Youth social behaviour and network therapy (Y-SBNT): adaptation of a family and social network intervention for young people who misuse alcohol and drugs – a randomised controlled feasibility trial

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Disclaimer: This report contains transcripts of interviews conducted in the course of the research and contains language that may offend some readers.

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Plain English summary

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Plain English summary

Research has shown that people’s social networks (family and other important people) can make a difference to their drinking and drug use. Interventions (types of treatment) that involve families have been shown to be successful at helping young people with drink and drug problems. This research project looked at a social network intervention that is currently used with adults in the UK called SBNT (social behaviour and network therapy) to see whether or not it could be adapted for young people. A group of young people who had used drug and alcohol services in the past worked with the research team to make sure that the research was relevant to young people.

What we did

- We spoke to young people about involvement in this and future studies.
- We tested the delivery of the intervention (called Y-SBNT) with 53 young people in two treatment services in England.
- We looked at how the intervention was provided and whether young people and their social networks agreed to get involved.
- We compared Y-SBNT with the treatment that is usually given and measured the number of days that the young people used their primary problem substance (either alcohol or a specific drug) over a 3-month period before and after receiving treatment.

What we found

- We found that the Y-SBNT intervention could be delivered in services and was acceptable to young people, their family members and staff.
- Y-SBNT is more expensive than usual treatment and does not appear to work better than usual treatment in reducing the frequency of substance use.
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