

TIME FOR A CHANGE

## WORKBOOK 3

Supporting your young person  
(a workbook for families)



**Odyssey House**  
*in pursuit of wellbeing*



**ODYSSEY**  
changing lives

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## Welcome

It is great that you are looking at ways that you can support your young person to make changes.

This can be a challenging process for your young person and your whole family. As your young person changes, some of the ways that you work as a family will also change.

There are lots of possibilities out there, and taking steps to develop a stronger family can be really exciting. It can also be scary, but you don't have to do it alone.

This workbook is designed to help you and your family know how to best support your young person as they get support at Odyssey. You'll get a chance to think about how you want your family to work together and what you need to do to help support your young person.

You can work through this workbook by yourself, as a family, or with others - like a supportive friend, or an alcohol and drug practitioner.

## You are not alone

We have worked with many New Zealand families and, at the start of their journey with us, many speak about feeling lonely, worried and emotionally exhausted. These are all normal emotions, and they are what we expect most families will be experiencing when they walk through our doors.

## Our role

Our role is to help your young person to make changes, and to support you and your family to connect with your family's strengths, so that you can provide the best support to your young person that you can.

## Reality check those fears

Many families have worries and, unfortunately, many families have slowly become disconnected from people around them before they have reached out for help. During that time, they often also believed some things that didn't turn out to be true. Here are some common examples:

The myth	The reality
My young person's addiction is my fault	You didn't cause your young person to be addicted.
I have to control everything	You can set boundaries and limits, but you can't control your young person's addiction.
I have to appear like I am completely ok, or my family will fall apart	Your feelings are ok. Try and find some support for yourself where you can let these feelings out. Your family still need you, but you can't be there for them if you are emotionally exhausted.
My young person needs me to be their friend	You can be friendly, but your young person needs you more as a parent than a friend.

## Top tips for parenting a young person through substance use issues

- The best and most important thing you can do is **spend time with them**. Pretty much every young person we have supported has told us they want a better relationship with their family (even though they may not have shown it). They just didn't know how. The first step towards a better relationship is spending more time together.
- **Listen** to what they are saying. Try not to interrupt them, and check that you have understood them properly before you speak.
- Try to **have fun with them without drugs or alcohol**. Many young people use drugs and alcohol to relax, reward themselves, or avoid feelings. Having fun with them without alcohol or drugs will help them to learn drug-free ways to do this.
- Have a **drug and alcohol-free house**. Your young person is making changes, and seeing drugs or alcohol around would make it much harder.
- Give **clear and encouraging messages**.
- **Be honest**. Try to be honest with them about how you feel and what is happening.
- **Set clear expectations and keep them**. Don't give excuses or cover up if they slip up. Slip ups will happen and, when they do, acknowledge them and remind them of the clear and consistent expectations that you hold. Remember, these expectations apply to everyone in the family. They are there to help the family work together, not to punish or shame others.
- **Try not to give them money**. If they need something, buy it for them.
- Talk to your young person when they are clear headed, not when they are under the influence of drugs and alcohol.
- **Get support for yourself**. It is hard to stay focused all the time. Try not to blame yourself. Reflecting and learning is helpful, but beating yourself up doesn't help. Getting professional support can help.

## What can you expect from Odyssey?

We know that young people have a family. During their stay with us, we arrange family meetings and visits, which help young people to build stronger relationships and practice communicating in different ways with their family.

We will work together with you to come up with a plan for how you will be involved, and what support you will receive. The next few sections will help you to reflect on things as a family.

You can also speak to your Odyssey key workers if you have any questions, or would like some more information.

1. **Referral**  
This is when we find out that a young person would like our support.
2. **Assessment**  
This is when we speak to the young person and others in their life to get a good picture of what is happening. Many of the questions that we will ask during the assessment are included in this workbook. [See 'Your current situation', pages 6-8.](#)
3. **Planning**  
This is when we speak to the young person and others in their life to get a good picture of what is happening. Many of the questions that we will ask during the assessment are included in this workbook. [See 'Making changes' on page 11.](#)
4. **Withdrawal and detox**  
Withdrawal symptoms are unpleasant feelings when someone stops using substances. We help young people manage their withdrawal

symptoms to make them as comfortable as possible. This could be at home with you, living with us, or in a medical setting.

[See pages 12-14 for more.](#)

5. **Staying with us**  
While living with us, your young person will have a timetable, attend a private school, learn new skills, and get given responsibilities that help them to practice these skills and keep the programme running.

There are different levels that a young person will progress through, each with a different set of skills that they will focus on learning. The longer they stay with us, the more skills they learn, and the more equipped they are to make changes. Young people tend to stay with us between one and six months.

[See pages 16-19 for ideas on how to support your young person during their stay with us.](#)

6. **Coming home**  
We plan together with your young person and you about how they will return home, and how they will keep making changes at home. [Pages 23-26 will help you prepare for this.](#)
7. **Community support**  
We have a team that work with your young person and you to help them keep making changes at home.

## Your current situation

You can help your young person get ready for assessment by thinking about what is happening in your family at the moment.

The questions below will help you to build a clear picture of your life. Have a go at filling them in. It's OK if you can't think of the answer straight away. Take some time and ask people who are close to you what they think. You might be surprised by what they tell you.

### What is important to your family?

Hint: Think about your values and those of your family. Some common answers are: caring for each other; treating others with respect; making each family member feel like they belong; forgiveness.

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### What do we do well as a family?

Hint: Be shameless here! It can be hard to name, and it can be easy to focus on the things we want to do better, but have a go. Ask people around you what they admire in you, or your family.

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# YOUR CURRENT SITUATION

**What was your young person like before they started their journey with drugs and/or alcohol?**



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**Our relationship (my young person and me):**

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**Good things:**

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What things give stress to our family?	Changes we could make:
Hint: This might be money, accommodation, or relationship problems.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

What things strain our family?	Changes we could make:
E.g. do you have less time to spend with each other, or are you all really grumpy when you do see each other?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

How do we cope or respond to this strain?	Tick if helpful	Tick if you'd like to learn new strategies
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	○	○
	○	○
	○	○
	○	○
	○	○
	○	○
	○	○

**What support is your family currently getting?**

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**What additional support might be helpful?**

(There are some useful supports listed at the end of this workbook)

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**How could you support your young person?**

Hint: This could include: providing a safe place for them to detox, being supportive of their decision to make changes, learning more about their addiction, or writing letters of encouragement while they are staying with Odyssey.

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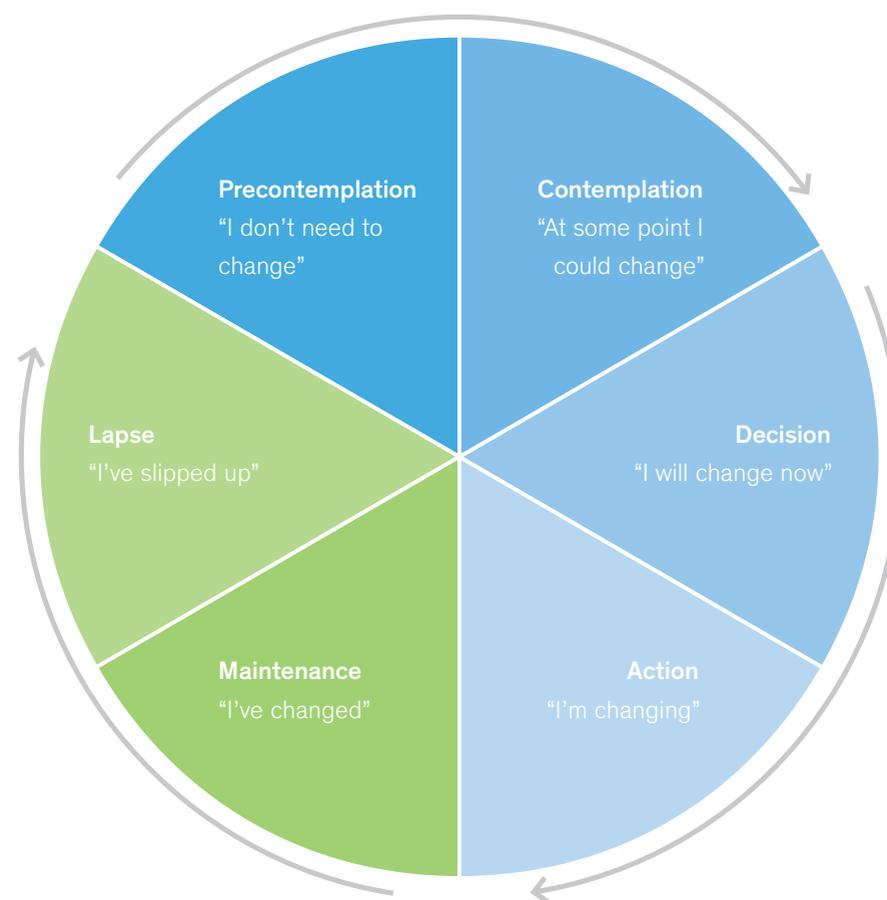
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## Making changes

Changing a pattern can be really hard. There will be times of great progress, but there may also be times when slip ups happen.

People go through different stages when they are thinking about change. These stages include:



# MAKING CHANGES TO SUPPORT YOUR YOUNG PERSON

## Before they stay at Odyssey

### Withdrawal and home detox

Drugs and alcohol change how our brain and body functions. For one-off use, what a person may experience while their body gets rid of the substance can be relatively predictable. However, it is much more difficult to predict what a person will experience the more a person uses.

Withdrawal is the term given to the experiences a person has when their body tries to get rid of the substances they have been taking and return itself to a stable drug-free state.

Sometimes, these withdrawal symptoms can feel so unpleasant that people go back to using substances, even if they really want to change.

Withdrawal symptoms usually are at their highest between days two and four, which usually makes people more anxious. Some symptoms, like low mood, poor sleep, and fatigue, can last for a few weeks.



### Common withdrawal symptoms

Severity	Symptoms
<b>COMMON</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>restlessness</li> <li>agitation</li> <li>irritability</li> <li>anxiety</li> <li>disturbed sleep</li> <li>intense dreams, nightmares</li> <li>poor concentration</li> <li>memory problems</li> <li>cravings</li> <li>aches and pains</li> <li>nausea</li> <li>no appetite</li> </ul>
<b>LESS COMMON</b> Time to talk to your doctor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vomiting</li> <li>diarrhoea</li> <li>sensitive to sound, light and touch</li> <li>low mood</li> <li>suicidal thoughts</li> <li>racing or irregular heart beat</li> <li>heavy sweating/chills</li> <li>shakes/tremor</li> </ul>
<b>GET URGENT MEDICAL HELP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high blood pressure</li> <li>hallucinations(seeing, feeling, hearing things that aren't there)</li> <li>delusions and psychosis(believing things that aren't true or not knowing what is true)</li> <li>seizures</li> <li>confusion</li> <li>disorientation</li> <li>loss of consciousness</li> </ul>

Source: Matua Rakī. 2012. *Managing your own withdrawal*. Matua Rakī, Wellington

### Options for withdrawal

We want to give your young person the best chance to successfully make changes. The following options are available to support your young person to withdraw:

<p><b>Home detox</b></p>	<p>If their withdrawal is likely to be straightforward, this could be an option.</p> <p>There needs to be good support at home to monitor and help manage withdrawal symptoms, and a living environment without access to substances, or people who supply or use them.</p> <p>(See workbook 2 of this series for more information).</p>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><b>Social detox</b></p>	<p>This is where we provide support to manage withdrawal symptoms when your young person is staying with us.</p>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><b>Medical detox</b></p>	<p>Sometimes we need to involve medical support to monitor withdrawal. This is likely to involve a short stay in a medical centre.</p>	<input type="radio"/>

### Setting boundaries

Boundaries can be hard to set with young people, and sometimes even harder to keep. Have a think about what you would like your boundaries to be, while your young person is living at home, and write them below.

#### These are the boundaries that I will set for my household:

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#### If these boundaries are overstepped, I will do these things:

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#### These people will help keep these boundaries:

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## A family support plan

What do you think would work for your family?

Fill in the table below, and speak to your Odyssey key worker about this:

KEY PEOPLE IN OUR FAMILY/WHĀNAU				HOW SHOULD THEY BE INVOLVED?				
Their names:	Will help our young person to make changes	Will make it harder for our young person to make changes		Gets told what our young person is doing	Gets told how our young person is progressing	Gets to know how they can help our young person	Comes to family meetings	Works with our young person and their key-worker
	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
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	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
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	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
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	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
	●	●		●	●	●	●	●

## Contacting Odyssey

Fill in the information below to help the family’s key contact person when they need to contact Odyssey.

ODYSSEY KEY CONTACTS	
<b>The Odyssey staff member who will help our young person while they are living in the community:</b>	
Name	
Phone	
Email	
<b>The Odyssey staff member who will be their ‘one to one’ key worker while they are staying with Odyssey:</b>	
Name	
Phone	
Email	
<b>Details for when I will call my young person:</b>	
<b>Details for when I will visit my young person:</b>	

## Some things to think about when you phone or visit

We love it when you talk with us about how your young person is doing.

Feel free to phone us beforehand to talk about what has been happening for your young person. Making changes can be very emotionally draining and sometimes young people talk about how hard things are, or they may be irritable. This can be alarming if you don’t know the bigger picture.

Your young person is learning new ways to express themselves, which might be different from how family members usually express themselves. This may mean that you need to practice new skills too.

During their stay with us, your young person will be trying to be both independent and to reconnect with you. Talk to the staff about what boundaries are good as your young person changes. Remember your young person needs you to be their parent, not their friend.

Finally, your young person will worry about what is happening at home while they are not there, e.g. Is Mum ok now that I’m not there to help with the younger kids? Has Dad found another job yet? How was my brother’s 21st? Is my bedroom still my bedroom? Try to reassure them that everything else is ok, so they can concentrate on making their changes.

**Noticing progress**

This is a great time to reconnect with your young person. And it's nice to see or hear their progress from one visit or call to the next. To help you track their changes we've made a list of things to think about when you visit or call your young person. You can jot them down after each visit - it might be a nice record to share with them later to show how they progressed during their stay with us:

**What changes do you notice in your young person?**

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**What do you notice about how their opinion is changing?**

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**What do you notice about how they talk about their emotions, or show you their emotions?**

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**What do you notice about how they talk about the future?**

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**What ways could you change how you communicate with them to get the best out of your relationship?**

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**Use the space below and on page 26 to record some of the changes you note during other visits.**

**What changes do you notice in your young person?**

Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

.....

**What do you notice about how their opinion is changing?**

Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

.....

**What do you notice about how they talk about their emotions, or show you their emotions?**

Date .... / .... / ....

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Date .... / .... / ....

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Date .... / .... / ....

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### What do you notice about how they talk about the future?

Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

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### What ways could you change how you communicate with them to get the best out of your relationship?

Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

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Visit .... / .... / ....

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## When they come home

### Making changes to your family environment

As your young person changes, your family will too. Making changes to the way your family works together may also help your young person to keep making changes. These changes could also lead to a much happier and healthier family.

Have a go at answering the questions below to help you think about what changes your family could make to support your young person. Speak to your Odyssey key workers about this in your family meetings.

#### 1. The changes my young person is making:

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#### 2. This is what will help them change:

The physical things in our house and community.	 <input type="radio"/>
The way we communicate with each other as a family.	<input type="radio"/>
The way we parent our young person.	<input type="radio"/>
Our daily routine.	<input type="radio"/>



How will your family communicate about what you expect from each other?

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Remember that your Odyssey key worker is there to support your young person and you, even if they come home earlier than expected. Talk to us about any concerns you may have and get ideas around how you can support your young person make changes.

What questions would you like to ask your Odyssey key worker the next time you speak to each other?

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# CELEBRATING CHANGES

## Reflecting on the changes

Your young person has returned home! These next few pages will help you to reflect on the changes that you are noticing:

### What differences do you notice in your young person?

How they act:

.....  
.....

How they communicate with others:

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.....

What is important to them:

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.....

### How is your family different?

What your family does well:

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How your family acts:

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How your family communicates:

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What is important to your family:

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The things that stress your family:

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How your family copes with stress and strain:

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The support that your family has:

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**How hopeful are you about these changes sticking?**

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**What do you need to do to help these stick?**

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**How will you celebrate these changes?**

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**Maintaining changes**

Slip ups do happen and slipping up is really common. Sometimes it can feel like things are back to square one, but that is never the case.

When slip ups happen, remember that you can speak to your Odyssey key worker. This can be really helpful to get some perspective. Try the following steps with your young person:

1. **Acknowledge** that it has happened.
2. **Plan** a time to talk with your young person that suits you both, once you both have had time to let out some of your emotions.
3. **Listen** to what they are saying without interrupting them.
4. **Tell them how you feel.** Try finishing this sentence, “Hearing you speak, I feel...”
5. **Agree on expectations.** These could be the same as before.
6. **Find solutions.** You might need to come up with a few and then decide which will work the best.
7. **Take action.**
8. **Encourage** your young person when you see they are making an effort to live up to expectations, or you can see they are improving their skills.

## Your family plan

Have a go at filling in this family plan to figure out what is right for your family.

Having a focus and clear expectations will help your young person make changes.

OUR FAMILY PLAN		OUR FAMILY PLAN		
Our family values:			<b>HOW WE WILL SUPPORT OUR YOUNG PERSON:</b>	
The goals of this plan:			Their triggers:	Their high risk situations:
<b>SUPPORTING EACH OTHER AS A FAMILY:</b>				
We will act and communicate in this way:				
These behaviours are not acceptable in our family:				
If expectations are broken, we will:				

## About the programme providers

### Odyssey

(09) 638 4957

[odyssey.org.nz](http://odyssey.org.nz)



Odyssey offers a range of residential and community-based programmes and services for adults and adolescents. We also help families with children. We can help with a variety of addiction issues, including: drugs; alcohol; gambling; and specialist help for people living with mental health issues alongside their addictions.

### Odyssey House Christchurch

(03) 358 2690 ext 719

[odysseychch.org.nz](http://odysseychch.org.nz)



Odyssey House Trust Christchurch provides therapeutic support and education to clients with drug and alcohol addictions. Our mission is to reduce the harm to the individual, family and community by reducing the long term effects of addiction.

### Workbook 3: Supporting your young person (a workbook for families)

is the third of four workbooks prepared by Odyssey and Odyssey House Christchurch to support participants in the National Youth Methamphetamine Treatment Programme

### The Time for a Change series of workbooks also includes:

Workbook 1: Preparing for residential treatment

Workbook 2: Home detox

Workbook 4: Going home

This series was made possible through the combined efforts of the following people and groups:

### National Advisory Group

**Ben Birks Ang**, Odyssey and New Zealand Drug Foundation

**Rachel Forrester**, Odyssey House Christchurch

**Andrew Buglass**, Odyssey House Christchurch

**Rochelle Brett**, Odyssey

**Kate Doswell**, Odyssey

**Tangi Noomotu**, Mirror HQ

**Debbie Christie**, Nelson Marlborough DHB Addictions Service

**Ashley Koning**, Matua Raki

**Michelle Fowler**, Werry Centre

**Jacqui Hampton**, CADS Altered High

## Useful contacts

### Alcohol.org.nz (Health Promotion Agency)

[alcohol.org.nz](http://alcohol.org.nz)

### DrugHelp

[drughelp.org.nz](http://drughelp.org.nz)

### PotHelp

[pothelp.org.nz](http://pothelp.org.nz)

### The Alcohol and Drug Helpline

0800 787 797

## Useful resources

### Alcohol and Your Health

A series of workbooks by the Health Promotion Agency (these can be found on [alcohol.org.nz](http://alcohol.org.nz))

- Concerned about someone's drinking?
- Is your drinking okay?
- Cutting down
- Stopping drinking
- Maintaining the change

### PotHelp

A workbook to help you change your cannabis use (order the workbook and DVD at [pothelp.org.nz](http://pothelp.org.nz))

### MethHelp

Helping you change (order the workbook and DVD at [methhelp.org.nz](http://methhelp.org.nz))

### P\*\*d off

A guide for people trying to stop using Meth/P/Ice/Speed (download at [matuaraki.org.nz](http://matuaraki.org.nz))



**ODYSSEY**

changing lives



**Odyssey House**

*in pursuit of wellbeing*

National Youth Methamphetamine Treatment Programme

[odyssey.org.nz](http://odyssey.org.nz)  
[odysseychch.org.nz](http://odysseychch.org.nz)