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► [Practice standards for young people with substance misuse problems.](#)

Gilvarry E., McArdle P., O'Herlihy A. et al, eds.
[UK] Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2012.

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Practice standards developed by the UK's Royal College of Psychiatrists on working with young people aged 18 or under with substance misuse problems, intended (if followed) to promote high quality screening, assessment and treatment for these young people.

SUMMARY The featured standards are freely available and intended for use by practitioners, so this account confines itself to indicating how they were constructed and what they are about; access the full standards for more.

In January 2011 the Centre for Quality Improvement of the UK's Royal College of Psychiatrists established an advisory group to inform the development of standards on working with young people aged 18 or under with substance misuse problems. The group comprised 20 professionals who represented a range of stakeholder groups including: the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, Alcohol Concern, DrugScope, Turning Point, Addaction, commissioners of young people's substance misuse services, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Department of Health, Department of Education, and the Youth Justice Board.

The aim was to develop practice standards which, if followed, would be likely to result in high quality screening, assessment and treatment for these young people. The standards were intended to be applicable to and usable by staff or professionals and services across all the sectors and agencies involved in the care of young people with substance misuse problems, both those specialising in substance use and those not, across health, social care, education, the youth justice system, and voluntary and community sectors.

The standards propose that services invest in the psychosocial development and well-being of young people with substance misuse problems to give them the best chance of a normal life through:

- engagement of the young person, and their family where possible;
- skilled initial analysis of the young person's difficulties, including mental disorders and developmental problems such as learning disability, and life circumstances;
- engaging local systems so that they work together;
- coordinated, well-led interventions that mobilise the resources of local communities as required, including safeguarding, education, training, mental health and accommodation;
- active follow-up to detect the need for further episodes of support or intervention;
- prioritising and delivering the training and support of staff.

The standards are organised in to the following sections:

- 1 Identification and brief assessment (including brief advice and intervention for over 15s)
- 2 Comprehensive assessment
- 3 Integrated care planning
- 4 Integrated care and intervention
- 5 Planned completion and transfer of care

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