

QUESTIONS TO HELP WITH SAFETY PLANNING – DRUG / ALCOHOL USE

Managing your drink / drug use:

- On a scale of 0 – 10, where 10 is that even though life has got a bit more stressful since everyone has been on lockdown, we're managing, we've got people checking in on us and no one needs to worry and 0 is we're at the end of our tether, I feel like I could lose it at any point, the only way to get through the day is to get drunk / high, where would you rate it? Where do you think I (social worker) would rate it? What do you think needs to happen so that I'll be less worried and can get off your back about this?
- What kind of things are you doing right now to try to make sure that you aren't drunk in charge of the kids or that you aren't using drugs around them? How well do you think this is working? What would the kids say if I asked them? What would granddad say are the best ways that you're coping right now?
- When are you least likely to drink to the point where you get drunk or use drugs around the kids?
- How do you see yourself dealing with your drink / drug use? Is this something you can safely reduce or do you need to be completely sober / clean from drugs? What would your best friend / grandparents / the kids say if we were to ask them?
- Since I can't come out to see you, who else could I talk to that would help me understand how everyone is getting on at the minute?
- Who has been your biggest support in helping you stay off the drink / drugs? How is this working now that it's harder for people to spend time together? What ways have you found to stay in touch and how is this going?
- What would your kids say is the most important thing for you to do about your drinking / drug use? What would they absolutely not want to happen or be around right now?

Triggers:

- What is the hardest thing you're having to deal with right now that might mean that your drinking or drug use gets out of control?
- When your drinking / drug use is at its worst, what kind of things are going on in your life? How do these stressful things compare to what is going on for you right now?
- Who are the people that you are most likely to drink heavily / use drugs with? If I was to ask the kids, who would they say these people are?
- If I was to ask the kids what they think you are stressed about at the minute, what would they say?
- If I was to ask the kids how well you're dealing with stress at the minute, what do you think they would say?
- Thinking about life over the next few weeks / months, however long we might be on lockdown, what would be the main things that could happen that would make you want to drink / use drugs in an unsafe way?
- I know you're trying your hardest to cut down your drinking / stay sober / cut down your drug use / stay off drugs. What's the main thing that we need to think about and plan for to make sure that you stay on track with this?

Red flags:

- If I was to ask the kids, what would be the first thing that they would notice that would let them know that your drinking was getting out of hand or you were using drugs around them? What would your partner, granddad, friend etc notice?
- What would be the first thing that would warn you that things are starting to slip again with your drinking / drug use? What would be the first thing that your partner / your friends / grandparents etc would notice?
- What would tell you that things have got to the point where you need to do something to cut down or stop your drinking / drug use? Who agrees with this? What would your partner, friend, grandma etc say is happening when things have got out of control?
- What would the kids notice that would tell them that things were starting to get really bad again?

Keeping the children safe:

- If I were to ask the people who know you best what they think is a safe amount and type of alcohol / drug for you to drink / use, before things get to the point where you couldn't look after the kids properly, what do you think they would say? What would you need to do to help you to stick to this so that it doesn't get out of control?
- Of all the people that you know, who would be the first person to notice that you were going off the rails again with your drinking / drug use? Who would be the most likely person to step in and make sure that the kids are protected? What would they do?
- If you did end up getting so drunk or out of it that you couldn't care for the kids and they needed to be looked after by someone else, who would decide this? Who would go where? Where would you be? Where would the children be? Who would decide when it would be safe enough for the kids to be back in your care? How would they know?
- If we were to ask the kids what they would want to happen if you ended up getting so drunk or high that you couldn't look after them properly, what would they say? Who would they want to help?
- Now that you're picking up your methadone for the week instead of everyday, where are you keeping this so that the kids can't get hold of it? How are you making sure that there is absolutely no way that the kids could get hold of it or into it?
- The Safety Plan we had come up with involved your friend Sue and Aunty Pat coming in to see the kids. Now that they can't do that, what other ways can everyone think of that would mean that Sue and Aunty Pat could still help and see that the kids are okay?
- Kids, what would be the best way for you to let people know if you have any worries (could think about a safety object or word here)? Who would you feel most comfortable telling?