

Do you support someone who uses or is dependent on alcohol or drugs?



1800 250 015 | 24 hours a day, 7 days per week | FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL

HOW CAN I HELP?

You can:

- **Talk** without judging. This is often easier if you know the effect the drug has.
- **Encourage** the person taking drugs or alcohol to seek help or get a health check-up. This may help them to look at their drug or alcohol use. It may help them see if the drug or alcohol use starts to impact or is impacting on their physical or mental health.
- **Support** changes if a person wants to try to cut down or reduce harm from their use. They may not want to stop. Not using is the safest option, but sometimes people do not feel they can, or do not want to do this straight away. When this happens, it can help to focus on ways to reduce harm.
- **Remember** change is hard.
- **Provide hope** and encouragement that change is possible, if they decide to stop using alcohol or the drug.

WE CAN:

- **Provide** information about alcohol or other drugs.
- **Talk** through issues you may be having about someone else's drug use.
- **Connect** you with other services or groups that may give you extra support.
- **Discuss** services that might support the person who is using alcohol or other drugs.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

We all cope differently. It is not easy to support someone using drugs. You may have had some difficult times with the person you care about. You may not always have good feeling about the person using drugs or alcohol. You may feel upset or frustrated.

You can:

- **Phone Alcohol & Drug Information Service** to talk with someone. This will help you to get the support you need and also understand what other services are available to you or the person you care about, such as counselling. Or you can make an appointment with your local Drug and Alcohol Service.
- **Care for yourself first.** The stress of caring for a person who is dependent on or who may have problems with drugs or alcohol can put a lot of strain on your own physical and mental health. Take time out for yourself.
- **Plan** to do something you enjoy or that helps you reduce stress, e.g. massage, gardening.
- **Spiritual practices and support from your faith community** may also be helpful.
- **Join** a support group. Sometimes carers feel that family and friends do not fully understand what they are going through. Try to connect with others who understand and have lived with similar issues to provide extra support.
- **Eat** food that will keep your body healthy, keep your mental wellbeing strong and keep your energy high.
- **Be active** and enjoy exercise to help you manage stress and sleep well e.g. walk, swim.
- **Rest** or sleep when you can.

SO WHY DON'T THEY JUST QUIT?

There can be many reasons why a person chooses to use drugs or alcohol.

For example, they may be dependant, or they may choose to use alcohol or other drugs to;

- Try to relieve symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Be social with friends.
- Feel the effects of the drug or alcohol (this may include a relaxing feeling).

It is important to:

- **Understand** that no one can make another a person change. It is important to know that the person 'owns' their drug use and all the effects from their decisions.
- **Don't blame yourself** for someone else's decision to use drugs.



1800 250 015



Call TIS for an interpreter on 131 450 (free)

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OTHER HELPFUL NUMBERS



Stimulant Support Line*: 1800 101 188
Illawarra Shoalhaven Drug & Alcohol Service*: 1300 652 226
Family Drug Support*: 1300 368 186
Drug & Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre:
(02) 8706 0150
Lifeline: 131 114
Mental Health Helpline*: 1800 011 511

Where to get help for Drug and Alcohol:
<https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/publications/Pages/Where-can-I-get-help-English.aspx>

How to approach drug or alcohol use in the family:
<https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/pages/for-families.aspx>

**Please note: if you are calling from a mobile, call costs to 1800 and 1300 are set by your mobile service*