

str8 UP

**Young Persons Drug
and Alcohol Service**

**Are you
Worried That Your
Child is Using Drugs?
A leaflet for Parents and Carers**

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This leaflet has been designed to inform parents and carers about the support that is available from Str8 Up Young Persons Drug and Alcohol Service.



Who are Str8 Up?

Str8 Up is a Young Persons Drug and Alcohol service that provides a confidential service to anyone under the age of 18 that is using drugs, alcohol or volatile substances. The service is available to any young person living within the borough of Solihull or attending a Solihull school.

How will Str8 Up support my child?

Each young person that receives support from Str8 Up has an allocated substance misuse worker. Initially the worker will complete an assessment to identify the needs of your child and then, with the young person, will complete a care plan. The care plan is like an action plan and includes targets for the young person that will be set with support from the key worker. The care plan will also identify ways that we can support the young person to reduce or stop using drugs.

The care plan will be tailored to the individual and will consider all aspects of a young person's life e.g. school, home/family life and peer relationships.

The key worker will be able to provide information to the young person regarding the drug(s) they are using. This can include looking at both the positive and negative aspects of the drug.

One of the ways that we can understand a young person's drug use is by looking at their feelings, thoughts and behaviour when they are using drugs. This would be done by asking the young person to keep a diary noting where, when and who they are with when they are using drugs and how they feel at the time. With this information we try to identify any patterns in their behaviour to see if changes can be made.

When working with a young person one of our main aims is to ensure their safety while they are still using drugs, alcohol or volatile substances. To do this we will look at the risks associated with their drug use and identify ways to reduce any of these risks; this is known as harm reduction. An example of this would be looking at safer levels of drinking for the young person or asking them to identify a non-drinking friend to support them when they have had too much to drink.

For young people that may be using opiates (heroin) we have a young person's clinic where a doctor can prescribe medication to substitute their drug use. There is also a needle exchange service available within Solihull that young people are able to access.

Where will you meet my child?

As a service we aim to be as flexible as possible in meeting the needs of the young person.

For young people that live in the North of the borough appointments are offered at Keepers Lodge, where we have access to a private meeting room.

In the South of the borough we are able to offer appointments at either of the Connexions offices in Shirley or Solihull library. If these venues are not convenient for the young person alternative arrangements can be made.

How will I know what support you are providing?

The service that is provided to any young person is confidential. However, we will always aim to encourage your child to talk to you about their drug use and with consent from your child we can keep you up to date with their progress.

There are occasions when we will not be able to maintain your child's confidentiality. Such instances include:

- Young person disclosing any form of abuse or neglect
- Disclosure to cause harm to themselves or someone else

We would always inform the young person that we were sharing any confidential information prior to doing so and explain why.





**Make sure your
child knows that
your main concern
is for their health
and well-being and
that you are there
to support them.**

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What if my child doesn't want to or isn't ready to talk to anyone?

Any support that is offered to a young person is done so on a voluntary basis, therefore the young person must consent to our involvement.

If your child refuses support there are a number of things that you can do to support your child once you know they are using drugs. These include:

- Try to gain a better understanding of the drugs your child is using before talking to them so that you have some information on what effects the drug can have.
- Give some thought to how you will react if your child does tell you they are using drugs. Try not to get angry with your child if you disagree with what they are telling you.
- Make sure your child knows that your main concern is for their health and well-being and that you are there to support them.
- It may help to tell your child what behaviour is and isn't acceptable within the home, particularly regarding drugs being used/kept in the home.



Email: str8up@solihull.gov.uk

Text: 07795 400 755

Phone: 0121 788 5390

How do I book an appointment or find out more information about your service?

You or your child can phone us directly and we will take your details over the phone or offer further information. If your child consents to a referral to our service a key worker will be allocated and will then contact you/your child to arrange an initial appointment.

Alternatively we accept referrals from any professional, for example a GP, teacher or youth worker.



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Other services that you may find useful include:

Frank: www.talktofrank.com

Adfam: www.adfam.org.uk

Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA): www.pada.org.uk



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