The Children’s Society has been improving the lives of children affected by drug and alcohol misuse for over 25 years. We work in partnership with local authorities to transform services for these young people. From prevention to treatment, our programmes are tailored to deliver solutions that work.

Our expert staff meet children and young people’s needs, such as counselling to help them stay off drugs, or support to deal with a parent who misuses substances. We give our young service users a say in everything we do, to make sure we are giving them the best support possible.

**Hope for children affected by substance misuse**

Essex Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Service (EYPDAS) was established in 1984 and has been the main provider of young people’s substance misuse services for Essex County Council for over a decade.

‘I am proud of the work we carry out,’ says deputy project manager Mark Munday. ‘The young people that come to us are often at their lowest ebb, and by offering them a tailored service that meets their individual needs, we help them turn their lives around.’

EYPDAS provides a wide array of services to meet Essex County Council’s needs and improve children and young people’s lives.

**Adding value with innovative services**

An important part of the outreach programme is a mobile unit, partly funded by private income, which brings us into contact with otherwise hard-to-reach young people at community events across the county.

Children and young people’s needs and desires are at the heart of everything EYPDAS does. ‘Young people are part of our decisions – from the design of treatment to what kind of leaflets and posters we put out to engage young people,’ says Mark. ‘We have a youth forum, which is always consulted. Listening to what young people need and want means we can provide the best possible service for them, and help them improve their lives.

‘We provide a comprehensive service that is making life better for young people affected by substance misuse.’

**What commissioners say**

‘EYPDAS provides high quality services across Essex. They are approachable and are flexible in thinking about how to deliver services to meet our needs. We needed an organisation that could work closely with others to provide universal, targeted and specialist services to help improve young substance abusers’ lives, and they provide that. I hope we continue to work closely together to improve services for children, young people and families across Essex.’

Sally Hills, Young People’s Substance Misuse Commissioner, Essex County Council
What young people say about EYPDAS

‘EYPDAS has basically taken me off the streets, away from all the criminals, drug users and abusers and given me time to reflect on what I have done in my life and what I want in life. And that is to help other young people.’ Jamie, 17

‘The whole EYPDAS team supports you and they are all friendly, non-judgemental and appreciative.’ Sian, 15

‘One of the best things about the service is that they see you where you feel most comfortable. If you have trouble remembering when your appointments are they can text you to let you know. They motivate you to get up for your session and do not give up on you, which shows someone cares.’ Ellie, 16

EYPDAS offers:

• an integrated recovery management system (delivered in partnership with Open Road), which covers triage, assessment, and the allocation and co-ordination of care with relevant services

• a structured intervention service (delivered in partnership with Open Road), delivering psychosocial and other structured interventions, using one-to-one, group work and family models

• schools liaison workers, running classes, assemblies and drop-in sessions to help young people develop the skills, knowledge and self-confidence to make informed choices about alcohol and drugs

• a drop-in service for any young person who needs support with their own or someone else’s drug or alcohol problems.

Each year, The Children’s Society works with almost 1,000 children and young people with substance misuse problems, or at risk of experiencing substance misuse.

Commission The Children’s Society

Impressed by EYPDAS? The Children’s Society could provide similar services in your area.

Call 0845 612 9402, email bdu@childrenssociety.org.uk or visit www.childrenssociety.org.uk to find out more.