

Telephone delivery of Discussing Drugs and Alcohol with Young People



In the current coronavirus pandemic, lots of face to face interactions have been taken away by lockdown and social distancing. Discussing drugs and alcohol with young people (DDAYP) might still be possible via a phone conversation.

As with face to face discussions, remember first to ask permission to discuss someone's alcohol or drug use. They may not be in a place to talk about this just now, depending on how lockdown is impacting on them and their friends and family. Unless your call is routinely to discuss alcohol or other drugs, you'd need a cue from the person that they are perhaps drinking above the guidance or using drugs.

We know many people are using alcohol as a coping mechanism just now. Some may also be using drugs to cope. Once someone agrees to talk about this, the usual messages of drinking or using less often, having less each occasion, and having smaller amounts (size, strength etc) should be used..

Phone calls miss the cues from body language, but using **OARS** can help here.

Be sure to use:

O – open ended questions (allow them to tell their story)

- How are you being affected by the current coronavirus situation?
- How are you filling your time during lockdown?
- How are you managing just now with social distancing?

A - affirmations (show empathy)

- You're really concerned about your family (your money, your job, etc).
- It's good that you are talking about this.
- You are thinking about other ways you could spend the time.

R – reflections (let them see you have understood)

- You are worried about friends and family and miss them.
- You're wondering how you will manage if this goes on much longer.
- You realise you are having more at home than you used to.

S – summaries (to sum up your chat)

- You are feeling....just now.
- You are going to try to have a few days off this week (if that was volunteered, for example).
- We will catch up again next time and can look at your drinks/drugs diary (if that was volunteered, for example).

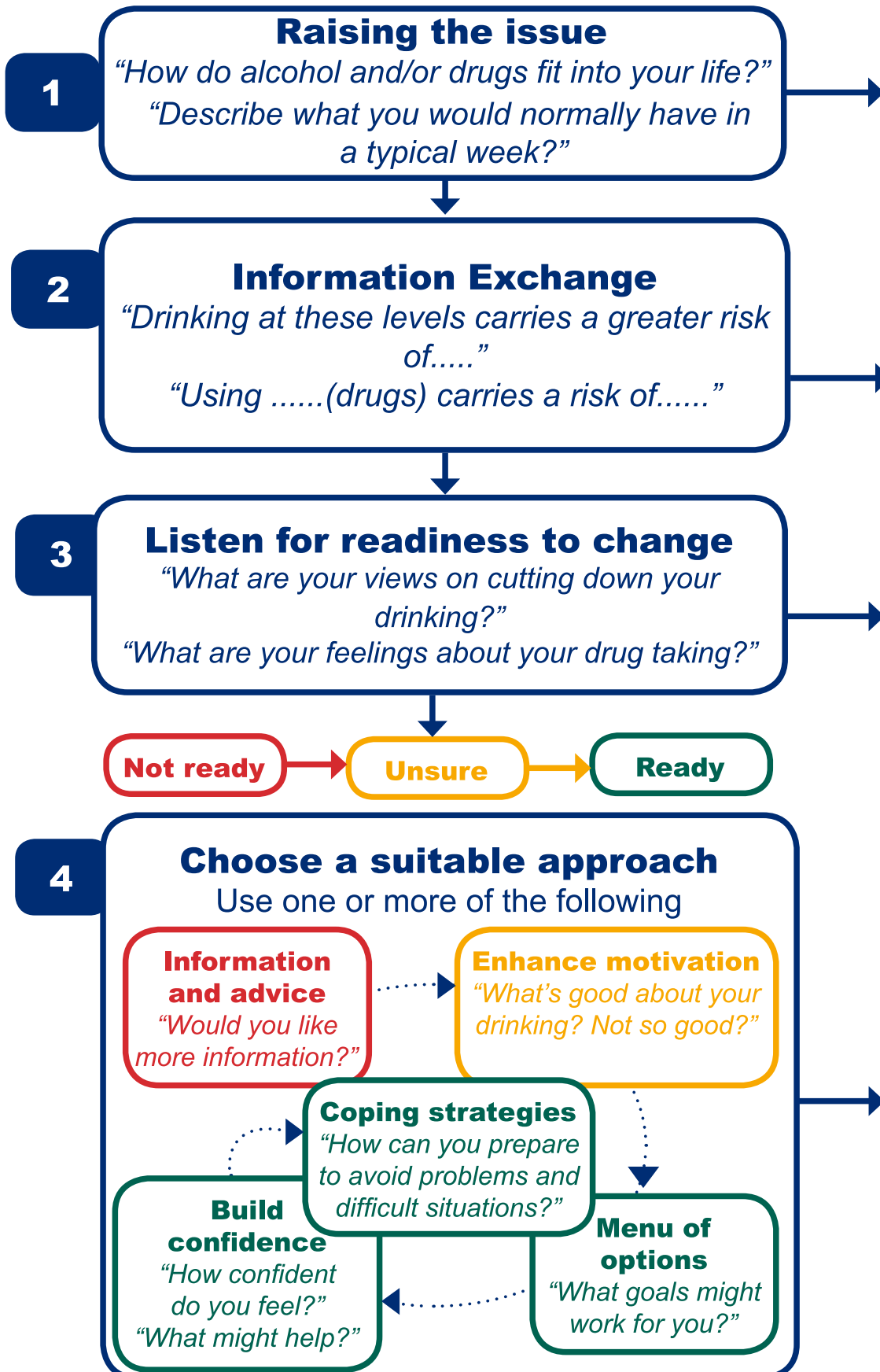
Other useful information could include:

- Alcohol and other drugs affect our moods, and it's important to look after our mental health at this time.
- Alcohol and drugs can have a negative effect on our sleep.
- The use of alcohol and other drugs can affect the immune system negatively.
- Be sure to take your opportunity to exercise – a walk can really boost your wellbeing.
- Eating healthily will help get through this.
- www.count14.scot or www.crew.scot or www.h-sat.co.uk for more information and ideas.

Stages of a Brief Intervention

Throughout the brief intervention remember to:

- Maintain rapport and empathy.
- Emphasise the patient's personal responsibility



Exit strategy - remember you or the person can choose not to continue at any point
Close conversation "It's fine if you don't want to discuss this now. I'll leave this leaflet with you."
Signpost and/or refer if appropriate