Merton Young Person’s Substance Misuse Integrated Model

Young person talks about using substances or concerns are raised about a young person’s use of substances.

Key questions to consider

- Has a parent expressed concern about a child or young person’s risky behaviour?
- Has the young person presenting as if under the influence of substances? e.g. loud, red eyes, lack of balance, agitated, giggling, risky behaviour.
- Is the young person requesting information or advice on substance misuse for themselves or another person or family member?
- Are there concerns about a young person’s attendance concentration, punctuality?
- Has there been a breakdown in the family placement? (LAC, 14+)
- Has there been risky behaviour as a result of substance use? e.g. drinking/baking drugs in an unsafe place – park, unsupervised party in a house, visiting a house for the purpose to use substances, risky sexual behaviour, injury.
- Have you had a report including from A & E detailing substance misuse?
- If the answer is YES to any of the questions above complete CASA to give holistic view of young person’s life and family context and refer to Catch22. Where there are safeguarding concerns refer direct to MASH merton.gov.uk/mash Tel: 020 8545 4227/020 8770 5000 (out of hours) Email: mash@merton.gov.uk

Suggested appropriate response

Universal response
- Provide harm prevention messages to provoke thought/pre-contemplation.
- Provide information and advice on substance misuse and related behaviours e.g. sexual health.
- Talk through an information leaflet.
- Refer to FRANK 0800 776600 www.talktofrank.com or www.gettington.org.uk
- No need to refer on but contact Catch22 for advice if required 020 3701 8641.

Occasional/infrequent use
- Occasional experimentation with substances (aged 15+).
- No family history of substance misuse.
- First time use of substances (14+).
- Has resilience factors e.g. supportive family environment, social support system, is in education, employment/training, has positive self esteem, has a caring relationship with at least one adult.

Frequent/regular use
- Frequent, regular pattern of substance misuse e.g. using for parties, in trouble with the police.
- Experimentation with substances aged 13 to 14.
- At risk of exploitation due to substance misuse.
- Family history of substance misuse.
- Has more risk factors, e.g. belongs to a vulnerable group, LAC, mental health problems, NEET, homeless, young offender, young sex worker, is pregnant.
- Parental substance misuse influencing young persons’ use.

Targeted response
- Where risky sexual behaviour is identified refer to Checkitout services www.gettington.org.uk
- Concerns regarding sexualised behaviour contact Barnardos 020 8688 1079 or young runaways – Jigsaw4u 020 8687 1384.
- Consider other targeted services e.g. Transforming families, My futures, Young Carers.

Specialist response
- As in targeted response plus:
  - Follow safeguarding procedures: MASH merton.gov.uk/mash Tel: 020 8545 4227/ 020 8770 5000 (out of hours)
  - Email: mash@merton.gov.uk

Harmful use
- Experiencing high level of harm through use of substances.
- Experimentation with substances aged under 13.
- Young person injecting.
- Substance misuse exacerbating existing complex needs.
- Uncontrolled use and/or physical psychological dependency on substances.
- Involvement in drug dealing/exploitation by dealers.
- Has high level risk factors, e.g. belongs to a vulnerable group, LAC, mental health problems, NEET, homeless, young offender, young sex worker, is pregnant, homeless.
- Parental substance misuse is preventing ability to parent.

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Has there been a breakdown in the family placement? (LAC, 14+)?
- Has an offence occurred in relation to substance misuse, or young person discloses moving substances around? e.g. possession or supply, driving, stealing.
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