



## Case Studies

**A) Arshad** is 14 years old. His mother has brought him to see you after finding a small amount of what Arshad says is cannabis in his coat pocket. You complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) assessment using the SID tool to help you identify any substance misuse related need. Arshad tells you that he does pretty well at school and likes playing football. He has good relationships with friends and family and lots of people that he can talk to when he gets worried. Arshad says that he has smoked cannabis occasionally with friends and that it helps him to chill out. He doesn't see it as a big deal and doesn't think that he's doing it enough to have an impact on his life. Arshad's mother says that she's concerned that cannabis might be a stepping stone to other drugs. There hasn't been any drug use in the family before. Arshad's mother doesn't feel that she has enough knowledge to give Arshad the support she thinks he needs.

Arshad seems to be in control of his cannabis use. He has lots of protective factors in place that will increase his resilience to the development of substance misuse problems. Give Arshad some information around cannabis (please consult the 'Resources' and 'Useful website addresses' sheets for ideas) ensuring that he's aware of the risks associated with its use. You might want to offer to work through this information with him. Give Arshad's mother a copy of N-DAP's 'Do your children know more about drugs than you do' and direct her to The Matthew Project's helpline on 0800 764754 for support, information and reassurance.

**B) Sarah** is 16 years old and lives in a Norfolk village. She complains to you that the police have confiscated her alcohol three times in as many months. She says that she has been having harmless fun but the police say that she has been in breach of the peace. You use the Sid tool to screen for substance misuse related needs and to help you to decide whether a CAF should be completed. Sarah tells you that she began drinking occasionally when she was 13. She thinks that she has probably drunk every weekend for the last year or so. On a night out, she drinks at least five cans of special brew and usually some vodka.

Sarah's alcohol consumption is escalating. She is at risk of harming her health and of being arrested. However, she sees her behaviour as harmless. Use the Sid tool to help you: to establish her substance misuse related needs via the CAF assessment; and to access appropriate substance misuse services. In completing the CAF assessment, you may identify further unmet needs which require a multi agency response.

**C) Jamie** is 15 years old and has a father who is physically disabled. Jamie tells you that he takes responsibility for doing the shopping, looking after the animals and cooking the evening meal. You complete a CAF assessment to establish any unmet need and the way in which this can best be addressed. Jamie tells you that he is doing well in school although he's worried that he might not be able to keep this up and carry out his responsibilities at home. He has a good relationship with his father and with his older sister and doesn't want to let them down. You agree to help Jamie to access a local young carers project. In response to questions from part 1 of the Sid tool, Jamie tells you that he drinks alcohol occasionally and that he smokes cannabis with friends at weekends. He understands the risks associated with alcohol and cannabis use but isn't worried about them as he feels in control. Towards the end of the assessment, Jamie mentions that several of his friends use ketamine regularly. You're worried about this but are not sure whether it's serious enough to involve substance misuse services in a 'team around the child'.

Contact The Matthew Project Under18 on 01603 774360 any time that you're unsure. A substance misuse specialist professional will be available to offer advice on how to proceed.



## Case Studies

**D) Amy** is 14. A teacher has reported that she has been hung over on at least one occasion whilst in school. You use the Sid tool to help you to identify any substance misuse related needs via the CAF assessment. Amy tells you that she began drinking occasionally earlier this year following the separation of her parents. Alcohol helped her to have a good time and to forget about what was going on at home. Amy says that she knows that drinking isn't good for her and that she always feels terrible the next day. She plans to stop and is confident that she'll be able to do this without help from a young people's substance misuse service. She feels comfortable talking to you and would like to see you again in a couple of weeks so that she can tell you how she's getting on.

Amy knows that drinking isn't good for her and is planning to stop. Give Amy appropriate information about alcohol (please consult the 'Resources' and 'Useful website addresses' sheets for ideas) ensuring that she's aware of the risks associated with its use. Arrange to meet her again in a couple of weeks if your role allows you to do so. Ensure that Amy has the contact details of someone that she can talk to confidentially. You may contact The Matthew Project Under18 for consultancy and advice at any time.

**E) Jon** is 15 years old and lives at home with his mother and her new partner. Jon's mother is worried about Jon. She tells you that he has been spending an increasing amount of time with an older group of people and that he often seems anxious and agitated. You complete a CAF assessment to establish any unmet need and the way in which this can best be addressed. Jon tells you that he doesn't get on with his mum's new partner and that he no longer feels that he can talk to his mum in private. Jon doesn't like being at home any more and tries to stay out as much as he can. He tells you that feels accepted by his new group of friends and that they give him the respect that he feels is lacking at home. Jon admits that that this may be because he's proved himself to be good at shoplifting. In response to questions from part 1 of the Sid tool, Jon discloses that he has been using cocaine and that his use is escalating rapidly. He feels that things are getting out of control and agrees that he would like some help from other agencies.

Jon's cocaine use is escalating and there's evidence that it is having an impact on his emotional health and well-being. He's in a difficult situation at home and has admitted to shoplifting. Call a multi-agency meeting with the intention of creating a 'team around the child'. Invite The Matthew Project Under18 and other appropriate agencies. The Matthew Project Under18 will take on the role of the lead professional if appropriate.

**Ana-Margarida** is 13 years old and lives with her mother. She moved to England from Portugal five years ago and has lived in several homes since then. Ana-Margarida has a poor school attendance record and tells you that she can't remember how many schools she has been to. She is able to speak English but finds reading and writing difficult. You complete a CAF assessment to establish any unmet need and the way in which this can best be addressed. Ana-Margarida tells you that she often stays up all night watching television so that she can sleep during the day and avoid seeing her mother using and dealing drugs. She says that she misses the routines that she and her mother used to have and that she just wants her mother to be well again.

Ana-Margarida needs support to deal with the impact of her mother's substance misuse and has other unmet needs. Call a multi-agency meeting with the intention of creating a 'team around the child'. The Matthew Project Under18 will contribute to this process where appropriate.

**F) Rasheeda** is 17. She tells you that she has been to a big party in Thetford Forest every weekend for the last two months or so. She has a summer job that she likes in a café but has had to call in sick quite a lot recently. You complete a CAF assessment to establish any unmet need and the way in which this can best be addressed. Rasheeda tells you that she has a college place set up for September and that she's looking forward to studying professional cookery. In response to questions from part 1 of the Sid tool, Rasheeda discloses that she usually takes ketamine when she goes to parties. She doesn't feel that this isn't impacting too much on her life but admits that she's finding it more and more difficult to deal with Monday comedowns. Rasheeda agrees that some support with managing her ketamine use could be helpful but doesn't feel that she needs help from any other agencies.

Rasheeda's ketamine use is concerning and there's evidence that it is having an impact on her health and social functioning. Make a referral to The Matthew Project Under18 by following the instructions on the Sid tool.

**Josh** Josh is 15 and lives with his father and his younger brother and sister. He does well in school although he sometimes appears to find it difficult to concentrate. He is small for his age and has admitted to you he is often hungry. You complete a CAF assessment to establish any unmet need and the way in which this can best be addressed. Josh tells you that he often looks after his younger brother and sister while his father is out drinking. He says that most of his father's benefit money is spent on alcohol and that there is not much left for food. Josh tells you that he loves his father and that he doesn't want to get him into trouble. He agrees to you contacting The Matthew Project Under18 about support to deal with the impact of his father's alcohol misuse but is adamant that his details should not be passed onto other services.

Josh needs support to deal with the impact of his father's alcohol misuse and has other unmet needs but he doesn't want his details passed onto other services. Make a referral to The Matthew Project Under18 by following the instructions on the Sid tool. Try to gain consent to share Josh's details at a later date if appropriate. A multi-agency approach may be the best way to ensure that his needs are met.

---

**G) Ricky** is 16 but looks older than his age. He tells you that he drinks alcohol every day in his local pub and that he uses cocaine at weekends. Ricky's substance misuse is concerning but he says that he doesn't want to talk about it and that he won't consent for his details to be passed onto a substance misuse service.

Ricky's substance misuse is concerning but he says that he doesn't want to talk about it and that he won't consent for his details to be passed onto a substance misuse service. Make sure that Ricky is aware of the help that The Matthew Project Under18 can offer and that he knows how to contact them if he changes his mind. Give him some appropriate information (please consult the 'Resources' and 'Useful website addresses' sheets for ideas). Please also contact The Matthew Project Under18 on 01603 774360. A substance misuse specialist professional will be available to offer advice on whether there's anything else you can do. You will not have to give any information by which the young person can be identified.

---

**H) Gemma** is 14 years old and lives at home with her mother. She has an older sister who lives independently. Gemma's records show that she has been excluded from school and that she attends a pupil referral unit. She has a history of self harming and is receiving support from the Bethel Child and Family Centre. Gemma tells you that she spends a lot of time at her sister's flat where she sometimes stays overnight. She says that her sister's flat is always full of people using drugs. Gemma tells you that she often uses cannabis, alcohol and ecstasy and occasionally cocaine. She says that she is not concerned about her drug use and that an older man has told her that he will get her any drugs she wants if she has sex with him.

Gemma's substance misuse is chaotic and she may be at risk of suffering significant harm. You must immediately share this information with Norfolk Children's Services in line with Norfolk Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures<sup>1</sup>. Consent to share this information is not required.

<sup>1</sup>For more information please see Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures, **LSCB protocol 1** and **LSCB leaflet 5** which can be found at [www.lscb.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.lscb.norfolk.gov.uk)