

Pilot Randomised Study of Multidimensional Family Therapy

We are carrying out a study of young people who use substances and are referred to Barnardo's in England and Wales. The study is to try to find out whether a new approach might help young people in the future. The study is being run by The University of Kent and is funded by the Youth Endowment Fund.

What is this study about?

The study explores a new way of helping young people who use substances in England and Wales. The study will help us know if the new approach is better at helping young people reduce or stop their substance use.

This leaflet is for you to keep. Please read it carefully. Please ask if there is anything that you do not understand, or you would like more information about, we can be contacted at mdftproject@kent.ac.uk.

What will happen to a young person if they take part?

If they agree to take part, they will be asked to provide agreement in the form of a written consent. A computer will decide at random whether they receive the care as usual or the MDFT intervention.

MDFT Intervention

The new approach involves staff who have been specifically trained to offer therapy and support to young people and their families.

All young people taking part in the study will be asked to fill questionnaires at the start of the study and again 6- and 12-months later.

When the young person completes the questionnaires at 6- or 12-months they can have a trusted family member, carer or worker from another service with them. When the researcher calls to make the appointment, they will check them if they require any additional help and they will arrange it. As a thank you we will give the young person a £25 voucher at each stage they complete questionnaires, one £25 after completing the questionnaire at the start, another £25 after completing the questionnaire at 6 months and a final £25 for completing the questionnaire at 12 months. The questionnaires explore substance use, behaviour and mental health. To get a clear understanding of what young people think about the new approach we might ask them to take part in an interview with a researcher, but before we do, we will ask for permission, and they can say no if they want to.

Do I have to take part in the study?

No. It is up to you to decide.

We will describe the study, go through this information sheet with you and answer your questions. If the young person decides to take part in the study, they will be asked to sign a consent form.

We understand that families may have different experiences and beliefs about research, therapy, and services. We also know that for some communities—especially those who have experienced discrimination or unequal treatment in the past—there may be less trust in these systems. We want to acknowledge this openly and assure you that your views and experiences are important to us. We will take time to answer your questions, explain anything in plain language, and respect any cultural or personal considerations you may have in making your decision.

They can change their mind at any time before we delete any information that could identify them from the data, usually about 12-months after they join the study. They will not need to give a reason. If they decide not to take part in the study or want to withdraw your participation, it will not affect the support they receive from substance use services or referrals to any other services.

Who will have access to my information?

All information collected about the young person during this research will be kept confidential. The only people who will be able to look at it will be the research team.

All information will be stored on a password protected computer. After we have done the 12-month questionnaire we will remove any information that might identify the young person from our records. The data will be stored at the University of Kent for 5 years (for written information) or 10 years (for electronic data). At the end of the study, this data, without anything that could identify the young person, will be archived by the organisation who is funding the study, the Youth Endowment Fund.

All staff and organisations involved in the research work to the same rules of confidentiality as doctors and nurses which can only be broken, without consent, in very exceptional circumstances. **Usually this is if the researcher sees or is told something which raises serious concern for the young person's personal safety.**

Could I be at risk by taking part?

The research staff and organisations involved in this research have a lot of experience and we do not think that they will experience any harm as a result of taking part in this research study. Any suggestions or complaints about the study or how they were treated will be dealt with by the chief investigator Professor Simon Coulton

whose contact details can be found at the end of this leaflet.

Who is funding and organising the study?

The study is funded by the Youth Endowment Fund and conducted by the **University of Kent**. The interventions are delivered by experienced, trained staff. Before we started the study, we asked an independent body to look at what we planned to do to ensure what we are doing is ethical and good practice.

What happens to the results of the study?

We are keen to ensure that all families involved in the study get an opportunity to help discuss and understand the results of the study. We will let you know of any opportunities to do this as they arise throughout the study period. We are happy to send you a summary of the research at the end of the project. If you would like to receive this, please email us using the details at the end of this leaflet. The study results will help us understand new ways to help young people in the future. No one will be identified in any of the information or reports written about the study.

Will the research help me?

At this stage we cannot promise that this study will help the young person directly. However, the study will provide information about how we work with young people in the future.

Thank you...

For taking the time to read this leaflet. Please ask any questions or raise any concerns you may have about the project. If you decide to take part, please keep this leaflet for future reference.

Project staff

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Professor Simon Coulton, Chief Investigator, University of Kent, 01227 824535, S.Coulton@kent.ac.uk

If you have any complaints or concerns about the research project do not hesitate to contact:

Research Ethics and Governance, lssjethics@kent.ac.uk

The privacy notice can be accessed here <https://media.www.kent.ac.uk/se/40432/ResearchParticipantUniversityLevelPrivacyNotice.pdf>

Research Information Leaflet: Parent/ Carer