

# Parenting Positively



## Coping with a Parent's Problem Drug or Alcohol Use

**For parents**

of children between 6 and 12



Family Support Agency



Barnardos

This booklet is one in a series on **Parenting Positively**. Parenting is a very rewarding job but one which can be difficult at times, especially when parents are faced with challenging situations. The aim of this series is to provide information and guidance to parents of children between the ages of 6 and 12 to help create a positive, loving and supportive relationship between you and your child.

The series covers general parenting skills as well as complex life issues such as bullying, bereavement, separation, parental drug and alcohol problems, and domestic abuse. There are booklets for parents outlining children's understanding of the particular issue and how you can support them. There are also booklets for parents to read with their children, which may help your child to better understand what is happening and help you as a parent to answer any questions they might have.

Each booklet also gives further resources that you can follow up for more information and help on the issue covered.

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This series was produced by the Family Support Agency and Barnardos' Training and Resource Service.

The Family Support Agency provides support to families through locally based Family Resource Centres, through supporting organisations providing Marriage, Relationship, Child and Bereavement Counselling Services and by directly providing Family Mediation through its 16 family mediation centres to couples going through a separation or divorce. It carries out research, provides information and advises the Minister on family related matters. The Family Support Agency was established as a statutory agency in 2003.

Barnardos supports children whose well-being is under threat, by working with them, their families and communities and by campaigning for the rights of children. Barnardos was established in Ireland in 1962 and is Ireland's leading independent children's charity.

Written by Mary Daly.

# Introduction

This booklet is for parents of children between the ages of 6 and 12 who are living with parental drug or alcohol problems. It is for use by parents experiencing problems with their own drug or alcohol use, or for those who are living with their partner's harmful drug or alcohol use. This booklet is also for any other adult who is concerned about a child such as a grandparent, family member, guardian, foster parent or friend.

Parenting can be stressful at the best of times and is not made any easier when there are alcohol or drug problems in the home. Not only is this a very serious issue for the individual person involved, when that person is also a parent, the impact on the children and family as a whole is significant. Harmful alcohol and drug use in the home can cause serious risk to any child living there.

It is hoped that through this booklet you will become more aware of how drug and alcohol problems affect parenting and what issues your child may be facing. There is information on how to talk to your child and how to recognise how they are being affected by what is happening at home. In this way you can help keep your child safe, ensure their needs are met and find out where to go for help if either you or they need it.

## Children's needs and rights

### Children's needs

Children thrive best in situations of security, affection and continuity. They need a 'secure base' and parents who behave in responsible and predictable ways. This means loving and attentive parents or guardians who recognise and respond to their needs, put their best interests first and provide a stable and consistent environment.

### Children's rights

Like all human beings, children have rights in order to protect them, promote their well-being and provide them with the things they need in order to grow and develop their potential. The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* states that children have a right to express an opinion and to be consulted on matters affecting them according to their age and maturity.

Every child has the right to grow up in a family ...

- Where they are taken care of and protected from harm.
- Where they are safe from violence and neglect.
- Where they are treated with dignity and respect.
- Where they have their wishes taken into account in matters affecting them.

When considering parental drug and alcohol problems, it is important to consider the rights of children given that such problems do not support family life but rather act as a drain on parenting and therefore have the potential to hurt and damage children living with it.

As a parent, you are responsible for ensuring that your child's needs are met and that they grow up in a home where they are protected from harm and supported to reach their potential.

# Drug and Alcohol Problems

## What do we mean by drug or alcohol problems?

The term 'drug or alcohol problems' (sometimes called substance misuse or abuse) describes a pattern of harmful behaviour involving the misuse or overuse of substances for mood-altering purposes. In today's society, there is a broad range of substances which may be used in this way. These include alcohol, over-the-counter drugs, prescription medication, illegal drugs (also known as recreational drugs) as well as inhalants and solvents. Illegal drugs include marijuana/cannabis, cocaine, heroin and LSD.

Drug-like products are also sold on the internet and in 'head shops'. These products are now easier to access and may include incense blends, smoking mixes or party pills. Many of these synthetic products are unsafe and they can have very serious consequences for the user.

Alcohol use is widely accepted in Irish culture. The majority of people who use alcohol do so in a social way that does not have a negative effect on their family life. However, when a parent drinks too much or too often, this gets in the way of the job of parenting.

The acceptance of alcohol in our society often causes it to be less visible as a problem to those outside the family. Often the 'hidden harm' of a parent's alcohol abuse is minimised and underestimated. Hidden harm refers to the deep and long-lasting impact for a child when a parent has a problem with drugs or alcohol.

'All children and adolescents have the right to grow up in an environment protected from the negative consequences of alcohol consumption.'  
(*World Health Organisation, 2001*)

## When does it become a problem?

**Alcohol and drug use happen at different levels. Not everyone who uses substances is addicted.**

It is socially acceptable to drink alcohol and some people may enjoy its taste or relaxing effect. Sometimes people can take drugs for a pleasurable effect. However, even small amounts of drugs or alcohol can alter moods, cause drowsiness or inhibit judgement. Similarly, careful use of medication (as prescribed) can also affect the mind or body, for example there may be a loss in appetite or drowsiness. Any of these reactions affect how a parent cares for or responds to their child.

Problems arise when alcohol or drugs are over used and guidelines are not followed. This can be when someone uses alcohol in a way that isn't consistent with legal or medical guidelines, e.g. underage drinking, binge drinking or drinking excessively. Or someone could be using legal drugs in a way that is different to their intended use, such as using someone else's medication, taking wrong amounts of their own medication or inhaling solvents. Or a person could be taking illegal drugs.

When someone is drunk or under the influence of drugs it can seriously impair their judgement.

When a parent has taken drugs or alcohol they may be absent from the home on 'benders'. A 'bender' is another word used to describe going drinking or taking drugs for blocks of time, such as days or even weeks. Alternatively, the parent may be physically present but absent in every other way such as being emotionally distant. Either situation can be very difficult for a child to live with.

If a parent has a problem with drugs or alcohol, it can be upsetting, confusing or dangerous for children or others in the home. The user may feel a strong need to take alcohol or drugs, even though they know it can have dangerous health risks. It may feel like being caught in a trap. The parent may be aware that they have a drug or alcohol problem yet they will turn to alcohol or drugs as a way of coping or managing feelings.

## So, what is addiction?

**Dependence**, also known as **addiction**, refers to more long-term use of alcohol and drugs. The person may use greater amounts of the drug as their body can tolerate larger amounts. There can be serious withdrawals if they cannot get the drugs or alcohol that their body and mind craves. When a person is addicted, life becomes more centred on using or drinking. The person is no longer in control and it is difficult for them to stop even though it may be causing harm. With addiction, there is a physical (in the body) or psychological (in the mind) dependence on the substance.

Addiction is considered by some to be a chronic, progressive illness. However, many people working in the field prefer to call it a 'condition' that has some similarities to an illness in that the affected person can have symptoms of an illness such as vomiting, headaches, shakes, appearing very sleepy or slurring of speech. Also, signs such as severe mood swings, staying in bed all day or being unable to carry out normal day to day tasks can be signs that the person is not coping mentally.

Unlike an illness, however, it is not possible to recover from addiction by a visit to the GP or by taking an antibiotic or headache tablet. Over time the person may become ill and develop a mental illness, such as paranoia, or a physical illness, such as liver disease.

Addiction is not easy to recover from and can require medical or specialist help.

Poly drug use or dual use is when two or more drugs are used together, or when problem drinking is combined with problem drug use.

## What happens when people are addicted?

Addiction means that a person can be in one of these three states:

1. **Preoccupation or anticipation:** Constant cravings are a sign that addiction is taking hold. There is an overwhelming urge to use and the person can be preoccupied with this, despite other events or responsibilities in their life. This means spending time and money getting drugs or trying to work out or plan the next time they can drink or take drugs. Irritability, mood swings, tiredness and depression are a part of this stage.
2. **Under the influence:** The person is not in control of themselves or the situation around them. They are either intoxicated from alcohol or 'high' on the drugs or substances they have taken. As the drug or alcohol is taken frequently, the person may take larger amounts to experience similar or greater effects or highs. This 'bingeing' pushes the effects of drug or alcohol use to dangerous levels. Recovery from episodes can be physically painful and the user may be unable to carry out day to day tasks due to symptoms.
3. **Withdrawal:** This brings serious physical pain and psychological anxiety (mental distress). The person may become upset or agitated and feel panic or anxiety. They may be unable to sleep or show signs of paranoia (thinking is distorted). Other possible effects can include tiredness, muscle pain, seizures, headaches, nausea or sweats. Avoiding these frightening and painful symptoms becomes the main priority and 'preoccupation' sets in, so the addiction cycle continues.

Addiction can have a significant impact on a parent's capacity to look after their children and on the quality of family life.

# Drugs, Alcohol and Parenting

## When we talk about harmful parental drug or alcohol use, what do we mean?

This is when one or both parents are using drugs or alcohol in a way that causes problems for them and for those living with them. The effects can be very serious for the parent, impacting on their physical and psychological health as well as their parenting skills.

When there are parental drug or alcohol problems, family life can be chaotic, stressful and a child's emotional well-being and safety put at risk.

Not all families living with drug or alcohol misuse experience serious difficulties. For example, a parent may be dependent on methadone, a synthetic opiate which can be prescribed to treat heroin addiction, or other medication, but because they avail of treatment and support services they may function well. In other cases, the person who is misusing will choose to use

at a time when there are less risks, for example, when children are in bed and there is another responsible adult in the home to ensure safety. Despite this appearing to be a safer option, it is still a gamble which has the potential to lead to danger. There is always the risk that while under the influence someone may become urgently ill, their behaviour may become aggressive or accidents could happen.

Also, the parent or young person who has to take on the extra responsibilities in the home may feel under pressure during times when the person is using and less able to parent (due to withdrawal symptoms). There is also an ongoing risk that the drug or alcohol use could become more serious.

While some families are better able to cope with drug and alcohol problems, it is always a serious issue and it can be a great strain on family life.

## When does alcohol and drug use become a problem?

When a person has a problem with alcohol or drugs they are often not in a position to make choices and decisions that will be in the best interests of their own health or the welfare of their family.

Important questions to ask are:

- How does the drinking or drug use affect the person's ability to make good judgements regarding the needs and welfare of their child?
- Is the parent engaging in behaviour which is putting a child at risk?

When a parent has a drug or alcohol problem, the drug is in control and the need for it can be so great that they cannot stop using it even when it is causing them harm. This is a problem for the family as it can have an adverse effect on both the health of the person who is misusing and the lives of others living with them.

Problems with drugs or alcohol may negatively affect the ability of parents to respond to the emotional, physical and developmental needs of their children in the short and long term.

## How do drug and alcohol problems affect parenting?

In families where alcohol and drugs are being misused, behaviour is unpredictable and life can swing from calm and loving to crazy and violent. Children do not know that the mood of their parent is dependent on the amount of alcohol and drugs in their system and can become confused and insecure. They love their parents and want them to stop, yet feel their parents don't love them enough to make the decision to stop.

Children can become unsure of what is going to happen next and can develop difficulties with trust, particularly with adults.

# Effects on Children

## Will my child be affected?

Every situation is different, but children's lives **are** affected by parental drug or alcohol problems and it can have a deep and long-lasting impact on them. At times, this is not fully seen until early adult life.

We do know that children living with parental drug or alcohol problems often experience certain common feelings. Children can be affected in the following ways:

- Children need routines and a stable home environment. Normal family routines can become interrupted and unpredictable when there are drug or alcohol problems in the home. When these take hold, the child can experience their family life slipping away. It is full of confusion and broken promises. One day they have a parent who seems to be caring and well, the next day they have a parent who appears angry with them and can't organise a meal or get out of bed.
- Children can be tired and hungry if bedtime and mealtimes are affected.
- Children see what is happening but, if no one is mentioning it, they can become confused. They may feel they need to keep the drug or alcohol problem a secret or even pretend it is not happening at all.
- When parents are under the influence of mood-altering drugs or alcohol, they are not the same towards their child and behave differently than when they are sober. A child cannot understand this and will sometimes blame themselves for their parent's behaviour. They can feel that the problem is their fault.
- Children may be ashamed and embarrassed by how their parent behaves and may not want to bring friends home in case they see what is happening.
- Children can feel their family is the only family with this problem. They do not know that other children are also living with parental drug and alcohol problems.
- Children can feel under pressure to be loyal to their parent and not want to betray them by discussing the problem with anyone.
- Things may be said which would not be said if parents were not under the influence of drugs or



alcohol. It can be scary for a child to experience this. It is harmful for a child to see their parent out of control.

- Newborn babies can be born with harmful physical effects. Drug and alcohol use during pregnancy can harm the unborn child.
- Research has shown that drug and alcohol problems often go hand in hand with domestic violence. Due to the increased risk of violence, children can be at greater risk of emotional and physical neglect or abuse.
- As children can feel very alone, they may have strong and conflicting feelings of sadness, anger, confusion and anxiety.
- Children often take on adult responsibilities and may feel that they have to look after the parent with the drug or alcohol problem or other siblings.
- Children may underperform in school or miss school. When in school they may be worried about how their parent is or what is happening at home.
- Family income may be used to buy alcohol or other drugs, leaving little money for other essential items such as food. This causes children to be hungry and also causes family arguments.

## How will I know if my child is being affected?

Children can be affected in very different ways.

Not all children show signs that the parental drug and alcohol problems are affecting them. This may be because they are coping well and have some strengths or supports which are helping them, such as another adult in their lives that they can rely on. It may also be that the effects will not surface until later in life.

1 in 10 Irish children feel that their life is significantly affected by their parent's alcohol use.  
*(ISPCC, 2009)*

Signs to look out for can be emotional, physical, behavioural or social.

- Is your child withdrawn or in a low mood?
- Has there been a change in mood?
- Does your child have friends? Do they come to the house?
- Are they hungry or tired a lot of the time?
- Is your child sleeping?
- Has your child got anyone to talk to?
- How is your child coping in school?
- How is your child spending their time? Are they taking part in activities outside school?
- Have they become angry or aggressive?



# Talking to My Child

## How can I talk to my child?

Listening and making time to be with your child is the first step in knowing what information or support they need. Choose a time when you will not be interrupted, a time when you are alone with your child. That way you can give your child your full attention and they will know that you really want to understand what they are thinking and feeling.

## Should I talk to my child about the drug or alcohol problems?

It is really important to talk to children about what is happening in their family.

When families do not talk about what is happening, children are left to try to make sense of it on their own, which can be scary. It is not necessary to constantly

talk about it, but not talking at all can lead to confusion and problems with relationships in the family.

A child can feel very alone if drug or alcohol use is causing problems in their family. The people to whom they would normally turn are involved in the problem and a child can feel as though there is no one to turn to as the whole family are involved in a pattern of harmful behaviour.

Children usually know more about their parent's harmful drug or alcohol use than parents realise and if it is not talked about they may have feelings of secrecy and shame around it. They can also feel scared about any risk or possibility of being separated from their parent. Parents may also worry a lot about losing their children and may be fearful to discuss their drug or alcohol problems because of this.

## What are the important things to say?

- Give clear, factual information about substance misuse and what addiction means. Use child-friendly language and simple explanations. See the booklet in this series for children on parental drug or alcohol problems.

- Explain that parents can do mean and stupid things when they drink too much alcohol or use drugs.
- Reassure your child that it is not their fault and they are not the reason their parent is drinking or using drugs.
- Explain that they cannot cure their parent's drug or alcohol problem.
- Let the child know they are not alone. Other families have the same problem all around the world as well as in their school or community.
- Let your child know it is ok to talk about the problem.
- Accept your child's feelings and let them know that it is ok to have these feelings.
- Encourage your child to make good choices for themselves and to be involved with friends and activities.
- Don't burden children with adult roles and responsibilities. When children are overburdened it can affect how they cope with their day to day lives, including school.

## How can I help my child to cope with school?

School is very important for children. It offers them a routine and life outside the family where they can grow and develop. Often school is where children get a break from the family situation and are allowed to be just children. They will take part in activities, find their strengths and meet their friends. This allows them to escape from the situation at home for a while every day, giving them a life of their own.

If your child is worried by what is happening at home it will affect them in school. If your child does not get enough sleep or is upset and distracted, it will affect how they cope in school and they may have difficulty concentrating or communicating with others.

If teachers know what is happening in your child's life they may be able to understand and respond to their needs. If you feel you can, it may be helpful to talk in confidence to the school teacher and/or principal about the situation.

If people in the community and children in your child's school are aware of the problems in your home, there is a risk that your child could be bullied about this, for example 'Your Da's an alco.' Watch out for the signs of bullying and link in with the school as soon as possible.

The booklet in this series on **Coping with Bullying** may be helpful for you.

**One way to help children to deal with parental addiction is to use the 7 Cs developed by the National Association for Children of Alcoholics.**

**The 7 Cs are:**

- I didn't **C**ause it
- I cant **C**ure it
- I cant **C**ontrol it
- I can **C**are for myself
- I can **C**ommunicate my feelings
- I can make healthy **C**hoices
- I can **C**elebrate myself

## **I don't misuse but my partner does. What can I do to help my child?**

Children cope much better when they have someone to talk to and confide in about their feelings and what is happening. It is hugely important for children to have someone stable in their lives who acknowledges that there is a problem and recognises how the child is feeling.

However, because of the way in which drug and alcohol problems can affect the whole family, sometimes the parent who is not misusing is under considerable stress. You may be trying to deal with and cope with the demands of living with harmful drug or alcohol use and are at risk of being caught up in the chaos. It can be very tough trying to remain healthy and well if family life is being challenged in this way.

If you are feeling stressed like this, try to get some support for yourself. Having this support can give you the strength to better help your children. Talk to a family friend or your GP.

Try to accept that as the parent who does not have a problem with drugs or alcohol you cannot change your partner's drug or alcohol use or control it. You can, however, make changes in your own life and take steps to support the safety and well-being of your child.

## How can I best support my child?

The best protection for a child living with harmful parental substance use is that their parent gets help to deal with their problems.

It is possible for families to recover from the pain that the drug or alcohol problems have caused. This means taking the steps to get help and talking to someone who is specialised in the area. This is not easy, but it is the best option for you and your child in terms of reducing the harm.

## What helps children to cope?

- Having someone to talk to and confide in is a big support to children. If you cannot do this for your child then make sure that they have another adult to talk to that they can trust. This can be a family member such as a grandparent, an aunt or uncle,

or a family friend. Never encourage a child to keep it a secret.

- Maintaining some key family routines and activities helps children to cope. This includes recognition of special events such as birthdays and celebrations as well as weekly routines such as watching a movie on a Friday or going to the park on Sunday.
- Children who are supported to take part in other activities outside the family home and develop a network of friends are also better able to cope with day to day life. It strengthens children to see outside the drug and alcohol misuse and separate themselves from it.

## I don't want my child's life to be affected by drug and alcohol problems. How can I best support them to be strong and get on with their life?

Many children are able to draw on inner strengths to cope with their circumstances and succeed in life. These inner strengths are called **resilience**. Children who are living with parental drug or alcohol problems can be helped by being supported to develop resilience.



You can help your child to develop resilience by:

- Taking time out to talk to them and give clear, honest information.
- Spending time with them and having fun together. Allowing them behave and act like children.
- Ensuring they have someone in the family they can talk to who they can trust.
- Protecting them from conflict and directly seeing their parent under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Making sure they attend school and are not tired or hungry.
- Supporting them to take part in sporting and after school activities.
- Talking with them and giving them encouragement, telling them what they are good at and helping them to build a positive image of themselves.
- Ensuring that they know they are not to blame and cannot 'fix' their parent's drug or alcohol problems.

## What are my options?

Help is available to both parents who have drug or alcohol problems and those who are living with them.

The most important step is to make the decision to change and get help.

Parents who are misusing alcohol and drugs will find it very difficult to make this decision. It is without a doubt the best decision you could make, both for yourself and for the future well-being of your children. Some parents find the effect that their behaviour is having on their children is what motivates them to get help and seek a new substance-free life.

As a first step it often helps to discuss the issue with your GP. A medical practitioner can assess your health and level of drug/alcohol use and make recommendations as to what options are available to you. Because of the nature of substance misuse and addiction, no single treatment is appropriate for all individuals. The service will be matched to your needs.

Treatment services include in-patient and out-patient options. This means you can be treated while living at home or by staying in a hospital or treatment centre. Sometimes a combination of both is needed. Recovery can be a long process. There are support services in the community and self help groups available for both the person in recovery and all involved in the family and these are listed at the back of this booklet.

## If my partner has a problem with drugs or alcohol, where can I get support?

You can seek help from a number of sources:

- Trusted friends or family members.
- Support groups – many other people have had similar experiences and can offer helpful advice from their own knowledge and understanding of the impact of parental substance abuse on children and families.
- Other services – there are a number of support services listed at the back of this booklet.

## I am a parent in recovery, how can I talk with my child?

Before you talk with your child, think about the effects your drug or alcohol use has had. What did your child know about your drug or alcohol problems? What were they exposed to? How was your relationship with your child during that time? How serious was your drug or alcohol use? Who was there to help?

Remember, your child will have a range of feelings. They may be angry or resentful about the past. They may be relieved that you are well, but anxious about the future. It is important that you acknowledge and accept **all** of the feelings your child has and resist any urge to minimise these. It can be hard to hear and accept the damage and pain caused by your actions but it is very important that your child gets your support.

Give your child opportunities to talk about things, but only at their own pace. Addressing the past may be part of your recovery process but it's important to remember your child will only be able to do this when they are ready.

As a parent in recovery, you will more than likely be availing of professional support and treatment. It is important that you have a support system in place as rebuilding family relationships may be a challenging time for you. Also, professional services that specialise in addiction can advise you about how best you can approach this. Check out Sources of Further Information at the back of this booklet.

# Staying Safe...

It is very important that alcohol and drugs are not left around your home in a way in which children may have easy access to them. Children may experiment and become involved in drug use in this way. Medications and alcohol should always be kept in a secure locked cabinet safely away from children. Do not leave children unsupervised in the home when there are drugs and alcohol available.

If alcohol or drug use is causing violence in the home, make sure your child knows what to do when an argument starts. The booklets in this series on **Coping with Domestic Abuse** may be of some help to you. Advise your child to stay away from the situation. Talk to them about how to get help and if they do not feel safe, advise them to leave the house and go to a neighbour or a family friend.

Talk to your child about how to avoid getting into an argument with their parent when they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

If a child feels scared by the behaviour of a parent make sure they know it is important to get an adult who can help. You can give your child some important contact numbers such as the local Gardai or a trusted family friend.

Talk to your child about what makes them feel unsafe and take steps to protect them from these situations.

# Sources of Further Information

## Useful Contacts

### **Barnardos**

Barnardos supports children whose well-being is under threat, by working with them, their families and communities and by campaigning for the rights of children. Barnardos was established in Ireland in 1962 and is Ireland's leading independent children's charity.

Christchurch Square, Dublin 8  
Tel: 01 453 0355  
Email: [info@barnardos.ie](mailto:info@barnardos.ie)  
[www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

### **Family Support Agency**

Government Agency which supports Family Resource Centres, organisations providing marriage/ relationship, bereavement & child counselling services and operates the Family Mediation Service. Also funds research and provides information on family related issues.

4th Floor, St Stephen's Green House,  
Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2  
Tel: 01 6114100  
Email: [info@fsa.ie](mailto:info@fsa.ie)  
[www.fsa.ie](http://www.fsa.ie)

### **Family Mediation Service**

The Family Mediation Service is a free mediation service, operated by the Family Support Agency, to assist couples to negotiate the terms of their separation, located in 16 offices around Ireland.

1st Floor, St Stephen's Green House,  
Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2  
Tel: 01 634 4320  
Email: [info@fsa.ie](mailto:info@fsa.ie)  
[www.fsa.ie](http://www.fsa.ie)

### **Family Resource Centre National Forum**

A support network working with the Family Resource Centres (FRCs) located in communities throughout Ireland.

Email: [info@familyresource.ie](mailto:info@familyresource.ie)  
[www.familyresource.ie](http://www.familyresource.ie)

## For Parents

### **Al-Anon**

Al-Anon is for people who are affected by a problem drinker. Visit <http://www.al-anon-ireland.org> for more information about Al-Anon and a list of contact details for groups in your area.

### **[www.alcoholireland.ie](http://www.alcoholireland.ie)**

**Alcohol Action Ireland** have a searchable online guide to alcohol services. The Alcohol Action Ireland Alcohol Service Finder can be found at: [www.alcoholireland.ie/get-help](http://www.alcoholireland.ie/get-help), at [www.drinkhelp.ie](http://www.drinkhelp.ie) and at [www.alcoholhelp.ie](http://www.alcoholhelp.ie) or by searching for 'Alcohol Service Finder' on Facebook.

### **Ana Liffey Drugs Project**

Tel: 8786899  
Email: [info@aldp.ie](mailto:info@aldp.ie)  
[www.aldp.ie](http://www.aldp.ie)

### **Citizens Information Service**

Tel: 01 605 9000  
Email: [info@ciboard.ie](mailto:info@ciboard.ie)  
[www.citizensinformationboard.ie](http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie)

### **Free Legal Advice Centres**

Tel: 01 874 5690 / 1890 350250  
[www.flac.ie](http://www.flac.ie)

**HSE Drugs Helpline:**

Tel: 1800 459 459 (Mon - Fri 10am and 5pm)

**Merchant's Quay Project**

28 Winetavern Street, Dublin 8

Tel: 01 524 0160

Email: [info@mqi.ie](mailto:info@mqi.ie)

[www.mqi.ie](http://www.mqi.ie)

**Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)**

Tel: 1890 283 438

Email: [helpline@mabs.ie](mailto:helpline@mabs.ie)

[www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie)

**Parentline Confidential helpline**

for parents under stress or seeking parenting advice and support.

Locall: 1890 927 277

Email: [info@parentline.ie](mailto:info@parentline.ie)

**Pavee Point (Travellers Resource Centre)**

Tel: 01 878 0255

Email: [info@paveepoint.ie](mailto:info@paveepoint.ie)

[www.paveepoint.ie](http://www.paveepoint.ie)

**Samaritans**

(24 hour confidential emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair)

Lo-call: 1850 60 90 90

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

**The Rise Foundation**

(offering family programmes and support for those who have a loved one with addiction)

Aras Treasa, 5 Coppinger Row,  
Clarendon St., Dublin 1.

Tel: 01 7645131

Email: [therisefoundation.ireland@gmail.com](mailto:therisefoundation.ireland@gmail.com)

[www.therisefoundation.ie](http://www.therisefoundation.ie)

**The Rutland Centre**

An alcohol and drug rehabilitation centre which also offers counselling services, family intervention programmes and public workshops/family meetings

Knocklyon Rd, Templeogue, Dublin 16

Tel: 01 4946358

Email: [info@rutlandcentre.ie](mailto:info@rutlandcentre.ie)

[www.rutlandcentre.ie](http://www.rutlandcentre.ie)

**Women's Aid**

Tel: 01 868 4721 / 1800 341900

Email: [info@womensaid.ie](mailto:info@womensaid.ie)

[www.womensaid.ie](http://www.womensaid.ie)

Contact details for your local Garda Station, Health Services Executive or Hospital can be found in the Green section of your local telephone directory.

## For Children

**CARI Foundation**

– Children at Risk in Ireland

Tel: 1890 924 567

Email: [helpline@cari.ie](mailto:helpline@cari.ie)

[www.cari.ie](http://www.cari.ie)

**Childline**

Tel: 1800 666 666

[www.childline.ie](http://www.childline.ie)

Text 'Talk' to 50101

**Children's Rights Alliance**

Tel: 01 6629400

Email: [info@childrensrights.ie](mailto:info@childrensrights.ie)

[www.childrensrights.ie](http://www.childrensrights.ie)

**Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC)**

29 Lower Baggott Street, Dublin 2

Tel: 01 676 7960

Email: [ispcc@ispcc.ie](mailto:ispcc@ispcc.ie)

[www.ispcc.ie](http://www.ispcc.ie)

**The Office of the Ombudsman for Children**

Tel: 01 865 6800 / 1800 20 20 40

Email: [oco@oco.ie](mailto:oco@oco.ie)

[www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie)

## Useful Publications

All of these books are available from  
[www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

### For parents

**Understanding Addiction and Recovery through a Child's Eyes: Hope, Help and Healing for Families** by J. Moe, HCI, 2007

### For children

**Wishes and Worries: Coping with a Parent Who Drinks Too Much Alcohol** by Lars Rudebjer, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2011

**An Elephant in the Living Room - the Children's Book** by Jill M. Hastings and Marion H. Typpo, Hazelden Information and Educational Services, 1984

**When a Family is in Trouble: Children can Cope with Grief from Drug and Alcohol Addiction** by Marge Heegaard, Woodland Press, 1993



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Family Support Agency, St. Stephen's Green House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2

T: 01 611 4100 E: [info@fsa.ie](mailto:info@fsa.ie) [www.fsa.ie](http://www.fsa.ie)

Barnardos' Training and Resource Service, Christchurch Square, Dublin 8

T: 01 454 9699 E: [resources@barnardos.ie](mailto:resources@barnardos.ie) or [training@barnardos.ie](mailto:training@barnardos.ie) [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)



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