

## Specialist parent court to be piloted

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**Camden Council is to pilot the UK's first specialist court for parents with a drug or alcohol problem, reports *Community Care* magazine.** Its aim is to reduce the number of children going into care.

The court will be set up in 2008, subject to further funding being secured. The court would offer same-day referrals for help, advice and support in cases where children may need to go into care because of their parents drug or alcohol misuse problems.

Camden Council carried out a study last year with neighbouring Islington and Westminster Councils to ascertain the feasibility of the court. The study found that two thirds of all care cases referred to courts in the three boroughs have parental substance misuse as a major contributory factor.

Drug and alcohol courts are widely used across the US, says *Community Care*, where early findings have suggested that they have been successful in allowing more children in care to return to their parents, as they have engaged with substance misuse services.

The proposed pilot scheme would run for three years and would see a judge, substance misuse specialists and social workers able to put support in place for parents willing to engage with the court.

**Source:** [www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

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