

The Young People's Substance Misuse Service



Young people are not adults and therefore services designed for them must be child centred. If a young person is showing signs of misusing substances, it is likely that he or she will have several other issues in his or her life, for example:

- Being homeless
- Poor or inappropriate accommodation
- Domestic or family problems
- Problems in school or at work eg bullying or harassment
- Sexual health worries or unplanned pregnancy
- Feelings of not coping or not fitting in
- Being hungry and having no money

When a young person presents at one of our services, they may not recognise themselves as having substance misuse problems, although substance misuse may be at the root of their homelessness, family breakdown or offending behaviour. This is why skillful assessment is crucial.

Young people are still growing and developing physically and psychologically and are less likely to have an established chronic physical or psychological dependency on a substance. The emphasis of the young people's substance misuse service therefore is on early intervention and addressing all the needs of the young person

“to prevent today's young people from becoming tomorrow's problematic drug users.” (National Drugs Strategy Young People's Outcomes)

Funding for substance services for young people comes to local partnerships in a single yearly grant, the young persons substance misuse grant. Currently there are a number of key substance related services which must be provided from the grant including clinical services, education and prevention and work in the youth offending team. The services are commissioned by the Drug Action Team on behalf of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, and monitored on their behalf by the Youth Board.

The structure of the service in Southampton forms a triangle, with specialist clinical services at the very top and generic universal services at the very bottom. In the middle is a raft of services trained to a high level in substance issues as they affect young people. The multi agency Drug Action Team is part of Southampton Safe City Partnership. The DAT support team is part of Southampton City Council's Community Safety Service.

The updated National Drug Strategy and the "Every Child Matters" outcome "be healthy" aim, both use the term "drugs" which refers to controlled drugs within the meaning of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. **Reducing the use of these drugs by children and young people will often involve broader education, assessment and intervention covering a wider range of substances, including alcohol and volatile substances.** Early use of these substances is a recognised risk factor for problem drug use in later life.

TIER 3

Specialist clinical treatment for under 18s with significant substance misuse problems is provided by Southampton E's Up. As well as designing packages of care for the most chaotic young people with alcohol or drugs issues, the service can arrange substitute prescribing and detoxification and will work with a young person on harm reduction and more managed drinking or drug taking. An aftercare co-ordinator puts together specialist packages of ongoing support for young people when their clinical treatment has finished. Southampton E's Up also provides clinical supervision and support for all the city's Tier 2 young people substance specialists and administers the city's Young People's Drug and Alcohol Reference Group. Southampton E's Up is also the Tier 3 service for the city's "Transition Service" for 18-25s who are assessed as more likely to benefit from a "child centred" service than an adult service. Referrals to Southampton E's Up can be made only through a Tier 2 substance specialist.

No Limits is an independent voluntary organisation which provides a range of drop-in and outreach services including open access substance misuse services offering information, advice and counselling support for young people from 13-18 years old. No Limits workers form the bulk of young peoples Tier 2 substance services in the city. No Limits also provides the city's Transition Service, for young people from 18-25 with substance issues.

Named Substance Worker in Youth Offending Team carries out further substance screening of YOT clients who score 3 or 4 on the ASSET tool

Saucepans is a project with multi disciplinary teams working under the auspices of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to work principally with young people with emotional and behavioural problems. Saucepans will also work with whole families where this is appropriate. Saucepans is also the city's Youth Inclusion and Support Project (YISP) for young people at risk of offending.

Support Staff including education welfare officers and special schools staff, looked after children's nurse and nominated foster carers and YMCA housing staff.

Social Inclusion Projects including:

- Baseline: Supports young people in the city centre who are at risk of offending or exclusion.
- Impact Project in Thornhill: Supports young people between 8-17 years old who are at risk of exclusion or offending in the Thornhill area of the city.
- Fairbridge: A national charity offering personal development programmes for disadvantaged and disaffected young people aged 13-25.
- Barnardos Young Womens Project, for young people injured through sexual exploitation.

TIER 2

There is a range of generic young people's services in the city with nominated staff trained as Tier 2 substance specialists and who receive regular clinical supervision from Southampton E's Up. This means that not only can they give advice and information about substances including legal and illegal drugs, alcohol and solvents, but they can screen for substance misuse and provide short term interventions and 1:1 counselling support. Thereafter if necessary, they can refer on to more specialist organisations like Southampton E's Up, according to individual need.

Schools
Including Healthy Schools Co-ordinator and PSHE Co-ordinator, PSHE and nominated specialist teachers and assistants.

TIER 1

Many front line workers who work with and around young people across a range of agencies in the city are given basic training in drugs and drugs awareness and are able to provide information and advice to young people who are either using or considering using substances. These Tier1 workers include youth workers, project and outreach workers, Connexions PAs and foster carers. All of these know how to signpost a young person into the Tier 2 service.

Connexions PAs

Behaviour Resource Centre Workers

Foster Carers

Youth & Family Project Workers

Children and Families Workers

Positive Futures
Positive Futures and other Social Inclusion Projects.

Supported Housing Providers

School Nurses