



What do I do if My Child Needs Help?

If your child's drug or alcohol use progresses even after you have attempted to intervene, you may decide he or she needs more help and guidance than you personally can give. There are resources you can tap if your child is not yet at the stage where his drug or alcohol use is causing serious problems.

The following people can help your teen:

- School counselors can work with your teen by discussing the underlying issues behind his or her drug or alcohol use
- Family doctors or pediatricians can talk authoritatively about the risks of drugs and alcohol and their effects on the body (make sure you give the doctor advance notice so she knows to prepare)
- Coaches, if your child is on a team, can speak about how his or her drug use negatively affects his body, health, performance, and the whole team
- Other family or caring adults that your child admires or likes may be able to non-judgmentally offer your child the opportunity to open up

Once your child's drug and/or alcohol use has started causing serious and recurring problems, it's probably time to start looking into intensive treatment programs.

Treatment programs provide the stability, education, discipline, and counseling adolescents need to get better. Look for programs that are specific for youth as those counselors will have the most expertise with adolescents. You can start with outpatient treatment which usually consists of individual, family and group therapy and may also involve your child's school in the process. If your child's drug use is out of control or you feel it is a crisis situation, you may want to talk with your child's physician or an outpatient treatment center to get a referral to an inpatient program. Inpatient treatment can be a short-term solution to stabilize your child and prepare him to move into an outpatient program.

The most important thing to remember is to not let embarrassment about drug or alcohol use in your family keep you from getting help for your child. Professional help is always confidential and your friends will be empathetic.

Call 828-254-2700 or toll free 877-678-2696. We're here to help.