

## **Substance Abuse Treatment Options – What You Need to Know**

For most people, “treatment” for substance use conjures images of detox or a residential rehab facility. In reality, detox (detoxification) is not treatment, and a residential program is just one of a variety of options.

Treatment for teens and young adults struggling with substance use or addiction can take place in different forms, settings and for different lengths of time — and the type you don’t know about could end up being the best one for your child. Before you make any decisions, take time to understand the options.

### **Understand What’s Available**

Approaches to treating addiction are generally similar regardless of substance. However, treatment is typically individualized to some degree based on the characteristics of the patient — treatment programs usually address an individual’s physical, psychological, emotional, and social issues in addition to his or her alcohol or other drug use — as well as the type of substance itself, as in the case of [medication-assisted treatment](#) for opioids.

Review the overview of different types of programs below. And if you haven’t already done so, be sure to review our information on [Navigating the Treatment System](#).

## **TREATMENT PROGRAM TYPES**

### **OUTPATIENT**

*Low to Medium Intensity*

Clients typically attend no more than nine hours of treatment a week (slightly less for teens) at a specialty facility while continuing to live at home. Many programs make services available in the evenings and on weekends so individuals can remain in school or continue to work.

### **INTENSIVE OUTPATIENT**

*Medium to High Intensity*

Clients attend 10-20 hours of treatment a week (slightly less for teens) at a specialty facility while continuing to live at home. Many programs make services available in the evenings and on weekends so individuals can continue to work or stay in school. A better option for individuals who need multiple services, have accompanying medical or psychological illnesses or have not been successful in outpatient treatment.

### **DAY TREATMENT / PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION**

*Medium to High Intensity*

Clients attend four to eight hours of treatment a day (20 or more a week) while continuing to live at home. Most families use these types of programs when their child needs an intensive and structured experience. Day treatment can be appropriate for individuals with co-occurring mental illness.

### **RESIDENTIAL**

*Medium to High Intensity*

These programs provide treatment in residential settings and can last from one month to a year. Typically, residents go through different phases as they progress through the program. During certain phases, contact with your child may be limited. Ask questions about the program’s policies and procedures, and any additional services like education or vocational training.

**INPATIENT***High Intensity*

Treatment provided in specialty units of hospitals or medical clinics offering both detox and rehabilitation services. Typically used for people with serious medical conditions or mental disorders.

**MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT**

For individuals with a physical dependency on certain drugs, primarily heroin and other opioids, medication is provided in a specialized outpatient setting in combination with counseling and other treatment services.

Source: [What are the Treatment Options?](#), Partnership for Drug Free Kids, 2018