



Welcome to your Foster carer's learning log. Helping you to structure and record your self-directed learning.

Name:

## Unit 1: Families affected by a parent struggling with addiction

Whether you are caring for a child on their own or a parent-and-child, if the family is affected by a parent with addictions, this unit is for you. Understanding how this affects the child, and the parent-child relationship, and how you can help, is an important part of your role.

### Quick knowledge check

#### Which of the following statements do you think are true

An analysis of 175 serious case reviews from 2011-14 found that:

- 17% of cases featured parental substance misuse
- 30% of cases featured parental substance misuse
- 47% of cases featured parental substance misuse

- 10% children live with at least one parent who is a binge drinker
- 30% children live with at least one parent who is a binge drinker
- 50% children live with at least one parent who is a binge drinker

Most women who use heroin or other opioid drugs or substitution therapy (methadone) should be encouraged to breastfeed (T /F )

#### What do you already know?

Before you start researching, make a quick list of some of the issues that families affected by addiction may have.

*Your notes*

## Improving your knowledge and understanding

### Resources if you are caring for children

[Childline's section 'Parents and alcohol'](#)

[Talk to FRANK. 'Honest information about drugs'](#)

[ADFAM website: 'improving life for families affected by drugs and alcohol'](#)

[Silent Voices: supporting children and young people affected by parental alcohol misuse. A longer read for a more in-depth understanding](#)

### Additional resources if you are caring for a parent-and-child

[Fostering Hope website section on supporting parents with addictions](#) (see also [useful links](#) section)

[Best Beginnings 'Parents who use drugs'](#)

[Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder \(FASD\) information for pregnant women](#)



## My key learning

What have been the most interesting things you have learned from your reading and research? Use this space to make some notes or a bullet-point list.

*Your notes*





## Reflection

Think about a family you have worked with where there was an issue of parental addiction. Would you now do anything differently? How does this experience affect their current behaviour and relationships? How could their experience be viewed as an asset?

*Your notes*

Have you come across resources that would help a child, young person, or parent in your care?

*Your notes*

## Discussion with peers or your supervising social worker

### Discussion starters

- Things you have learnt
- How that might affect your practice as a foster carer
- A list of useful resources to go back to or pass on to other carers



*Your notes*

What will you, as practitioners or as an organisation, now do to upskill yourselves about parental addictions? Could you invite a drug and alcohol specialist to your group to tell you about the service, or organize a coffee morning for PAC carers in your area?

*Your notes*

### Answers to quick knowledge check

- 30% live with at least one parent who is a binge drinker (between 3.3 - 3.5 million children) (Binge drinking: 6 or more units on a single occasion for women; 8 for men.)
- An analysis of 175 serious case reviews from 2011-14 found that 47% of cases featured parental substance misuse.
- Most women who use heroin or other opioid drugs or substitution therapy (methadone) should be encouraged to breastfeed, but not if they use cocaine/crack or high-dose benzodiazepines. (NHS evidence 2015)

These resources have been developed by Lucy November ([lucy@fosteringhope.co.uk](mailto:lucy@fosteringhope.co.uk)), funded by the Sir Halley Stewart Trust. They are free to use, but please contact Lucy if you are using them in order to join our network and contribute to an evaluation. Copyright 2020 Tanya Farrugia Illustration (images).