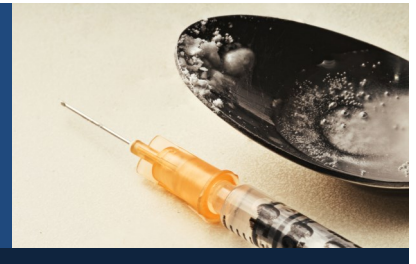


# How to Talk to a Loved One About Substance Abuse



Talking to someone about their drug abuse is not easy, but is often necessary to get a person into treatment. Don't wait to speak up. Start the conversation before it is too late! If you need to talk a loved one about their addiction, here are some tips to start the conversation:

**Talk to your loved one when they are sober.** Find the window during the day that they are less likely to be using, such as in the morning after they first wake up.

**Keep your cool and be patient.** Talking about a person's addiction is difficult. Someone battling addiction may use different techniques such as anger, avoidance, aggression etc. to get the conversation to end. Go into the conversation with a clear head, determined to be patient no matter what the addict might say, or else your message may get lost.

**Don't judge the addict.** Being too harsh will not get the person into treatment. Remember that the person has a medical disorder, and it is very difficult to give up the addiction without help.

**Be honest.** Addicts often don't realize how badly they are hurting their loved ones. Tell the person how you feel in a simple and straightforward way. Remain calm when you tell them how you feel and remain empathetic, but don't hold back.

**Listen.** Listen to what they have to say. By listening closely you will be able to better address what their specific fears or questions are.

**Offer support.** Ask how you can help them address their addiction. Let them know that you understand that stopping a problem with drugs long road, but that you will be there for them.

**Talk about next steps.** Research different treatment options in your area. Offer to go with the person or help make phone calls to get the process started. Try not to end the conversation without determining a next step that person is agreeable to, whether it be seeing a health care provider or making a call for more information on treatment.

To find information on treatment options in your area, call 1-877-8HOPENY (1-877-846-7369) or text HOPENY (467369). You can also visit [www.oasas.ny.gov/accesshelp/](http://www.oasas.ny.gov/accesshelp/).



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