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An Introductory Explanation

What's the ABLÉ programme about?

Many demands are made on young people today. You are expected to do well, look good, be popular, get a job, be slim, be high achievers, be accepted by your friends and get on with adults. This is a large task. When there are also many decisions confronting you, it can be difficult to know which are the best choices to make.

The ABLÉ programme is designed to provide strategies that will enable you to feel that you have control over the choices you need to make. It allows you to make the decisions that you want rather than relying on others to make choices for you. ABLÉ provides you with strategies to enable you to make the best decisions.

There are eleven units which will be completed in eleven weeks. The first two units introduce two strategies – the Problem-

solving Process (PSP) and an assertiveness process (ASSIST) which help you deal with difficult situations. The programme also explores realistic situations in which you can practise the strategies using techniques such as role play and discussion.

Units three to ten examine various situations which you may confront. For example, how you react to situations such as going out instead of studying, or choosing to do something because it is popular. It is intended to allow you to discover more about yourself by seeing how you would best handle various situations.

The last unit is intended to look at the 'whole picture'. This unit draws together the issues explored in the other units and provides an opportunity to practise other situations which require the ASSIST and PSP processes.

Keeping a Journal

In order to reflect and think about difficult situations, you are asked to keep a journal. Writing down your thoughts is a useful way of thinking about and solving a problem. You do not have to write in your journal every day, although there may be times when you want to; however, it is important that you write in the journal.

Your journal will also provide useful information on ways you solve problems. It is not necessary to write down information that is confidential or personal, rather record information which tells about the situation, how you felt and thought about it, and how you handled (solved) it. Place the date at the

top of each entry. Your journal need not be read by others (namely your teacher) unless you wish it. However, it can be a useful way for your teacher to see the development of your processing. Constructive feedback may assist you in your problem solving.

Writing cues can be kept in front of you while you write your thoughts.

The writing cues are :

- a. Defining the situation
- b. Elaborating
- c. Handling the situation

Writing Cues

The following sentence starters will act as cues for your thinking. Select cues that reflect what you want to say.

Defining the situation:

I found myself needing to solve...

Today I was confronted with...

When I was at school/home today, I had to deal with...

I didn't know what to do so...

Elaborating:

The best way to deal with this is...

An example of this...

My own feelings about this are...

The reason I think...

Another way to put it would be...

I could develop this point by adding...

My reaction to this was...

In addition to this, I...

Furthermore, I/they/the...

Handling the situation:

I handled it by...

Another way I could deal with this would be...

I'm not very clear about what I just said so...

I could make my point clearer by...

Usually, I...

A whole new way to think about this is...

A different aspect would be...

A better way would be...

Next time I will...

My feeling about the way I handled this was...

My main point is...

I think I...

Essentially, I...

As a consequence, I...

Finally, I...

