

Dealing with violence

Arguing with someone who is under the influence of drugs, particularly stimulants, can be dangerous. Violent behaviour cannot be ignored. It may be necessary for you to seek legal advice urgently, and to take yourself and other members of the family to a safe place.

Protecting the children

If you have children, you will probably have done everything in your power to protect them. Children of all ages need to talk about what is happening and, above all, to understand that they are not responsible. Try to see that the family is not isolated or cut off, and encourage outside interests and friendship. Never let children travel in a car with someone who has been using drugs.



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Living with a drug user

If you live with someone who is using drugs, you may wish to consider some of the following ideas and strategies. Not all of them will apply to you, but you will almost certainly find some of them helpful. They have been drawn from the experience of many other people over the years.

Remember that there is a limit to what you can do for someone else. People are responsible for their own lives and, however hard it seems, we are all capable of making choices.

You may find it useful to talk with a counsellor to get things straight in your own mind. If so, or if you would like further information about any aspect of drug use, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Should I be worried?

If you are worried about somebody's drug use, you are probably right to be concerned. Even if the drug user says there is nothing to worry about, find out all you can about the drug and its

effects. They you will have a much better idea whether you are right to worry or not.

Should I cover up?

You may have tried to cover up for someone else's drug use. You may have made excuses for the user to family, friends or employer. By doing this you are protecting the user from the consequences of his/her drug use.

Whose responsibility?

The drug user is responsible for the consequences of his/her own drug use - you should not take on this responsibility yourself. Talking to people you trust and explaining that there is a drug problem will lessen the burden you carry.

What about my feelings?

Anyone involved with a drug user will feel at times anxious, guilty, fearful, lonely, helpless, depressed, angry or worthless. These are very

common feelings - and common for the user, too. Try to keep your own life going and do not allow the drug use to isolate you as well. Care for yourself, and keep your own interests going. You owe yourself love and concern too.

Saying 'no'

Don't buy drugs for the user, or finance the drug use. You are only giving permission for it to continue. Refuse quietly but firmly. Hiding the drugs or throwing them away will be playing a game you will never win. The drug user will always get some more somehow.

Talking about the drug use

Choose sober moments to talk about the drug use - not when someone is under the influence of drugs. Don't threaten to do anything unless you mean to carry it out. You may need to talk to the drug user about your feelings over and over again before you are certain you have been heard.