

Carlow Regional Youth Service (CRYS)

Substance Use Policy Third Edition



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Introduction

The original guidelines, of which this document is an updated and revised version, were developed over a series of meetings and discussions by a working group drawn from workers involved in the Community Based Drugs Initiatives in the five Youth Work Ireland Member Youth Services in the South East in 2004 : Carlow Regional Youth Service, Ferns Diocesan Youth Service in Wexford (now FDYS Youth Work Ireland), Ossory Youth in Kilkenny, Tipperary Regional Youth Service and Waterford Regional Youth Service (now Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service).

The original document was produced using guidelines from Youth Work Ireland's document *Dealing With Drugs Alcohol and Tobacco in Youth Work Settings, Guidelines for Youth Workers, 2010*

Staff in Youth Work Ireland Member Youth Services provided feedback, comment and critique on these revised guidelines in 2009.

In 2010 the policy was reviewed using the guidelines and a focus group in CRYS.

This policy underwent the following processes in 2012/13.

1. John Leahy, Drug Education Officer HSE, Adam Byrne, Angela Keogh, Leanne Sweeny read and reviewed policy.
2. Policy was drafted by John Leahy, circulated among health promotion committee, Adam Byrne, Angela Keogh, Leanne Sweeny and Leighann Ryan and reviewed.
3. Draft given to CEO Kathryn Wall
4. Draft circulated to staff and reviewed following feedback.
5. Policy presented to the Board of Management to be ratified.

Mission Statement of Carlow Regional Youth Services

“We work to empower young people to achieve their potential through quality youth work”

Information and demographics of CRYs

Organisation Profile

Age Range 8-23

Gender 50/50 % Male/Female

The target group for Carlow Regional Youth Services includes all young people in the county.

Our work is primarily divided into three age groups:

- 8-12 year olds- Afterschool /Homework Support, Junior youth Group programme, Summer Camp. This accounts for approximately 15% of all our work.
- 12-18 year olds- Drop in facility, Planned Youth Work Programmes, Youth Participation Programmes, Youth Leadership Training, Specialist Support Services, etc –This accounts for 70% of our overall work.
- 18-23 year olds – Volunteer Training, Youth Work Accredited Training, Some services for vulnerable young adults in their social time. This accounts for 15% of our work

Aim of the policy

The policy is focused on five key areas:-

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Use Education Programmes
2. To support workers and service users around issues of substance use
3. Managing substance use related incidents
4. Training and Staff Development
5. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Why a Policy on Substance Use?

National Drugs Strategy 2009 - 2016

Problem drug use by an individual, or by a group of people, is rarely caused by a single factor. Instead, the interplay between multiple conditions and factors that put an individual at risk of using or developing problems with drugs influences the experience or outcome. These complex and interlinked factors will vary between communities and individuals. For instance, the type of drug used will depend on the availability, price and accessibility of particular drugs.

The National Drugs Strategy, 2009-2016 'Building on Experience', is now Government policy. The Steering Group is of the view that there is a need to further develop and promote prevention strategies in a number of key areas, third level institutions, workplaces, sports and other community and voluntary organisations. They also consider there is a need to further promote the development of substance misuse policies in these settings.

The Research has identified risk and protective factors and these show that effective drug prevention must not rely solely on giving information on the harmfulness of drugs, but must also build self - efficacy through the development of social and personal skills. These skills are only as effective as their implementation within a wider context of complementary policy development relating to such issues as educational achievement; provision of family support; reducing marginalisation and poverty; reducing involvement in crime; rehabilitation of offenders; provision of youth supports/ services; and interruption of supply and availability of drugs.

Youth Work Ireland recommends that when exploring how to respond to the use of drugs both legal and illegal in a youth environment, drug prevention and education are arms on an overall strategy in dealing with the issue of drug use by young people. It is useful as a lead in to these guidelines to outline the kind of drug prevention and education approaches that one can adopt as part of an overall strategy and holistic approach to looking at the issue of drug use by young people.

Interventions could be seen to fall under the following broad headings:

(i) Universal (primary) prevention programmes:

Aimed at reaching the general population such as students in schools, to promote overall health of the population and to prevent the onset of drug and alcohol misuse. Measures often associated with this type of programme include awareness campaigns, school drug/alcohol education programmes and multi - component community initiatives.

(ii) Selected (secondary) prevention programmes:

Aimed at groups at risk, as well as subsets of the general population including children of drug users, early school leavers and those involved in anti - social behaviour. These programmes aim to reduce the effect of risk factors present in these subgroups by building on strengths and developing resilience and protective factors.

(iii) Targeted (tertiary) prevention programmes:

Targeted at people who have already started using drugs/alcohol, or who are likely/ vulnerable to engage in problematic drug/alcohol use (but may not necessarily be drug/ alcohol dependent), or to prevent relapse. These require individual or small group programmes aimed at addressing specific needs.

The 2007 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) reported the following:

Smoking

Just over half of the respondents in ESPAD 2007 had smoked at some time and one-quarter had smoked during the previous month. Of those who had smoked, about half had their first cigarette during their primary school years (between the ages of 9 and 12). This finding is of some concern, particularly when we consider that the younger people are when they have their first cigarette; the more likely they are to continue smoking into adulthood.

Misuse of Alcohol and Drugs

While surveys measure drug consumption in different ways, all of them find that drug misuse is prevalent in the general population and not just a problem affecting a certain strata of society. One in four people in Ireland used an illicit drug at some point in their life and one in five used cannabis. The 2007 SLÁN survey found that 6% of respondents reported that they had used an illegal drug in the year prior to the survey.

In 2010 there were a total of 2,026 drug users in treatment who reported alcohol as an additional problem substance

Prevalence of Drug use among high risk groups

While drug use is prevalent in the general population it is more common among certain groups, such as:

- Early school leavers (ESL);
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community;
- Travellers
- Young people.

Illegal substances

More than one in 5 of all respondents (20.3%) in ESPAD 2007 had tried cannabis, an illegal substance, at some stage in their lives. Many boys and girls begin using cannabis at an early age. Findings from ESPAD surveys over the last 12 years show that while the percentage of boys who report having used cannabis by the age of 13 or less has decreased (from 10% to 8%), there has been an increase in the number of girls who report using it (from 4% to 6%).

Prevalence of Alcohol Use

Adolescents report that alcohol is more difficult to obtain now than it was 12 years ago. However, there is still a major issue about drunkenness: over half the respondents (54%) in ESPAD 2007 reported being drunk at some time in their lives. The vast majority (86%) of Irish students have experimented with alcohol by the age of 16.

Irish girls are drinking almost as often as boys, and more girls (29%) than boys (25%) reported being drunk during the previous month. Girls showed a preference for alcopops, wine and spirits, whereas boys tended to drink beer and cider more often. Girls' preference for spirits is of particular concern and is a trend that has been observed in Ireland for the last 12 years. Almost the same percentage of boys (42%) and girls (44%) reported binge-drinking during the previous month. The tendency for boys and girls to binge-drink with equal regularity was also observed in 2003 and 1999, and reflects a narrowing of the gender gap in this aspect of drinking since 1995.

Drug Definition - A term of varied usage.

In the CRYS policy, the word “substance” refers to any chemical substances, which alter the way, the body functions and/or the person behaves. “Substances” will include illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy etc. and legally available drugs such as painkillers, alcohol, tobacco and solvents. Tippex and similar type products along with aerosols are also forbidden.

In medicine, it refers to any substance with the potential to prevent or cure disease or enhance physical or mental welfare, and in pharmacology to any chemical agent that alters the biochemical physiological processes of tissues or organisms. Hence, a drug is a substance that is, or could be, listed in a pharmacopoeia.

In common usage, the term often refers specifically to psychoactive drugs, and often, even more specifically, to illicit drugs, of which there is non-medical use in addition to any medical use.

Professional formulations (e.g. "alcohol and other drugs") often seek to make the point that caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, and other substances in common non-medical use are also drugs in the sense of being taken at least in part for their psychoactive effects. (World Health Organisation, WHO)

Definition of service user

The policy is relevant to all staff, volunteers, service users, stakeholders, board of management and other agencies that use our service.

Guidelines for youth workers managing substance related incidents.

This section of the policy has been produced with regard to responding effectively and professionally to drug misuse in youth settings, in order to provide a clear framework and practical guidance for all CRYs staff working within CRYs. It also bears in mind the legal, professional and managerial expectations that staff might be exposed to risk and difficult situations in responding to and managing drug related incidents.

Finally, these guidelines also recognise the parameters within which workers and volunteers operate will differ from setting to setting, project to project, event to event and from agency to agency and responses will be governed and shaped accordingly.

Guidelines for CRYs

1. Principles of good practice

The following outlines some principles of good practice, for workers are undertaking work with service users in relation to substance use.

- All workers follow CRYs' policies and procedures and in particular the Child Protection Guidelines.
- Workers should follow good practice aims and objectives as outlined in the Drug Education Workers Forum (DEWF) Manual in Quality Standards in Substance Use Education page 5 and 6. Available from CRYs.
- Every person using CRYs will be treated with dignity and respect and in a non-judgmental manner.
- Service users will be offered all relevant supports in regard to substance use issues.

3. Confidentiality Statement

It is vital that the Child Protection Procedures and Policies of CRY5 at all times operate a strict code of confidentiality. Confidentiality is about managing information that arises in a relationship and doing so in a manner that is respectful, professional and purposeful. All staff and volunteers must adhere to CRY5 Confidentiality Statement.

In relation to informing parents/guardians the appropriate staff member with the support of the designated liaison person (DLP) of CRY5, will firstly inform parents/guardians in the event of a child disclosing any incidents of abuse unless this could put the child in danger.

Youth Work is based on trusting relationships and the sharing by young people to youth workers of personal information and problems is not uncommon. Any stakeholder disclosing information in this context need to know in advance the limits of confidentiality and the responsibilities attached.

In matters of child abuse allegations, CRY5 can never promise to keep secret any information that is divulged. A staff member/volunteer of CRY5 should explain to the young person disclosing why s/he cannot keep this information secret and also explain to the young person what s/he intends to do with it. Every effort should be made to get the young person to understand this policy and consent to it. Those working directly with a child and family should make this clear to all parties involved.

- All information regarding a concern, disclosure or assessment of child abuse should be shared on “a need to know” basis in the best interest of the child and to safeguard the young person. The giving of information to relevant others, for the protection of the child, is NOT a breach of confidentiality. It must also be clearly understood that information, which is gathered for one purpose, must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided that information.

- When working with over 18's all aspects of work will be treated as confidential within the CRYS, however confidential is not an absolute and may have to be set aside under the following circumstances:
1. When there is a risk of harm to the client.
 2. When a client presents as a danger to others.
 3. When the client either divulges or implies that a third party is at risk from others, ie; alluding to or making specific threats to cause worry or harm.
 4. When information concerning service users is directly obtained / ordered by a court order.
 5. All service users have the right to request to see all information held by the CRYS about themselves under the Freedom of Information Act (1997 & 2003).
 6. The sharing of information with other parties or agencies will only take place, if written consent is obtained from the client – except in the outlined circumstances.

Managing substance use related incidents.

CRYS acknowledge that in all situations involving substance use it is important not to under or over react. Support will be offered to the individual and CRYS' disciplinary & policy procedures will be followed at all times.

4. Substance use incidents

The following are examples of substance use incidents.

- Emergencies when the person may be Unconscious
- Intoxication/Unusual Behaviour
- Suspicion/rumour of substance use
- Disclosure by another person
- Possession of a legal/illegal drug on the premises or an a CRYs related activity
- Selling / supplying substances
- Person seeking help from a member of staff
- CRYs grounds being used for substance use activity
- Substance Use paraphernalia found on CRYs grounds or premises

Action required

In all of the listed incidents, it is essential to inform the line manager as soon as possible.

In the case of emergency situation, emergency services should be contacted immediately.

Each individual incident will be discussed by the relevant workers and an incident report form (Appendix 1) completed and follow up recommendations will be put in place.

Assessing a substance use incident

Never respond to an incident on your own. In all cases where there is no immediate danger to the service user, it is important to take time to assess the situation before responding. The substance use incident report form should be completed. (Appendix 1)

Workers or volunteers will not put themselves or anyone else at risk of injury. In certain circumstances where there is such a risk it may be necessary for workers or volunteers to call the Gardai for assistance.

5. Substance Use Searches

If a worker has reasonable cause to believe that an individual is in breach of the policy, the worker can request that the young person empty bags/pockets. If the young person does not comply, parents may be contacted or Gardai.

The Line Manager will be notified that a request was made and will be informed of the reason.

There will be at least two staff members present in the event of a young person emptying contents of bags or pockets.

All incidents will be recorded and signed by both persons present.

All decisions regarding the incident will be discussed with all parties involved and the outcome will be decided following this meeting.

6. Recording Procedure

- All staff should be aware of the signs of substance use and be alert for changes in behaviour. When working with young people, staff should be aware that this is a period of great change and rumour must not be taken as evidence of substance use.
- In the event of a substance use incident, relevant senior staff should be notified during working hours.
- Details of the incident should be recorded and follow-up plan should be documented and acted on by the relevant staff. This plan and persons responsible for it should also be recorded.
- Please see substance use incident form appendix 1 and 2
- It is important in all suspected or confirmed substance use incidents that a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. People will be informed on a “need to know” basis.
- When a staff member identifies a substance use incident, it is important not to under or over react. All professionals working with young people

should be competent to engage in the identification of substance use or misuse.

NB: If in doubt, contact the substance use worker (CBDI) or management for guidance.

7. Parental Involvement

Keeping parents / guardians informed

- CRY5 will keep parents and guardians informed of the programme or activity that their child is involved in, this is often done through the initial consent form and sometimes via text, e-mail or phone.
- It is our policy to share information relating to the programme of activities, trips away, transport to and from events, etc. with the parents/guardians.
- Information on supports will be offered to all parents/carers who have their young person involved in any substance use incident in CRY5.
- Parents/carers should be encouraged to approach CRY5 if they're concerned about any issue related to substance use and their young person.
- A full copy of the CRY5 Child Protection Policy is made available for downloading at the CRY5 website (www.carlowys.ie).

8. In the event of finding a substance on the premises or grounds.

An Gardaí Síochána Involvement

- The management or staff member will contact An Garda Síochána in the event of a suspicious substance or paraphernalia been found on the premises or grounds or space used by CRYs.
- Staff will contact the Garda station (059-9131505) follow advise of the Gardai and either wait for Gardai or bring the substance to the station as advised.
- Staff will complete a statement (see appendix 2) to be submitted with the substance to the Gardai.
- In the event of going to the Garda station two adults must be present for the journey.
- In the event of Garda advise to wait in the premises the substance or paraphernalia will be stored in a container, with date and time written on the outside and container then stored in a secure place.
- Any paraphernalia will be given to the Gardaí.

9. Support

For some young people, their involvement with substance use may be masking some underlying difficulties and for others it may be a phase of experimentation which they will pass through safely.

In response to all incidents, support will be offered and the individual involved may be asked to discontinue attendance on specific programmes or drop- in.

This support may include, the Garda Diversion Project, YARC, CCDI, Follaine Youth Counselling Service, ARDU HSE Substance Misuse Service or other appropriate services.

Following engagement with these supports the individual circumstances will be discussed with those involved and they may return to their specific programme or drop- in.

If the person has indications of a substance use problem, then referral on for assessment will be recommended.

Similar to all incidents, staff will be offered support and the opportunity to debrief following all substance use incidents that they are involved in.

10. Training for Drug Education

Substance use education programmes will be delivered by those who have received training in this area, training will be provided regularly or as different trends emerge.

All staff will receive training on the CRYs substance use policy. Included in this training will be information on signs and symptoms of substance use.

In line with organisational and team training plans, staff and volunteers will be encouraged to attend substance use education training.

11. In the event of dealing with a young person under the influence of a substance

- Remain calm and do not panic
- Contact the young person's parents as soon as possible
- If the young person is losing consciousness, is unconscious or not breathing call an ambulance
- If appropriate, first aid should be administered by a trained person.
- Avoid excitement or stimulation, person may be hallucinating, paranoid or violent
- If they are distressed due to the effects of the drug eg hallucinations offer reassurance that the effects will wear off and offer the person a quiet place to sit in while waiting for parents/guardians/ emergency services.
- Talk with other persons present or check the area for evidence as to what was used.
- Youth workers cannot restrain people. If the person leaves the premises inform parents/guardians or Gardaí.
- Workers or volunteers will not put themselves or anyone else at risk of injury.
- In certain circumstances where there is such a risk it may be necessary for workers or volunteers to call the Gardaí for assistance.
- Complete an incident form Appendix 2

The support structures for staff and volunteers at CRYs are as follows

- Line management support and supervision.
- Team support where appropriate.
- Access to information on support and counseling services should be made available where appropriate.

This policy is subject to CRYs Health & Safety Policy

12. WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF SUBSTANCES

Workers and volunteers have a responsibility to take a lead role regarding the use of substances.

If a worker presents themselves for work under the influence of any substances, they should be asked to leave the premises by their supervisor/manager or a fellow worker or volunteer if their supervisor/manager is not available. Appropriate CRYs disciplinary measures should then follow.

Workers and volunteers should also refrain from speaking in an inappropriate manner about their consumption or excessive use of alcohol (and indeed any other drug), when in the presence of young people.

13. SMOKING ON THE PREMISES

CRYs has a no smoking policy and follows the Public Health (Tobacco) Health Act, 2002 which makes it illegal to smoke in any place of work.

Misuse of Drugs Acts 1977 & Criminal Justice (Psychoactive Substances) Bill 2010

Misuse of Drugs Acts 1977

An Act to prevent the misuse of certain dangerous or otherwise harmful drugs, to enable the Minister for Health to make for that purpose certain regulations in relation to such drugs, to enable that Minister to provide that certain substances shall be poisons for the purposes of the pharmacy acts, 1875 to 1962, to amend the [pharmacopoeia act, 1931](#) , the [poisons act, 1961](#) , the [pharmacy act, 1962](#) , and the health acts, 1947 to 1970, to repeal the [dangerous drugs act, 1934](#) , and [section 78](#) of the [health act, 1970](#) , and to make certain other provisions in relation to the foregoing. [16th may, 1977]

Section 2

Controlled drugs

(1) In this Act “*controlled drug*” means any substance, product or preparation (other than a substance, product or preparation specified in an order under subsection (3) of this section which is for the time being in force) which is either specified in the [Schedule](#) to this Act or is for the time being declared pursuant to subsection (2) of this section to be a controlled drug for the purposes of this Act.

Section 3

Restriction on possession of controlled drugs.

(2) A person who has a controlled drug in his possession in contravention of subsection (1) of this section shall be guilty of an offence.

Section 5

Regulations to prevent misuse of controlled drugs.

- (1) For the purpose of preventing the misuse of controlled drugs, the Minister may make regulations—
- (a) prohibiting absolutely, or permitting subject to such conditions or exceptions as may be specified in the regulations, or subject to any licence, permit or other form of authority as may be so specified—
 - (i) the manufacture, production or preparation of controlled drugs,

- (ii) the importation or exportation of controlled drugs,
- (iii) the supply, the offering to supply or the distribution of controlled drugs,
- (iv) the transportation of controlled drugs,

Section 19

Occupiers etc. permitting certain activities to take place on land, vehicle or vessel to be guilty of an offence.

(1) A person who is the occupier or is in control or is concerned in the management of any land, vehicle or vessel and who knowingly permits or suffers any of the following to take place on the land, vehicle or vessel, namely—

- (a) the cultivation contrary to [section 17](#) of this Act of opium poppy or any plant of the genus *Cannabis*,
 - (b) the preparation of opium for smoking,
 - (c) the preparation of cannabis for smoking,
 - (d) the smoking of cannabis, cannabis resin or prepared opium,
 - (e) the manufacture, production or preparation of a controlled drug in contravention of regulations made under [section 5](#) of this Act,
 - (f) the importation or exportation of a controlled drug in contravention of such regulations,
 - (g) the sale, supply or distribution of a controlled drug in contravention of such regulations,
 - (h) any attempt so to contravene such regulations, or
 - (i) the possession of a controlled drug in contravention of [section 3](#) of this Act,
- shall be guilty of an offence.

Section 24

Powers to inspect and demand production of drugs, books or documents.

(1) For the purpose of enforcing this Act and regulations made thereunder, a member of the Garda Síochána or a person authorised in that behalf by the Minister in writing may at all reasonable times—

- (a) enter any building or other premises in which a person carries on business as a producer, manufacturer, seller or distributor of controlled drugs,

(b) require any such person, or any person employed in connection with such a business, to produce any controlled drugs which are in his possession or under his control,

(c) require any such person, or any person so employed, to produce any books, records or other documents which relate to transactions concerning controlled drugs and which are in his possession or under his control, and

(d) inspect any controlled drug, book, record or other document produced in pursuance of a requirement under this section.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE (PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES) ACT 2010

Section 1

Interpretation.

(1) In this Act—

“Act of 1977” means the [Misuse of Drugs Act 1977](#) ;

“**Advertisement**” includes every form of advertisement, whether or not to the public, in a newspaper or other publication, on television or radio, by display of a notice, by electronic communication, including by means of the internet, or by any other means;

“**Consumption**”, in relation to a psychoactive substance, means to consume the substance (whether or not the substance concerned has been dissolved or dispersed in or diluted or mixed with any other substance)—

- (a) orally,
- (b) by smoking, insufflating or inhaling it,
- (c) by injecting it,
- (d) by applying it externally to the body of the person, or
- (e) by otherwise introducing it into the body of a person;

“Controlled drug” has the same meaning as it has in section 2 of the Act of 1977;

“Psychoactive substance” means a substance, product, preparation, plant, fungus or natural organism which has, when consumed by a person, the capacity to—

- (a) produce stimulation or depression of the central nervous system of the person, resulting in hallucinations or a significant disturbance in, or significant change to, motor function, thinking, behaviour, perception, awareness or mood, or
- (b) cause a state of dependence, including physical or psychological addiction;

Prohibition of sale, etc. of psychoactive substances.

(1) A person who sells a psychoactive substance knowing or being reckless as to whether that substance is being acquired or supplied for human consumption shall be guilty of an offence.

Appendix 1

Carlow Regional Youth Service - Drug Incident Form

Please complete if you have a concern about a young person in relation to a substance use issue (Please keep securely with the relevant project)

(please tick to indicate the category)

Concern established after following up a suspicion or allegation	Discovery On premises	Discovery Off premises	Disclosure by young person	Parent/carer expresses concern	Concern that young person is displaying signs of substance use (these may be emotional, social, behavioural or physical and may be symptomatic of another issue)	Concern for young person who appears to be under the influence of substances
					Details...	

Name of person: _____

Age of person: _____

Male/Female: _____

Is it second or subsequent incident involving same service user: Yes No

Time of incident am/pm: _____

Date of incident: _____

Report form completed by: _____

First Aid given? Yes No - First Aid given by: _____

Ambulance/Doctor called? (Delete as necessary) Yes No

Called by: _____

Time: _____

Appendix 2

Carlow Regional Youth Service - Drug Incident Report Form

Please complete if you find a substance on the premises and keep form with the substance found

1 For help and advice, telephone the CCDI 085 789 7303/ 085 1391701 you may also refer to, or be referred to the HSE Substance Misuse Treatment Service at (Lo- Call 1890 464 600).

2 Complete this form WITHOUT identifying the young person or individual involved.

3 Copy the form (two copies if substance found)

4 Attach copy to bag containing any substances discovered

5 KEEP the original, (adding the service users name) and form – store securely.

Drug involved (if known): _____
(e.g. Alcohol, Paracetamol, Ecstasy)

Sample found? Yes No

Where retained: _____

Witness name: _____

Disposal arranged with Garda :_Date/Time/ Contact Garda _____

At time: _____

Senior staff involved: _____

Parent/carer informed: _____

Informed by: _____

Time: _____

Description of incident:

Other agencies involved: (HSE, Garda: Other)

Incident discussed Yes No

Young people /staff informed: Yes No

Follow up - Decision

Person Responsible for follow up - _____

Other
Details _____

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