

Charity's survey will monitor substance abuse

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Norfolk-based charity the Matthew Project is appealing to parents, carers, and under-18s to take part in a research project and help in the fight against substance abuse.

The charity is conducting research in the form of an online survey, which will help it to assess public awareness of available services, support and information on the issue.

By participating in the survey, parents and carers will get the chance to have their say on young people's drug and alcohol services in Norfolk.

The organisers say it will also help to improve the provision of support offered by the Matthew Project's under-18 service.

Naomi Selim, the project's under-18 services manager, said: "It is definitely the case that many parents and carers are unaware of the support that is out there.

“A lot of young people are now using a wide range of legal highs, on which there is little information.”

Naomi Selim

“The issue of drug and alcohol problems among young people is a difficult one, and many people don't know where to go or how to access help.

“Also, conducting this research gives us a much wider of idea of what is really happening.”

Such research is crucial according to the Matthew Project, because of the quickly-changing profile of what drugs young people are using.

Ms Selim said: “A lot of young people are now using a wide range of legal highs, on which there is little information.

“It is very difficult to keep up to



■ A meeting between a client (back to camera) and a member of the Matthew Project.

Picture: LIBRARY

date on what people are using because their accessibility means that new legal highs constantly enter the market, and there is little to no information on them.

“There are a lot of myths around legal highs. We hear young people say that as they are legal that means they are safe, which is not the case.”

Organisers said they are targeting responses from 1,000 parents or carers by February 12.

The project said all responses will be dealt with in line with the Data Protection Act, with the information securely stored and then destroyed when it is no longer needed.

The results of the survey will be

publicly available.

■ Take the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/u18norfolkpandc>

■ What do you think about support for substance abuse in the region? Email newsdesk@archant.co.uk

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Alleged kidnap victim says he was taken to an address against his will

A 41 year-old man, who is alleged to have been kidnapped and beaten by members of a west Norfolk traveller family, told how he was made to get into a car and taken to an address against his will, a court heard.

The man and his partner, who was heavily pregnant, were both kidnapped on separate occasions and violently assaulted, so that the woman eventually made a false confession that her partner had smothered the grandmother with a pillow and had been stealing from her, Norwich Crown Court heard.

The court has heard how trouble flared after the death of Gertrude Frankham, in December 2012, at her home in Walpole St Andrew.

John Farmer, prosecuting, said Mrs Frankham died of

natural causes, and this was confirmed when her body was later exhumed, but members of her family were convinced she had been murdered.

Giving evidence via video link, the man, who cannot be identified for legal reasons, told the jury how members of the family had asked him if he might know who had burgled Mrs Frankham's home,

He said he was told that crockery had been broken and items taken from the home of Mrs Frankham but he said he did not know who might have done it.

However later he claimed he was asked to get into a car, by members of the family, while he was waiting to pick up his child from school, despite him telling them he did not want to go.

He said he was threatened

so he got into the car and was taken to an address nearby where there were about 20 men and women standing around waiting for the car to arrive.

He said when he got out of the vehicle he was knocked to the ground.

“I can't tell you 100 per cent who did it.”

He said he felt a number of punches and kicks.

“It felt like a dream. I was effectively going in and out of consciousness.”

He said he then heard someone shout to get him into a warehouse.

“I don't remember who transferred me to the warehouse.”

Five defendants have already admitted their part in the incident.

A total of seven defendants are on trial.

The trial continues.

Wheels and tyres stolen from dealership

Thieves stole wheels and tyres during a raid on an Audi garage in Norwich.

In three separate incidents, the thieves removed wheels and tyres from

two Audi A1s and an A3 at the Meridian Way dealership. The incidents happened between New Year's Eve and Monday.

Anyone with information should call PC Andy Mason at Sprowston police on 101 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.