

# Young People & Families Team Newsletter Summer 2024

withyou  
in BCP

## Cannabis is still the most commonly used substance amongst young people

From 1 April, WithYou's BCP YP & Families Team have received 195 referrals to work with young people around their substance misuse. Out of those referrals 47% used cannabis as their primary drug closely followed by alcohol at 23% and Ketamine at 5%.

### Cannabis – brief overview

Cannabis is a plant-based drug with two main active substances found in it which are Cannabidiol (CBD) and Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

**Appearance** – It usually looks like small buds of leaves, or whole or shredded green leaves, and has a strong smell.

**Slang** –Bud, Weed, Thai, Hash, Green, dope, ganja, Cali weed

**Administration** Smoking in a 'joint' or 'spliff' (similar to a self-rolled cigarette), a pipe, or a 'bong', which is where smoke is bubbled through water and inhaled Vaping through an e-cigarette or vape, where cannabis (or its active ingredient THC) is added to the vape liquid\* or by eating, through adding it to foods such as cakes, teas, and gummies or lollipops.

**The Law** –If bought illicitly, cannabis is a Class B drug. The maximum sentence for possession of a Class B drug is up to five years in prison, a fine or both

**Cost** – £10 for 0.8 g = approx 3-4 joints or £20 for 3.5g = approx 12-15 joints.



### Ketamine – the basics?

Ketamine is on the increase in BCP with 11% of our young people using it either as their primary or subsequent drug of choice. Nationally it has increased by 78% between 2014 and 2022.

Ketamine (ketamine hydrochloride) is a dissociative anaesthetic and analgesic (pain killer) that is used for pain management in veterinary settings and occasionally in hospitals.

**Appearance** – usually a white or off white powder.

**Slang** – Special K, Horse, Ket, Kenny, Donkey dust, Jet, Wobble, K

**Administration** – Ketamine can be swallowed (bombed), injected or Snorted (lines or bumps). Snorting Ketamine is the most common route of administration by Young People in our service.

**The Law:** Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) – Class B meaning Maximum: 5 years' custody for possession,

**Cost** –1g– £30

## The Effects

The effects of ketamine vary from person to person due to individual characteristics such as; gender, weight, tolerance, mindset and environmental factors.

When Ketamine is snorted, the effects are usually felt within 5–15 minutes and can last 30 minutes to one hour. However, depending on how much is taken, effects can last much longer.

The dose taken of Ketamine can also influence the user's experience and the experience can be heightened or disguised if used with other substances.



### LOW DOSES (10 - 30mg):

- Sense of 'Lightness'
- Dizziness
- Euphoria
- Relaxed
- Energised
- Confused

### HIGHER DOSES (75mg - 150mg+):

- Dissociative effects
- Hallucinations
- 'K-hole' (positive or negative experiences)
- Feelings of separation between mind and body
- Pain-relief

## The Effects – Negatives

Ketamine can be psychologically addictive– can begin as occasional and result in daily use quickly.

**Regularly using Ketamine more than twice a week can have severe and permanent effects on the body.**

**Damage to the inside of the nose (if snorted)** – Look out for sinus infections or nasal problems.

**Ketamine induced ulcerative cystitis** – the need to urinate often, pain when urinating, blood in urine. Some individuals have experienced permanent bladder damage requiring bladder removal surgery.

**K Cramps** – intense abdominal pain.

**HPPD (Hallucinogen Persisting Perceptual Disorder)**– Longer lasting changes to the way an individual thinks and feels – after the drug has worn off.

**Liver damage** – Evidence of liver damage due to long term use is emerging, The liver has a range of important functions such as cleaning your blood and removing toxic drugs.

## Why do young people use it?

Ketamine is a versatile substance, making its use appealing for a variety of occasions including;

- A party drug (Festivals, Raves, Clubs),
- An after-party substance – due to its depressant effects.
- To increase imagination and creativity
- To assist with an introspective experience
- To detach from their problems



Ketamine is also a cheap (1g- £30) drug compared to others such as Cocaine (1g- £70) and MDMA/Ecstasy Pills (1 pill £10)

The come-down from Ketamine is also reported to be less severe than stimulants such as Cocaine and MDMA – allowing users to continue with day to day tasks.

**For these reasons, Ketamine is increasingly popular with Young Adults in today's society.**

**Risk of overdose – Drugs bought illicitly can contain a mixture of substances, including Nitazenes (synthetic opioids) and other substances. In BCP we have one report of Ketamine being cut with Fentanyl which is an opioid.**

### Symptoms of ketamine overdose include:

- Increased heartbeat
- Fits or seizures
- Falling unconscious or having breathing difficulties
- Chills or fever
- Not being able to urinate
- Arching of the back or convulsions

If you suspect someone has overdosed, call 999 immediately. & administer naloxone. Naloxone reverses the effects of opioid drugs like heroin, morphine and fentanyl. so use naloxone if you have it. If someone hasn't overdosed on opioids, naloxone won't harm them.

**You can get a naloxone kit and training on how to use it from our service please call 01202 558855 to discuss.**

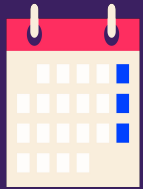
*"It makes you feel disconnected – like there's no problem in the world"*

*"It's cheap"*

# Activity Snapshot

withyou

in BCP



Since April our team has received 105 referrals to support young people in BCP



We are currently supporting 84 carers

We have had 401 face to face sessions, 440 telephone conversations and had 2132 advice and information contacts with people so far this financial year



## Feedback from some of our service users

I felt heard, I didn't have to repeat myself, My worker kept reiterating confidentiality.

Helped me reduce my substances and set goals 8/10

I just wanted to thank you all. When I came to the carers group I was broken and I would not have got to where I am now without your support - Carer

I was able to talk openly about how I felt about what is going on in my life. The ongoing support has enabled me to become substance free and has helped me be open and honest at home and with CMHT re my anxiety and mental health.

They have now offered me CBT.

## Contact Information

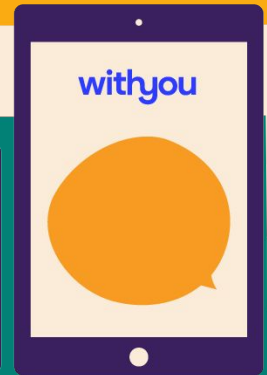
Click on any of the picture links below to access the information

### Website

Phone 01202 558855

E-mail

[bcpy pandfamily service@wearewithyou.org.uk](mailto:bcpy pandfamily service@wearewithyou.org.uk)



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