

How CASUS can help: Stepping Stones Pathway

January 2026



Pride in our children's, young people's and families' services

How CASUS can support young people

We understand it can be upsetting, isolating and confusing when a family member is misusing drugs or alcohol. Remember, there are multiple reasons for substance misuse but, the young person is NEVER to blame. Familial substance use can affect people in way you may or may not realise and it impacts the whole family, not just the person using the substance. Our friendly, professional and kind team are here to help make sense of it, give the young person an opportunity to feel heard and ask any questions they may have. We are a confidential service and do not share information without the young person's consent. This will only differ if we believe someone is at risk of serious harm or if a crime has or may be committed.

We can meet young people in a place they feel most safe and/or comfortable, whether that be at home, school, café or other community-based area. We provide flexible methods of contact such as, phone, text, email, WhatsApp or face to face meetings to support young people in the most effective way for them. Sessions will be held on a one-to-one basis and underpinned by a trauma-informed approach.

We will be offering a structured **8 session** intervention, run over **16 weeks**. This includes:

- Holistic assessment
- Emotional health and wellbeing sessions
- Onward support and resources
- Reflection session (of the treatment journey)
- Holistic discharge plan

Assessment

When the young person first meets their keyworker, they will complete an assessment with the young person, to gain an understanding of who 'they' and what their presenting needs are. We will ask a range of questions around their mental and physical health, and their family members substance use. Once completed, the rest of the session plan will be tailored to fit the needs of each young person ensuring, the information and education provided is personalised to them.

Education on substances

We will provide information and education around the risks associated with substances, inc. alcohol, and the effects they have on people, including behavioural, emotional and physical changes. Within sessions we can use (replica) substances which can help young people visualise different substance. We look to explore substance-use disorder in an age-appropriate way and what it means to a young person whose family member is using.

Emotional and wellbeing support

CASUS provides trauma-informed emotional health and wellbeing support for young people, helping them understand and manage their emotions. Our work includes supporting young people

to name and understand feelings such as anger, worry, guilt, shame and sadness; exploring safety concerns and creating safety plans; coping with unpredictability and potential parental relapse; developing calming strategies and distraction techniques; offering advice and support for young carers; understanding changes in parent-child roles linked to substance misuse; and guiding young people through transitions and losses such as parental separation or imprisonment.

Family work/involvement

Research shows family member involvement is the most effective and successful way to support those affected by familial substance misuse. Involvement of the family member can help strengthen potentially fractured relationships, separate the family member from their behaviour and help form an understanding of how substance misuse can affect the whole family. We can offer, where appropriate, joint sessions with the young person and their family members if this is something they would find helpful. We would respect their decision however, if they did not want to involve family members. We understand speaking to family members about their substance use (directly or indirectly) may be a frightening or scary thought but, we will support the young person every step of the way and will only hold joint sessions if the young person feels comfortable in doing so.

Collaborative working

We will ask all young people if they consent to us sharing information about their treatment with other professionals in their network. Our experience of being able to speak with other professionals/agencies, helps us to ensure care is well co-ordinated and holistic. This allows the young person to feel supported and understood through knowing exactly who is involved in their care/network and “which professional is doing what.” CASUS aims to work collaboratively with other agencies by using early intervention approaches to effectively safeguard children, promote wellbeing, minimise harm and improve overall outcomes for the young people and their families.

Referrals

CASUS welcome referrals from all professionals, parents, families, friends and self-referrals. If you are ever unsure about a referral, an anonymised pre-referral chat can be arranged with a member of the team who can discuss concerns and answer any questions you may have.

NOTE: ALL referrals MUST have the consent of the young person. If aged 13 or over parental consent is not required, if under 13, parental consent MUST BE OBTAINED alongside the young person's consent/understanding.

For further information or any queries, please contact CASUS on:

Tel: 01480 445316
E-mail: CASUS@cpft.nhs.uk
Web: www.cpft.nhs.uk/casus
Address: Newtown Centre, Nursery Road, Huntingdon



Further support and contact details:

First Response Service: Dial 111: If you are in a mental health crisis, you can speak to a mental health practitioner by calling this 24-hour line

Young Minds: Text YM to 85258. Provides 24/7 text support for young people across the UK experiencing a mental health crisis

Childline: 0800 1111 24-hour confidential helpline. Speak with ChildLine in private about anything worrying you

Frank: 0300 123 660 / text 82111 / www.talktofrank.com 24-hour drugs advice.

A&E / 999: Visit A&E or call 999 in an emergency (if you are seriously injured, have taken too many drugs or alcohol or are feeling suicidal).

NACOA (National Association of Children of Alcoholics): www.nacoa.org.uk

ADFAM: www.adfam.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns about any of CPFT's services, or would like more information please contact: Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on freephone 0800 376 0775 or e-mail pals@cpft.nhs.uk

If you require this information in another format such as braille, large print or another language, please let us know.



Out-of-hours' service for CPFT service users

Please call **NHS 111** for health advice and support.

HQ Elizabeth House, Fulbourn Hospital, Cambridge CB21 5EF.

T 01223 217400

F 01480 398501

www.cpft.nhs.uk

CPFT supports **HeadtoToe Charity** – visit www.cpft.nhs.uk/ourcharity for details on how you can help

