

Breaking the Cycle: Reducing Intergenerational Substance Misuse – a Follow Up Study



addaction

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The full report, titled **Breaking the Cycle:
Follow-up Study, Preliminary Findings Report
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addaction.org.uk/BTCreport

**Our findings tell the story of
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Addaction's Breaking the Cycle (BtC) programme aims to reduce and ultimately stop intergenerational substance misuse. BtC supports service users and their families to reduce the harms associated with parental substance misuse, promotes health and development, and fosters positive family functioning.

As BtC approaches 10 years of operation, Addaction and Zurich Community Trust have funded a pioneering long-term research study. The study has followed-up on a range of former BtC service users and their families to establish the long term impact of the programme.

Our findings tell the story of real families successfully tackling substance misuse, and demonstrate the significant societal and economic impact of the BtC programme's innovative approach.

Our Impact

Substance Misuse

65% of respondents indicated they were abstinent from substances or consuming alcohol within UK guidelines. At the start of treatment 100% of cases were using substances problematically.

Violence

In every interview where past issues of violence were highlighted, **all interviewees reported no current issues associated with violence** ongoing in their lives.

Parenting

At initial assessment most parents felt that their parenting skills were inadequate: only 25% said they were making progress. At the time of follow-up, everybody considered that they had made progress: 67% reported feeling they had achieved their goals and a further 8.3% felt they were making significant progress.

Protective Factors

Service users and their families reported improvement in the following protective factors:

- **Family harmony and cohesion**
- **Positive and stable parenting**
- **Parent-child related factors, such as discipline and improved school experiences**
- **Support networks beyond the family and engagement in a range of activities**

It is striking that between the time of the follow-up study and discharge from the BtC service, all of the above protective factors have continued to develop.

Resilience

Responses of "things are OK" were recorded in each of the following areas:

- **"My children are doing well, they are reasonably healthy" (92%)**
- **"My children can make friends and spend time with their friends" (89%)**
- **"How does your family get along?" (87%)**
- **"Can you and your family usually solve problems when day to day hassles happen?" (87%)**
- **"My children are going to school" (84%)**
- **"My children are doing well at school" (81%)**

These areas are of key importance, as each demonstrates that these children are showing strong signs of resilience and are therefore at much less likelihood of developing substance misuse problems.

Overall Impact

All participants reported that the BtC service had led to a **significant impact** on at least some, if not all, of the issues they initially presented with.

All participants attributed these successes to the BtC service, the interventions it provided and the approach of BtC practitioners.