

Advice and support for anyone who is worried about someone else's drinking and/or drug use

Drug and alcohol information

- why do people drink or take drugs
- drug names and what they are
- starting conversations and setting boundaries

Support for you

- identifying as a carer
- carer's assessments
- emergency planning
- local and national support services



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthinherts



Drug and Alcohol Information

Why do people drink or take drugs?

People take drugs and drink for a number of reasons such as:

- to cover up any physical or emotional pain
- to fit in
- to try and avoid problems
- as they feel bored or lonely
- to socialise and have fun
- to help them relax
- to experiment.

What are the different drugs, their street names and effects?

You can find lots of information on drugs, including:

- what it looks like
- how it is taken
- street names of drugs
- the risks and much more.

Visit the below websites for more information:

- Talk to Frank- www.talktofrank.com
- Druglink- www.druglink.co.uk/alcohol-drugs

Starting Conversations

If you are concerned about someone's drink or drug use, it can be hard to know what to say or do. Below are some tips to support you to have that conversation.



Prepare yourself

Think about what you would like to say, try and be as calm and as positive as possible. You may even prefer to write a letter.



Find the right moment

Aim to talk to the person when they are not intoxicated or least intoxicated, avoid moments when they are agitated or upset.



Ask open questions

You could try something like; “What do you like about drinking/ taking drugs?” “What worries you about not drinking/ using drugs?”



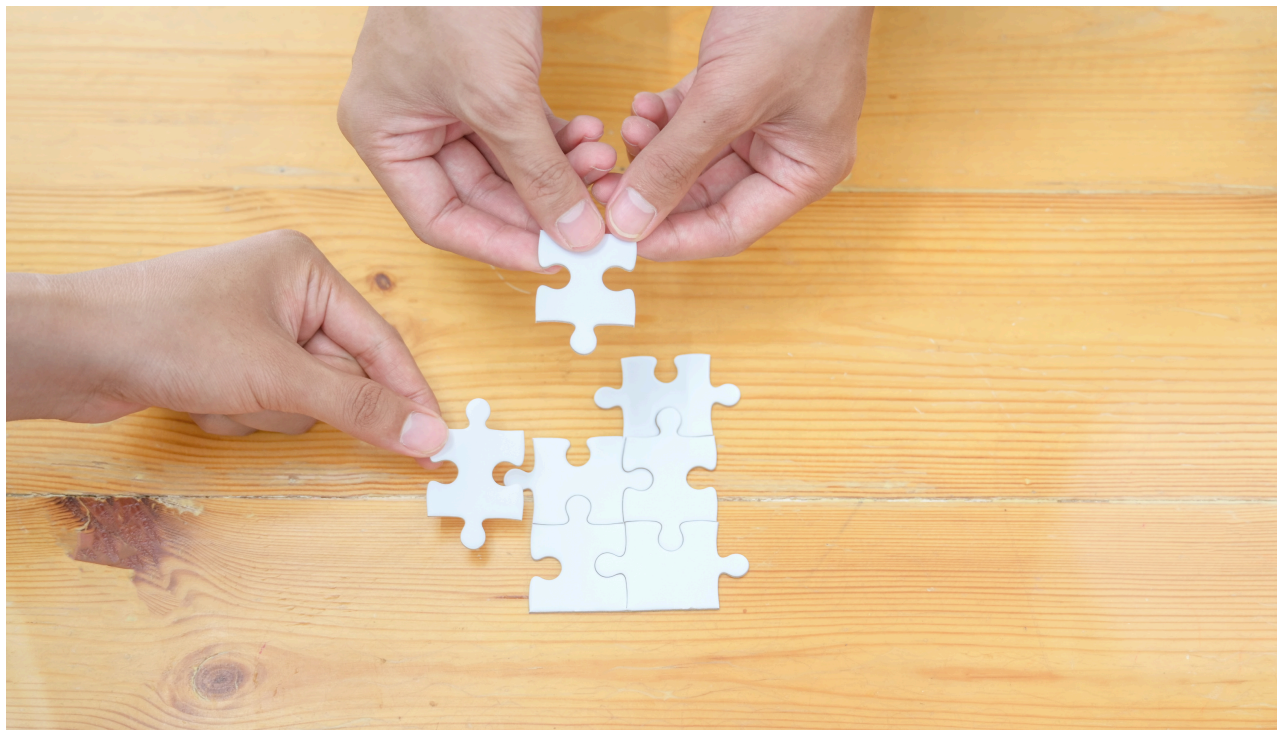
Using “I” statements

Starting your sentence with “I” creates a way of letting the person know how you feel and understand how their actions impact you. You could try something like: “I worry when you are intoxicated, that you won't come home.”

Boundaries

Setting boundaries and sticking to them is not always easy. Where possible, set boundaries and consequences that you feel confident you can stick to. It can help to decide together. Letting the person experience the consequences can support them to understand their actions and give them the motivation to change.

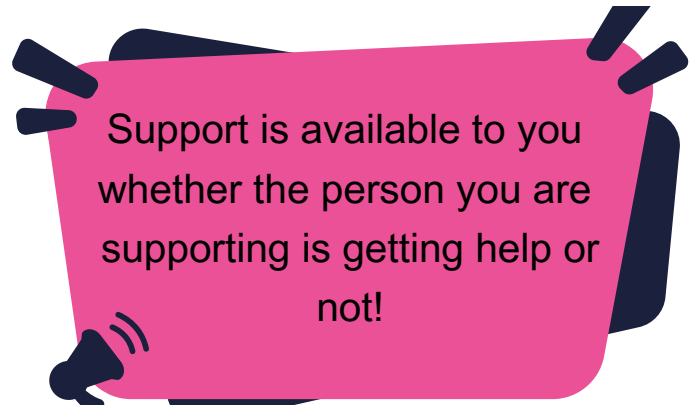
Try and support the person without directly supporting the drink or drug use. For example, if they want to access support but are worried about making the first step, sit down with them and encourage them to make that first step with you. Try not to do the task for them, instead empower them to do the task with you and praise them for making that step. This will help build their confidence and accountability.



Support for You

Individuals supporting someone who uses substances often prioritise the needs of the person they are helping over their own health and wellbeing. As a result, they may face a number of challenges, such as

- poor sleep
- constant worry / anxiety
- isolation and stigma
- financial impact
- anger and frustration
- impact on work and life in general
- feelings of guilt and responsibility.



You may find it hard to ask or seek help. But it's important that you do. By accessing support, it may help you manage the person you care for with their behaviours, keeping to boundaries and knowing you are not alone. Through accessing support, you may also find that it makes a positive impact to the person you are supporting too.

"I rang them to see what the process is because we only live up the road, even though he doesn't want to go. They said well you can come to our carers group, I didn't know there was such a thing, it's been absolutely life-changing. It has been the first time I have been able to talk to people in a similar situation who are going through the same anxiety."

Who is a carer?

Although you might not see yourself as a carer, supporting someone who drinks or takes drugs means that it is not uncommon for family members, friends or neighbours to take on a carer role. A carer is unpaid and without your support the person would not be able to manage, even when you are not undertaking traditional caring tasks, your own emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing are likely to be affected.

Carers assessments

If you provide unpaid support to someone who would not be able to cope otherwise, you are known as a carer. Even if the person you support is a close relative or friend and even if they do not receive services from Hertfordshire County Council. A carers assessment is a chance for you to have a conversation with a social care worker about ways to help you to:

- continue caring if you want to
- work if you want to
- have a life outside caring
- stay fit and healthy and be safe
- access full benefit entitlements
- get good quality information
- feel respected as a carer
- access guidance and advice
- access information on peer groups
- create a carers contingency/ emergency plan.



Call Hertfordshire
County Council
for a carers
assessment
0300 123 4042

Carers assessments aren't:

- an assessment to assess your ability to care- it's there to help you
- it isn't carers allowance benefit, this is separate and awarded from the DWP.

To find out more information on carers assessments please head to the website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers or call: 03001234042

Carers in Case of Emergency Planning

A carers in case of emergency plan will help you to plan what would happen if there were an emergency and you are unable to give support – for example if you are unwell.

Items you may like to include:

- medical conditions including any dietary requirements or allergies
- details of medication, and how often they need their prescription and where to get it from
- behavioural, physical and emotional needs
- contact details of people such as GP, social worker, recovery worker, friends or family
- a calendar of any upcoming appointments they have including time and location.

If you don't want to go ahead with your carers assessment you can still have a carers in case of emergency plan. Head to the below website for more information.

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carersincaseofemergency

Dedicated Carer Support Locally

Carers in Hertfordshire

Telephone: 01992 58 69 69

Website: www.carersinherts.org.uk

Change Grow Live Hertfordshire- All Age Service

Telephone: 0800 652 3169

Website: www.changegrowlive.org/spectrum-hertfordshire-drug-alcohol-services

The Living Room

Telephone: 0300 365 0304

Website: www.livingroomherts.org

Druglink

Telephone: 01923 260 733

Website: www.druglink.co.uk/

Resolve

Telephone: 01707 690739

Website: www.resolve-online.org

Dedicated Carer Support Nationally

Al- Anon- Alcohol only- Hertfordshire Groups Available

Telephone: 0800 0086811

Website: www.al-anonuk.org.uk

Families Anonymous (Famanon)

Telephone: 0207 4984 680

Website: www.famanon.org.uk

Adfam

Telephone: 020 3817 9410

Website: www.adfam.org.uk