

Have a Child Aged 12 to 17 with an Alcohol or Drug Problem?

Wonder where to turn?

We can help, by providing...

Information on community and family resources, support groups, school services, etc.

If your child refuses treatment, there is another option. The legal system can require your child to enter drug and alcohol treatment. To get the process started, call the **Bucks County Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. (BCDAC)** at **215-773-9643** and mention Act 53.

What is Act 53?

ACT 53 is a law in the state of Pennsylvania. Act 53 allows a parent/legal guardian to obtain a drug and alcohol assessment for their child, and if warranted, compel the child to enter treatment.

Criteria

- The parent/legal guardian has evidence that their child has had drug or alcohol problem within the last 30 days;
- The child is unwilling to participate in a treatment program;
- The child must be a resident of Bucks County; and
- The child must be between the ages of 12 and 17

If the above criteria are met, BCDAC, Inc. will guide the parent/legal guardian through the Act 53 process.

Procedure

The ACT 53 hearing and assessment process can be completed within a week. The first step is for parents to call BCDAC's Approval of Care Dept. 215-773-9643, for guidance and resources. Information on how to access Act 53 will be provided, along with direction on how to complete applications and the court hearings to be conducted. If a petition is filed with the court the court will review the petition to determine if a hearing should be scheduled. At the initial hearing the court will decide whether or not an evaluation will be ordered. If an evaluation is ordered it will take place that same day at the justice center by credentialed staff from Aldie Counseling Center or Penn Foundation Recovery Center. After the evaluation is completed a hearing will be held to determine whether involuntary commitment will be ordered. If the child is found in need of treatment arrangements will be made for the child's treatment to begin as soon as possible. Parents/legal guardians are responsible for court related fees, including \$58 Sheriff fee (which must be paid in cash) and \$24.50 filing fee. Funding for legal representation for the child will be through BCDAC, Inc. Treatment costs are through parent/guardian private insurance, Medical Assistance or County funding. Guidance on funding process will be provided to the family.

Questions? Contact:

Bucks County Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. 215-773-9643, M-F 8:30-4:30

OR

Bucks County Children's Crisis Support 1-877-HELP (1-877-435-7709), After Hours