

## **#RETHINKCANCER LESSON PLANS - TEACHER NOTES**

### **BACKGROUND TO #RETHINKCANCER CAMPAIGN**

One in three of us will receive a cancer diagnosis at some point in our lives. The outcome of this diagnosis is majorly impacted by our knowledge of the disease, its signs and symptoms and the habits we have developed that enable an early diagnosis. #RETHINKCANCER aims to introduce cancer awareness into schools, with the aim to:

- ensure that every young person has the opportunity to arm themselves with the knowledge and skills to ensure they have the best chance of surviving cancer now and in the future.
- enable teachers by training them, providing them with the skills and knowledge to teach young people about cancer.
- commit to providing young people and teachers with the protected time within the school curriculum to learn and develop life-saving habits.

The best opportunity to educate and influence young people in order to help prevent them from late cancer diagnosis, is to inform them early and help them develop healthy habits. Schools are already delivering lessons and advice, therefore by working with them we can reach and work with young people to increase their awareness effectively.

### **PILOT PROGRAMME**

The way we have done this is to put young people and their teachers in the centre and work with them to develop the best ways to learn and develop these habits. Too often adults tell young people what we think they need to know, we have decided to give information to young people and let them decide what they want to know, what works and how they should best receive this information.

We worked with the sixth form students at Riddlesdown Collegiate in South London to form lessons plans about cancer awareness, which were designed with input from pupils in year 9. We then used the Teenage Cancer Measure to test the baseline knowledge of two year 9 classes that had not been involved in the planning stages, measuring their awareness before and after the designed lesson plans had been carried out by teachers. The results showed that both awareness of signs and symptoms and risk factors had increased by 8%, along with a 10% increase in conversations about cancer taking place outside of the classroom. We still have plenty of work to do but it proved that teaching cancer awareness can have an effect on increasing young people's knowledge and changing their behaviours.

### **LESSON PLAN DESIGNS**

The pupils of Riddlesdown collegiate decided to use a menu structure to plan each lesson. This included a starter, to introduce the topic, a main activity to increase awareness and a dessert activity to summarise the points raised in the lesson. The students used resources that were accessible to them and therefore this may vary depending on the school. The lesson plans should be viewed as a guide and interpreted by the teacher, how they see fit. The students at Riddlesdown have designed two lesson plans, which appeal to both creative classes and students who prefer to take a more academic approach.