

Health risks

- If drugs and/or injecting equipment are kept on the premises are they kept securely? Is alcohol available or kept securely?
- Are the children aware of where the drugs/alcohol are kept?
- If parents are intravenous drug users: - Do they share injecting equipment? Do they use a needle exchange scheme? How do they dispose of syringes? Are parents aware of the health risks or injecting or using drugs?
- If parents are on a substitute-prescribing programme, such as children methadone: - Are parents aware of the dangers of accessing this medication? Do they take adequate precautions to ensure this does not happen?
- Are parents aware of, and in touch with, local agencies who can advise on such issues such as needle exchange, substitute prescribing programmes, detox and rehabilitation facilities, safe levels of drinking- cutting down, controlling? If they are in touch with agencies, how regular is the contact?

Family social network and support systems

- Do parents and children associate primarily with: - Other drug users /alcohol drinkers? Non-drug users/alcohol drinkers? Both?
- Are relatives/friends aware of the drug/alcohol use? Are they supportive? Do they assist in times of crisis?
- Will parents accept help from the relatives and other professional or non-statutory agencies?
- Do the children have their own network e.g. friends, activities outside school?

Contacts

Community Drug and Alcohol Team

Tel 8549 9279
FAX 8546 8589

Drop In Service

Acre Rd Clinic Chessington CAB
Mon 2.00 – 4.00 pm Elm Rd, Chessington
Thurs 10.00 am – Noon Wed (for times contact CDAT)

Alcohol Services Kingston and Richmond Tel 8339 9899
FAX 8399 5639

Kaleidoscope

Tel 8549 2681
FAX 8547 0228

Family Support Teams

Alpha Road Children's Resource Centre Tel 8547 6242
FAX 8390 6805

Beaconsfield Children's Resource Centre Tel 8547 6591
FAX 8336 0647

Team for Disabled Children Tel 8547 6569
FAX 8336 0647

Community Mental Health Teams

New Malden Tel 8336 2848
FAX 8336 2839

Kingston Tel 8547 4733
FAX 8547 6076

Surbiton Tel 8390 8161
FAX 8339 9343

Educational Welfare

Tel 8547 5264
FAX 8547 5235
Tel 8546 7711

Kingston Hospital

Kingston CAMHS

(Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) Tel 8390 8151
FAX 8390 4754

Probation

Tel 8977 0133
FAX 8943 3467

Magic Roundabout

Homestart

Welcare

Kingston Carers Network

(Young Carers Worker)

Tel 8947 9252
Tel 8296 0654
Tel 8546 3258
Tel 8547 1614

Parental Substance Misuse

An Inter-agency Protocol

Assessment Guidelines

For all agencies/professionals



These questions may be helpful to all agencies and professionals in gathering information to assess the impact of parental substance misuse on the child/ren and the family.

Children and Families Teams and the Community Drug and Alcohol Team are able to offer joint assessments of families where there are concerns about the affect of parental substance misuse on the family. They will then work with the family and / or refer to other specialist agencies -see contact tel nos. Alternatively refer directly to other agencies .

Parental drug/alcohol use

- Who is using drugs/alcohol? One or both parents? Is there a drug/alcohol free parent, supportive partner or relative?
- Is the drug/alcohol use by the parent – Experimental? Recreational? Chaotic? Dependent?
- Is the quality of childcare different when a parent is using drugs/ drinking alcohol and when not?
- Is there any evidence of coexistence of mental health problems alongside the drug/alcohol use? If there is, do the drugs/alcohol cause these problems, or have these problems led to the drug/alcohol use?
- Does the parent have any health problems?

Children's and Parent's perceptions about the situation

- What does the child/ren know or understand about the parental use of drugs/alcohol?
- Does the child/ren need support to understand the consequences of parental drug/alcohol misuse?

- Is there domestic violence in the family? If so how what is being done about it?
- Do the parents acknowledge the substance misuse?
- Do parents place their own needs before the needs of their child/ren?
- Do they see it as harmful to themselves or their child?
- Have any attempts been made to address the drug/alcohol use? What helped/didn't help?
- Are the parents aware of the legislation and procedural context applying to their circumstances (e.g. child protection procedures, statutory powers)?

Provision of the child/ren's basic needs

- Is the child meeting growth and developmental milestones?
- Are the children engaged in age-appropriate activities?
- Is there adequate food, clothing and warmth for the children?
- Are the children attending school regularly? Are there other school related issues such as changes in behaviour or achievement, bullying?
- Are the child's emotional needs being adequately met?
- Are there any indications that any of the children are taking on a parenting role within the family (e.g. caring for other children, excessive household responsibilities etc)?
- What is the relationship like between the parent/s and the child/ren?
- Does a child/ren use drugs/alcohol, do the parents know?
- Are the children left alone? How frequently? Left with appropriate carers?

Accommodation and the home environment

- Is the accommodation adequate for children? Is it secure?
- Are the parents ensuring that the rent and bills are paid?
- Does the family remain in one area or move frequently, if the latter, why?
- Are other drug users /drinkers sharing the accommodation? If they are, are relationships with them harmonious, or is there conflict?
- Is the family living in a drug/alcohol using community?
- If parents are using drugs/alcohol, do children witness the taking of the drugs/alcohol, see parents intoxicated by alcohol, or other substances?
- Could other aspects of drug use constitute a risk to children (e.g. conflict with or between dealers, exposure to criminal activities related to drug use)? Exposure to criminal activity (drink driving), witnessing violence or aggression linked with alcohol use?.

Procurement of drugs/alcohol

- Because of their parent's drug use are the children being taken to places where they could be "at risk"?
- How much are the drugs/alcohol costing? How is the money obtained? Is this causing financial problems
- Are the premises being used to sell drugs? Are the parents allowing their premises to be used by other drug users / heavy drinkers?
- Are there any legal proceedings?

