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Drug use and gambling have been a part of human societies, likely from the very beginning. Drugs have been used to enhance, moderate or mitigate subjective experience in religious ceremonies, as treatment for pain and illness, for relaxation, and to feel good. Gambling too has accompanied us on the human journey, providing excitement, fun and an opportunity to know the will of the gods or defy chance. While drugs and gambling provide benefits, they can also impair or harm us. Even with millennia of experience, we struggle to find the harmony in these parts of our lives.

One modern response to this challenge has been to turn to schools to address the issues. The explicit or implied goal has usually been to prevent, delay or change drug use behaviour or gambling activity. The approach has been largely didactic, giving information to young people, assuming that such knowledge will translate into the desired changes. These attempts have demonstrated little ability to foster behavioural change (Drug & Alcohol Findings, 2016) leading many reviewers to conclude that drug education is not effective. Some have even questioned whether it is ethical to tell others how we think they should live except where their behaviours infringe on the rights of others (Buchanan, 2006; Jensen, 2000).

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1. What is the goal of health education?
2. What do current valuations of drug and gambling education tell us?
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programs is scant at best, available evidence suggests that the few evaluated programs that incorporated a social ecological approach show promising results (Hansen, 1992, cf. 1997; Kiely & Egan, 2000).

Programs that only provide information, address values or teach skills have been shown to have little or no effect on drug use (Kiely & Egan, 2000; Paglia & Room, 1999). This may be in part because, "the decision to use drugs in a given situation derives from many factors not just a general belief system regarding drug use" (Kiely & Egan, 2000, p.34). Programs aimed at social influences such as media and friends, have had some effect on attitudes, though this does not usually impact actual drug use (Roona, Streke, Ochshorn, Marshall, & Palmer, 2000). Programs that focused on risk and risk factors produce little or no change in attitude or behaviour, with some programs even found to be harmful to youth (Brown, Jean-Marie, & Beck, 2010). Such programs may also perpetuate stigma and discrimination against people who use drugs (Kiely & Egan, 2000, p.45-46).

A health promoting schools program takes a social ecological approach. Based on democratic principles, and inclusion of students, teachers, family and community, this approach is aimed at increasing students' ability to make healthy decisions for themselves and their communities. Evidence indicates that a health promoting schools approach can contribute significantly to a positive school environment and young people's educational experiences (Barnekow et al., 2006). Within this social ecological approach the uniqueness of each individual is acknowledged as are the many social and structural factors that influence the phenomenological reality of individuals and communities. Within this complex reality, health education must be investigative rather than indoctrinating, and focus on healthy development and wellbeing rather than specific behaviours (Mallick & Watts, 2007; Warren, 2016).

Few school-based gambling education programs have been evaluated. Most programs are similar to traditional drug education programs, focusing on individual cognitive skill

development including gaining knowledge and examining attitudes toward gambling as a means to change behaviour. A recent review found effects on knowledge, perceptions and beliefs in all nineteen included studies (Keen, Blaszczyński, & Anjou, 2017). While these studies reported significant changes in gambling behaviour, there were important methodological problems with these studies. Even reported cognitive changes may have been due to recency effect as evaluation often took place within a few months of program completion. More research and evaluation is needed to draw clear conclusions from the evidence accumulated to this point.

What can we gather from the available evidence? A comprehensive social ecological approach focused on health promotion is needed (Barnekow et al., 2006; Buchanan, 2006; Gandhi, Murphy-Graham, Petrosino, Chrismer, & Weiss, 2007; Hansen, 1992; Minkler, 1989; Stead & Angus, 2004; Warren, 2016). Many of the personal and social development components identified in individual-behaviour-focused studies can be incorporated in a comprehensive approach. However, the focus in social ecological approaches is on developing resilience (the capacity to maintain and regain functional balance amidst complex challenges) rather than reducing drug use per se (Abbott, 2014; Brown et al., 2010; Hodder et al., 2017; Ungar, Russell, & Connelly, 2014). Resilience provides an individual the capacity to negotiate well-being within their ecological systems and mitigate any negative influence of those systems (Christens & Peterson,

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and wellbeing through good decision-making, and thereby mitigate potential risks of drug use. As potential harmful consequences from gambling often parallel, across cultural differences, those from drug use (Mooss & Zorlanf, 2014; Raylu & Oei, 2004), evidence regarding effective drug education is likely also to apply to gambling education.

A discussion of theory and evidence

Why evaluate? Most often we evaluate because we have questions about the usefulness or appropriateness of an approach, program or policy. We might also have questions about how we could improve our current practices. The way we frame those questions is determined, to a large degree, by our goals, assumption, beliefs and theories about human knowledge, behaviour and freedom.

If we have predetermined a desired behavioural outcome for our approach, program or policy and our goal is to measure the impact toward that outcome, we might frame questions such as:

- Does the program have its intended effect, and how well

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the capacity of individuals and communities to critically assess options, make reasoned choices and take actions that are likely to advance their own desired outcomes or goals in the context of their communities.

The predetermined behavioural outcome approach also assumes a positivist paradigm in which we can postulate logical chains from assessed need to intervention to outcome which we can then test through implementation and evaluation. The thinking goes something like this ... if young people are behaving in risky ways, and we provide certain information, then youth will change the way they think about drug use or gambling, and this, in turn, will lead to behaviour change. This pattern is based on the scientific method applied to the physical world governed by universal laws. However, in the human world, the links between information, beliefs and

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A social ecological approach to health education sits comfortably within a social constructivist epistemology and worldview (Gorman & Huber, 2009; Khanlou & Wray, 2014; Lancaster, 2014; Schwandt, 2001). In this view, knowledge is built on the experiences and meaning-making reflections of individuals in dialogue with others and is highly contextualized (Khanlou & Wray, 2014; Lancaster, 2014). Such understandings require a significantly different approach to education “means” and “ends” than programs built on positivist thinking. Outcomes (ends) in a social ecological approach to health education have less to do with the subsequent behaviour of actors than with the experience of actors within the learning environment. Students become more engaged in their education when they feel they belong and are valued in the school community, and when they are empowered to employ their individual and collective agency (Bowles & Scull, 2018; Collins, Hess, & Lowery, 2019). Interestingly, school connection has been shown to positively influence student development and reduce problems related to drug use and many other issues (Bowles & Scull, 2018). Nonetheless, evaluation of a social ecological approach needs to focus on the relational dynamics and the ability to engage students in active learning.

Finally, the evaluation needs to collect and present relevant evidence related to the goal of the program and the purpose of the evaluation. In a social ecological approach, this evidence should focus on the values, perceptions, beliefs, experiences and relationships of actors since these are critical to nurturing connection and learning (Khanlou & Wray, 2014; Lancaster, 2014; Pawson, Greenhalgh, Harvey, & Walshe, 2005). Collecting this kind of evidence involves observation but also requires “a combination of reasoning, reflection and informal experience” rather than controlled experimentation (Barrow in Barrow & Foreman-Peck, 2005, p. 29). What is relevant, to some extent, depends on who the evaluation is meant to help, e.g., teachers, students, administrators, or community members.

The task of evaluation is still to articulate the value of the approach, program or policy intervention. However, in this view, value is not defined through documenting a string of causes and effects related to a predetermined outcome because

... the value of a program is “almost entirely constructed by people through their conceptions, choices, and judgments.” It is therefore the task of the evaluator to capture those ways of perceiving quality and to offer a holistic portrayal of this complex understanding of overall value in such a way that it is accessible to the immediate stakeholders in a program (Schwandt, 2015, p. 61).

This same point had been made earlier by Robert Stake:

A work of art has no single true value. A program has no single true value. Yet both have value. The value of an art-in-education program will be different for different people, for different purposes. ... Whatever consensus in values there is ... should be discovered. The evaluator should not create a consensus that does not exist (cited in Abma & Stake, 2001, pp. 8–9)

Within this approach, the questions used to assess value might include:

The *iMinds* exemplar

Each educator has a philosophy that guides their teaching, whether they are aware of it or not. Beliefs about the education process – ideas about how students learn and helpful and unhelpful teaching strategies – merge with the teacher's own learning and teaching experiences to guide classroom activities. Every educational program also assumes a particular philosophy of education even though these are often not explicitly articulated. The following offers a summary of the philosophy of education that underpins the development of the *iMinds* K-12 learning resources in support of effective drug and gambling education (for a more complete discussion see Reist & Asgari, 2019). Evaluation of the *iMinds* approach needs to focus on its goal of nurturing students' capacity for agency and responsible action within their social and political environments, and not on conformity to some predetermined behavioural goal.

As a phenomenological approach to drug and gambling education, *iMinds* is grounded in a philosophical tradition that sees the individual as essentially embedded *in the world*. For human beings, to be at all is to *be in the world*. This embeddedness in the world has significant implications for education. First it challenges our distinction between inner

subjective experiences and external objective facts. Students' perceptions and ideas about the world, and others within that world, are always shaped by their own prior experiences of being part of the world – there is no “correct angle for observation” or “impartial spectator” (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, pp. 19, 15). Second, thinking is not some abstract activity. We learn how to think about what we already find ourselves seeing, hearing, grasping: “a child perceives before he thinks” (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 11). Learning is therefore not simply a cognitive activity of subject (knower) to object (known) but a way of engaging that involves our whole being (Taylor, 1989). Third, being in the world is always being in relation to others, being part of a social ecosystem. Gert Biesta suggests the goal of education is to “arouse the desire in another human being for wanting to exist in the world as subject” without “putting oneself in the centre of the world.” He characterizes this as existing as subject in “a grown-up way.”¹ This requires “education that is neither child-centred nor curriculum-centred but might best be characterized as world-centred” (2017, pp. 420, 430). The teacher's role is thus to craft situations within a social context in which rich encounters can take place (Dewey, 1916/2016, Chapter 4), “to speak in such a

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nurture, with particular reference to drug use and gambling, “lifelong practitioners of critical literacy who question and transform social injustice in our world fulfilling the promise of Dewey’s purpose for education—democracy” (Gregory & Cahill, 2009, p. 8). Critical literacy provides students “a way of thinking beyond the present, . . . entering into a critical dialogue with history, and imagining a future that would not merely reproduce the present” (Giroux, 2010, p. 716; cf. Shannon, 1995). This means that students must be able to access, reflect on and understand the human experience with drugs and gambling and make choices about how to manage them in their individual lives and in the human communities they are building with others. Noah De Lissovoy says, “Critical education takes the settled facts and truths of conventional education (and history itself) and proposes them to students as objects to be investigated” rather than as givens simply to be accepted (2008, p. 25). This means that educators must assist students in obtaining the skills and abilities that will help them discern the value of the information and social structures they inherit in various ways. Reading, writing and speaking skills are all part of the learning process, which can contribute to personal and social transformation (Freire, 1970). *iMinds* seeks to help teachers help young people to think, examine, ask questions, make sense of and act on drug use and gambling phenomena and information they encounter in their life-world.

Some education focuses on the transmission of information from teacher to student rather than nurturing the ability to reflect on the goals, values and purposes of action – emphasis on the *what* without considering the *why*. Along with this, there is a tendency to see knowledge as awareness of simple cause and effect relationships. This approach to education encourages the students to acquire and internalize enough facts to insert themselves into the preexisting order. In other words, in this approach, education is socialization (Biesta, 2006, pp. 1–11).

Phenomenologists challenge the very idea that knowledge exists simply as knowledge on its own – something that can be acquired by one person and provided directly to another. Knowledge is always formed in the context of experiences with the world and requires the learners to consider where they stand relative to the facts presented (Biesta, 2006; Dewey, 1916/2016; Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012). This requires giving at least as much attention to the *why* as to the *what* and to the relational dynamics involved. Biesta argues,

Instead of seeing learning as an attempt to acquire, to master, to internalize, or any other possessive metaphors we can think of, we might see learning as a reaction to a disturbance, as an attempt to reorganize and reintegrate as a result of disintegration. We might look at learning as a response to what is other and different, to what challenges, irritates, or even disturbs us, rather than as the acquisition of something we want to possess. . . . the second conception of learning is *educationally* the more significant, if it is conceded that education is not just about the transmission of knowledge, skills, and values, but is concerned with the individuality, subjectivity, or personhood of the student, with their “coming into the world” as unique, singular beings.

While learning as acquisition is about getting more and more, learning as responding is about showing who you are and where you stand. Coming into the world is not something individuals can do on their own. This is first of all for the obvious reason that in order to come into the world one needs a world, and this world is a world inhabited by others who are not like us (2006, p. 27; cf. Gadamer, 1960/2013, Chapter 4; Taylor, 1994).

iMinds adopts the “learning as responding” approach and seeks to help students learn how to live in the world where drug use and gambling are common phenomena. This requires developing their resilience and their capacity to

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viewed from many points, letting new understanding emerge. Teachers can gently push students to explore further and generate more questions. The path to understanding contains doubt, perhaps fear and risk. Yet, with teacher support, students can journey this path and open new vistas for investigation (Biesta, 2006, pp. 24–30).

is a powerful pedagogical tool that draws on the human tendency to organize reality by telling stories. Unlike the scientific mode that focuses on logical argument or empirical testing, narrative focuses on human intentions and the particulars of experience (what and why) as well as the context in which actions take place (where and when). The analysis of stories allows the student “to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person’s story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have” (Nussbaum, cited in Rutten & Soetaert, 2013, p. 5). Narrative is also central to building identity, or the telling of one’s own story. “The narrative of any one life is part of an interlocking set of narratives. . . . the story of my life is always embedded in the story of those communities from which I derive my identity” (MacIntyre, 1984, pp. 218–221; cf. Rorty, 2010; Taylor, 1994). *iMinds* makes liberal use of narrative to encourage the exploration of this intersubjectivity as students confront issues related to drug use and gambling.

, according to Hans-Georg Gadamer, is their ability to speak to us “as if there were no distance at all between us and the work and as if every encounter with it were an encounter with ourselves” (2007, p. 124). Art has an ability to break “through the mundane, the ordinary, and embeddp(erui.9 (inand asw[(es]TJsraltiv)7 (it)-11)1gauedanem) students (embedddo t)of s and the ww vistas stoch tw vistas 2622wa0 (, t can abil (T)4 (he (Huiz ta11 (38/1949e and when).)42valuliberome0; T)ful pedagonderstand icali(ont issuey t r)11 (l)erlon)tieshT[(chr)1ome0 m-

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A framework for phenomenological evaluation of drug and gambling education

The question remaining is, what would be a useful approach to evaluating phenomenologically based drug or gambling education rooted in a social ecological understanding? Earlier we suggested some general questions that might be useful in such an evaluation.

- Is the program engaging? For whom? Which students and teachers find it interesting?
- Does the program encourage participants to critically reflect and construct meaning for experiences and events in their life-worlds? How?
- Does the program involve participants in co-constructing meanings through critical, creative, caring, and collaborative thinking?
- How might we improve the program to increase its value along these lines?

We have also identified three critical considerations for useful evaluation: the purpose of the approach, program or policy evaluated; the theoretical foundation that guides the activities in pursuit of the goal; and the collection and presentation of appropriate evidence. The purpose and theoretical foundation must be clearly articulated and used to guide the evaluation questions (Schwandt, 2001b). Beyond that, the evaluation needs to determine how well the purpose and theory are reflected throughout the implementation of the approach, program or policy. A further consideration, noted above, relates to whose questions the evaluation is designed to answer. Teachers and other educators might be most interested in how to improve their educational practice, whereas funders or administrators may be more interested in the value of the program relative to development or implementation costs. Each evaluation is different and the

evaluator must take the “right action in consideration of *this* situation, with *these* people, at *this* time and place, in *this* set of conditions” (Schwandt, 2015, p. 44).

Most evaluation, based on a positivist model, depends almost exclusively on data about aspects of behaviour change (Micari, Light, Calkins, & Streitwieser, 2007). However, as Paul Ramsden argues, in a phenomenological approach, learning is not necessarily reflected in a change in behaviour, but rather in a change in how people “understand, or experience, or conceptualize the world around them” (cited in Micari et al., 2007, p. 459). Understanding that evaluation should be situated in lived experience, Stake (2004) developed an approach he calls responsive evaluation.²

Responsive evaluation focuses on understanding what is happening within a program in a particular context. It is interested in how actors within that context define value and how they interpret the utility of the program in advancing that value. Responsive evaluation does not begin by setting out *a priori* outcome criteria. It recognizes “that one is dealing with situations that are lived, embodied experiences, and performed” (Stake, 2004, p. 93). As a result, stakeholders actively participate in the evaluation, and the evaluator probes to understand not just their opinions but their experiences (perceptions, feelings, learnings). The evaluator approaches the task of evaluation with as few preconceptions as possible – much like Husserl’s description of the phenomenological philosopher as a “perpetual beginner” (unpublished material cited by Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2012). Stakeholders are engaged in forming questions, identifying participants and interpreting findings (Abma, 2006).

2 In developing “responsive evaluation,” Stake widened the scope of evaluation beyond assessing effectiveness to address a broad range of stakeholder concerns. Others have developed this further to emphasize negotiation among stakeholders in a participatory and transformative process (Abma, 2006). This approach to evaluation is sometimes referred to as “fourth generation evaluation” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), “dialogic evaluation” (Schwandt, 2001c) or “interactive evaluation” (Abma & Widdershoven, 2011).

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Responsive evaluation is a holistic approach to evaluation. The program being evaluated is not regarded as a means to a specific end but as a *practice*. People are not seen as independent individuals but as social beings who depend on one another (Abma, 2006). Within the social ecological context of the shared *practice*, stakeholders may have different (even conflicting) values, and the program may have different meanings for various participants. Responsive evaluation seeks to capture the *diversity* of stakeholder values, perceptions, interpretations, insights and meanings, not just the commonalities.

Dialogue is central to the process of responsive evaluation. Dialogue involves listening and questioning as well as a

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evaluation depends more on an emerging sense of what Barrow calls “reasonableness”³ (Barrow, 2019, pp. 151–152).

Within the four-step process described above, evaluation of phenomenologically based drug and gambling education such as *iMinds* needs to explore the values, perceptions, beliefs, experiences and relationships of the various stakeholders (students, teachers, administrators, parents and others). The questions used in this exploration will need to consider

1. The purpose of the evaluation (e.g., improving teaching practice of educators, improving experience and learning for students, etc.),
2. The different elements of the process (e.g., educator training, classroom experience, parent and community connections, etc.) and
3. Both the theoretical foundations and phenomenological value of the approach (i.e., to what extent do stakeholders understand and support the approach and how do they assess its value in nurturing the capacity for well-being in students).

Using this framework and drawing on examples of responsive evaluation questions, we can now expand on the list of questions suggested above. In the following, we offer examples of questions for evaluations serving the needs of both educators and students. Of course, these questions are only sample starter questions. Specific questions will need to be generated for each evaluation, and new questions will arise throughout the process of any responsive evaluation.

1. An evaluation serving the needs of **educators** might address the following.
 - Educator training
 - How have teachers' views of the goal of drug and gambling education been influenced by *iMinds*-related professional learning materials or workshops?
 - How comfortable are teachers in facilitating dialogue about topics related to drugs and gambling? What contributes to that level of comfort? What would help teachers be more comfortable?

³ Barrow's notion of “reasonableness” is seen in the development of thoughtful social conventions that allow us to understand each other. These conventions are not empirically based, nor are they dictated by logic (i.e., they could be different), but they make sense and they work. In this sense, Barrow's “reasonableness” is much like Habermas' notion of “communicative reason” – the rational potential built into everyday speech (1984).

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- An evaluation serving the needs of **all** might address the following.
 - Engagement of students
 - What is the reaction of students to a non-directive approach to discussing drugs and gambling? Give examples.
 - To what degree are students able to consider diverse views and respectfully engage with others?
 - To what degree are students engaging in meaningful conversations about drugs and gambling as a result of *iMinds* related lessons?
 - What contributes to this level of engagement or lack of engagement?
 - Utility in managing life and well-being
 - Are students challenged to examine the factors that influence the way they think, feel or behave related to drugs and gambling? Can you provide examples?
 - Do students engage in critical and collaborative processes to examine beliefs, attitudes and behaviours related to drugs and gambling? Can you provide examples?
 - To what degree do students demonstrate ability to recognize implications from the drugs and gambling discourse for life in the world? Give examples.
 - What pedagogical strategies are most useful in helping to bridge classroom discourse and life in the world?

Conclusion

The capacity to think for oneself and develop critical judgement and self-understanding in a context of mutual respect and

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by trying to measure knowledge of certain facts. Nor can it be assessed by recording compliance to a pre-determined behaviour such as non-engagement in drug use or gambling. Meaningful evaluation must explore the extent to which the approach builds the capacity of students to engage in responsible citizenship relative to social issues such as drug use and gambling.

In this paper, we suggested that an interactive or responsive approach to evaluation may be most useful for assessing drug and gambling education. Both our recommended approach to health education, and responsive evaluation, recognize the complexity of the relationship of individuals within their social and physical environments. Both draw on phenomenological insights and a hermeneutical understanding of dialogue. As such, they mesh, theoretically, and in practice. We have also mapped out a general approach for conducting such a responsive evaluation for drug and gambling education. We believe this offers a beginning place from which to develop a new way of assessing health education.

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