks of hands-on field practice. The training clearly specified the behavioral criteria, so that the participants could comprehend the purposes of the practice quite well. However, in terms of attitudes, some media or activities should be included to promote genuine feelings among the public-health personnel. In addition, thinking and belief systems should be formed using group processes.

Regarding life skills and knowledge, the students had developed their knowledge very well after the 15 weeks' training, by using participative processes to generate understanding and hands-on practice. Therefore, the students understood the denial, negotiation, and friendly-warning stages of refusal to use amphetamines.

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