SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN BOYS AND YOUNG MEN

DR TANIA SALVO & SOPHIE MITTER
WITH THANKS TO...

Young People at the Brandon Centre!

Young People within Forensic and Mental Health Services!
SUMMARY OF TALK

Topics covered:

- Substance misuse terminology and context
- Reasons why young people may start using substances
- Gender differences in substance use
- Ways to initiate conversations about substance misuse with young men
- Options of further support and interventions
- Local services - where to get help
WHAT DOES SOCIETY THINK ABOUT SUBSTANCE MISUSE?
SUBSTANCE USE IN THE MEDIA

**The Sun**

**DRUG ADDICT IN THE WOMB**

Junkie couple ‘gave newborn daughter drugs in sick bid to hide HEROIN addiction she picked up from her mum’

Violent drug addict, 28, admits mugging 92-year-old woman after he disappeared from a secure mental unit leaving her terrified to leave home with recurring nightmares

**Mail Online**

£435MILLION in sickness benefit handed to drunks and junkies, with 75,000 signed off work for their addictions given up to £108 a week

BBC NEWS

The nature of addiction
HOW ELSE CAN WE THINK ABOUT SUBSTANCE MISUSE?
SPECTRUM OF SUBSTANCE USE

No Use

I'm not using substances at all.

I've tried substances 1-2 times because I was curious. I may not do it again.

I use substances every so often with friends, usually after school or on weekends.

I use substances daily. My use isn't getting in the way of school, work, family or friendships.

Problem Harmful Use

My substance use is getting in the way of doing the things I need and want to do.

I need to keep using substances even though my use is causing problems for me.

Dependent Use

Regular Use

Experimental Use

Social Use
WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

Bronfenbrenner (2001)

mindyourmind (2015)
SOME YOUNG PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO USE SUBSTANCES THAN OTHERS

Contextual Factors
- Availability
- Positive social norms about substance use
- Social Media

Familial/Family
- Parental conflict or separation
- Parental mental health difficulties
- Family history of substance use
- Poor quality parent-child interaction/relationships

Structural
- Low socioeconomic status
- Neighbourhood environment

Interpersonal
- Affiliation with substance using peers

Individual
- Stressful life events
- Abuse or neglect
- Low educational attainment
- Novelty and sensation seeking
- Potential genetic risk factors
- Positive substance use expectancies and attitudes

Degenhardt et al. (2016) The Lancet
HOW MANY YOUNG PEOPLE ARE USING SUBSTANCES?
Around 1 in 5 (18%) young adults aged 16 to 24 had taken a drug in the last year.

Young adults were more likely to use drugs frequently than the wider age group (16 to 59 year olds).

WHAT ARE YOUNG PEOPLE USING?
### Table 2.3.1 Substance use of all young people in treatment 2015-16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th></th>
<th>Adjunctive</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>median age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis</td>
<td>12,863</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>2,005</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14,868</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>2,556</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5,682</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>8,238</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecstasy</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1,344</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1,605</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1,226</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1,477</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1,152</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New psychoactive substances</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1,056</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solvents</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other opiates&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicotine (adjunctive use only)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,443</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other‡</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>17,070</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td><strong>17,077</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>^</sup> Adjunctive percentages are out of all young people in treatment (17,077)

<sup>9</sup> 'Other opiates' include methadone.

<sup>‡</sup> 'Other' incorporates a number of different substance categories which are not shown elsewhere in the table. A single young person may be counted under both primary and adjunctive 'other' if the substances are from different categories. Therefore, primary and adjunctive users cannot be summed to give a total number of users.
ARE THERE GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SUBSTANCE USE?
Figure 2.1.1 Age and gender distribution of all young people in contact with treatment services 2015-16

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT...

- Males show significantly higher prevalence for alcohol and cannabis dependence than females.  
  (Lev-Ran et al, 2013).

- Males show significantly higher levels of substance use from middle adolescence to young adulthood.  
  (Chen & Jacobson, 2012).

HOWEVER findings are conflicting!

- Males were more likely than females to have opportunities to use drugs, but the sexes were equally likely to make a transition into drug use once an opportunity had occurred to try a drug.  
  (Van Etten & Anthony, 2001).
WHY ARE YOUNG MEN USING SUBSTANCES?
WHAT THE YOUNG MEN WE WORK WITH SAID....

It takes us away
To manage pain
For the buzz
It can cure things
It relieves stress
To be social
It makes music enjoyable
You get a good sleep
It’s relaxing
YOU TALK MORE
For fun
Good times
Makes you laugh
It smells nice
Spending time with your mates
It gives you the munchies
WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS...

Institute for Alcohol Studies (2013)

Young people may use substances (following experiences of adversity and trauma) in order to:

- ‘Escape from’ or avoid invasive thoughts, images or memories.
- Increase concentration and attention at school, or in their social life
- Strengthen trauma bonds and patterns of relationships
- Self-harm

Aysnley et al. (2017)

Gender identity, ‘masculinity’ and social norms
Hunt et al. (2016); Iwamoto et al. (2011)

Brain development, risk-taking, sensation-seeking and impulsive actions during adolescence
Romer et al. (2017)

Gang violence and exploitation
National Crime Agency (2016)

Socially acceptable expressions of distress
Shorter (1990)
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS SUBSTANCE USE IN YOUNG MEN?
EFFECTS OF EARLY SUBSTANCE MISUSE

- Social and cognitive development
- Social transitions in adolescence
- Physical health outcomes
- Mental health difficulties and suicide
- Violence and offending
- Physical and psychological dependence to substances

Hall et al. (2016) The Lancet
HOW CAN WE HELP?
There is no simple way of figuring out how substance use may be affecting a young man.

Instead, we might routinely think about:

- How substances are being used (used frequently or in excess? mixed with other substances?)
- How substance use is affecting a person (getting in the way of relationships, school/work, physical/mental health?)
- What the risks and consequences are (legal, financial, moral consequences? Leading to risky behaviours or decisions?)
WHAT CAN GET IN THE WAY?
WHAT YOUNG MEN HAVE SAID...

- Not wanting to change their pattern of use
- Feelings of shame
- Fear and distrust of services
- Stigma
- Meaning of asking for help
- Worries about what their friends and family will think of them
- Worries about what they will be asked/Not wanting to share personal information
- Not viewing their use as a ‘problem’
WHAT TEAMS HAVE TOLD US...

- Lack of knowledge about substances
- Worries about disengagement
- Fear of looking inadequate
- Not knowing where to start
- Burn out
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Personal & team prejudices
- Beliefs about remit of work
- Uncertainty about how to work with YP or people who use drugs
- Lack of time and resources
Take time to engage the person from the start, and build a respectful, trusting, non-judgmental relationship in an atmosphere of hope and optimism.
WHO SHOULD ASK ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE?

All professionals

At routine appointments and opportunistic contacts

Examples:
- Health Assessments for children & young people who are looked after or care leavers
- Appointments with GPs, nurses, school nurses, health visitors
- Attendances at emergency departments as a result of alcohol or drug use
- Contacts with the community-based criminal justice system
OPTIONS OF FURTHER SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS
DIFFERENT LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

Universal prevention and population interventions
- Structural (e.g., laws, policies, taxation)
- School based
- Family based

Early intervention and harm reduction
- Selective prevention
- Indicated prevention
- Screening and brief intervention
- Harm reduction (e.g., roadside drug testing, prevention of injection-related harms)

Treatment
- Peer-based self-help organisations
- Psychosocial approaches
- Pharmacotherapy
- Family-based and multisystemic therapy
- Specialised treatment services

Stockings et al. (2016). The Lancet
OPTIONS INCLUDE...

- Harm Reduction
- Contingency Management
- Drug and Alcohol Psychoeducation
- Motivational Interviewing
- CBT – Relapse Prevention
- Collective Narrative Therapy & Narrative Therapy
- Family Therapy
- Trauma-informed interventions
- Opioid detoxification
WHAT DIDN’T WORK....

DRUGS ARE BAD.... MMM KAY?
WHAT DID WORK...

Psycho-education
Collective documents
Sharing coping strategies
Practical
Team of Life
Socially relevant
Recognised their knowledge and skills
Relaxed environment
Open discussion
Use of media
Creative
Sharing experiences
MI
Harm reduction
### Collective Document

**Denborough (2008)**

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**How Drugs Affected My Life at a Young Age:** Advice

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### What gives us cravings?

- Pubs
- Stress
- Wanting to try it
- To get inspiration for music
- When you see it on TV
- When you stop taking drugs
- When people smoke next to you
- Listening to grime music or west side radio
- If family members are using
- The smell
- Arguments with family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When you want to have a good time</th>
<th>When you are eating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict with others</td>
<td>Breaks up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### How to keep on top of things

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things that stress us out</th>
<th>Ways to manage it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having no money</td>
<td>Shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sleeping</td>
<td>Gym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting into trouble</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement</td>
<td>Eat something nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up and down emotions</td>
<td>Listen to music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family arguments/breakdown</td>
<td>Have a routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disappointment</td>
<td>See your friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-harm</td>
<td>Cinema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse</td>
<td>Breathe in and out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking medication</td>
<td>Talk to someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming into hospital</td>
<td>Speak to a psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not going to college</td>
<td>‘Flexing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timetables</td>
<td>Rap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Go to a carnival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losing phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court cases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### What's not so good about using drugs and alcohol?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The come down</th>
<th>It can make your mouth dry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It affects your sleep</td>
<td>It can affect your work – for example you might be late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You ‘fiend’</td>
<td>You can be ill for a couple of days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The shakes</td>
<td>You get dehydrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your heart beats faster</td>
<td>It can give you dirty headaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect concentration</td>
<td>You can get into fights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can turn into a differ person</td>
<td>You can be abused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can lead to depression</td>
<td>You can be robbed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affects voices</td>
<td>You got up to no good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is addictive</td>
<td>You might get lost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It can make you feel hungry</td>
<td>You stumble home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hangover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COLLABORATIVE SONG WRITING

If we’re talking bout weed
It came from a seed
Don’t cost a lot of pz
They shot it in dz
Gives you bare memories
Find it anywhere on these streets
Get you hungry you be munching sweets
Smoke weed whilst spitting on these beats
If we’re takin cocaine
It smells propane
They think drugs
Are for thugs
But everyone takes
To get a break
TEAM OF LIFE

Where is the place you feel most at home?

Coach: Who is it that you have learnt the most things from?

Home Team: Where is the place you feel most at home?

Bench: Are there people who are sometimes on your team and sometimes not?

Team Theme Song: Do you have a particular song that means a lot to you?

Goal Keeper: Who looks out for you the most?

Attack: Who helps you and encourages you in trying to score goals?

Defenders: Who helps you in protecting your goals and dreams?

Team Emblem: What symbol or drawing means a lot to you?

Denborough (2008)
WHERE ELSE CAN I GET HELP AND SUPPORT?
LOCAL DRUG & ALCOHOL SERVICES (CAMDEN & ISLINGTON)

- FWD Drug and Alcohol Services for Young People in Camden (young people under 25 year olds) Tel: 020 7974 4701; Fax: 020 7974 3184; Email: ypsmt@camden.gov.uk

- Islington Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (young people under 21 years old) Tel: 020 7527 5099/ 020 7527 5554; Email: drugs@islington.gov.uk

- Drug and alcohol services (18 years old +) – Camden & Islington NHS Foundation Trust: http://www.candi.nhs.uk/our-services/drugs-and-alcohol/locations

- Grip Club Drugs Service (Club drugs) (18 years old +) http://www.candi.nhs.uk/services/grip-club-drugs-service
LOCAL SERVICES (CAMDEN & ISLINGTON)

- Brandon Centre - offers help, advice, drop-in and appointment-based services for young people aged 12 to 24 years (including Counselling and Psychotherapy, outreach projects such as Brandon Reach and Brandon Connect as well as contraception and sexual health services) - [http://brandon-centre.org.uk](http://brandon-centre.org.uk); Tel: 020 7267 4792; Email: reception@brandoncentre.org.uk

- Local CAMHS services
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE...

& IF YOU LIKE READING LIKE WE DO....
Clinical Guidelines on Drug Misuse and Dependence Update 2017


Talk to Frank - http://www.talktofrank.com

Adfam – Families, drugs and alcohol http://www.adfam.org.uk/

Mentor - http://mentoruk.org.uk/


BBC Three Documentaries – Drugs Map of Britain http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/p03nydkc

Addiction and the Rat Park experiments https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbQFNe3pkss
REFERENCES


Iwamoto et al. (2011). “Man-ing up” and getting drunk: The role of masculine norms, alcohol intoxication and alcohol-related problems amongst college men. *Addictive behaviours*, 37, 906-911.


FINISHING THOUGHTS FROM ONE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE...
Advice for others

The advice to young people and adults is that if you want to take drugs start off from adulthood it’s better for you and your brain but my advice is still don’t take drugs and just go watch a film with your mates and family.

Make your life useful don’t waste your life like other people in this world, there’s lot to learn still. My life started when I was 13. I was doing mad stuff, not going school and messing around, start taking weed and start smoking a lot made me feel like superman real talk. Started chilling with my mates, doing crimes and robbing people to hustle for money and take weed and party. I went court many times, also I went jail few time. I realise when I grow up and become an adult and think smarter and make new mates even doe some of my mates are in jail because of crime they did, am waiting for them to tell them to change their life. It was hard for me to give up weed, am speaking the truth, it even made me ill and I ended up in hospital and become in section. Am on my way, going home now because I haven’t smoked weed in 3 years and 3 months. I don’t even miss it as well, am happy that am off weed and not smoking it, my family is very happy for me, so am I.