



Young Person - Drug & Alcohol/Substance Misuse Safety Policy 2025-2026

Policy Statement:

Future Roots recognise that most young people will need to be able to access a wide range of information and informal support as they experiment and find their place in their communities and peer groups. Formal advice around substance misuse will generally be available at a young person's school and as part of their curriculum. There are statutory and voluntary agencies within local communities that can be approached for support and advice by young people and or their parents. Future Roots is able to signpost to these partner agencies.

Working with vulnerable young people is always likely to throw up many issues around substance misuse especially when young people are being pressured into trying new experiences with drugs or alcohol and the subsequent risky situations that may emerge.

Staff at Future Roots will be aware of the need to offer young people safe space to talk about their experiences and worries about substance misuse (their or their friends). Where necessary 1:1 time will be made available so young people can discuss any concerns they have in confidence.

Young people are encouraged to be open about their substance use and associated risks in order to a) ensure they are best informed about the choices they are making, b) they are able to understand the need for harm reduction, c) they are able to understand the law around substance misuse and the risk of prosecution. d) the overall context of substance misuse and the potential impact upon good life chances and opportunities.

Although we encourage open conversations the extent of confidentiality is very clear at Future Roots in that staff will always be open with young people about what disclosures can be kept confidential and what will need to be shared e.g. if there are issues of significant harm and risk to themselves or others.

Though this policy Future Roots primary aim will always be to ensure the safety of young people and ensure they are fully cognisant of measures they can take to seek help and support.

Misuse of substances by young people on the Farm Site.

If a member of staff becomes aware of or suspects that a young person is misusing substances on the Future Roots farm site then they should risk assess the situation before approaching and talking to the young person/people concerned. Inform a colleague to seek support if needed.

While workers may, if they feel the situation is right and their assessment of any risk to be low, try and speak with young people who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, their first regard should be the safety of other young people, their own safety and that of their colleagues. Support will be available from the office team should concerns escalate.

Where concerns exist, a decision must be made about the most appropriate reporting pathways. Due consideration must be given to a young person's vulnerability, risks to self and others and public safety. These pathways include:

- Following the Safeguarding policy and informing statutory agencies
- Notifying the Police
- Notifying the referral agency
- Notifying parents and / or carers.

Dynamic (active and ongoing) risk assessments must be undertaken to immediately assess the safety of the young person and others given this is a farm site and there is risk from Animals and Machinery.

Under no circumstances will a young person who is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol be allowed near the animals or to operate any farm machinery.