

- Find out about alcohol and other drugs and addiction as early as possible. Take the time to equip yourself so that you can speak from a base of knowledge.
- Make it clear that you really want to know what your child or loved one is thinking and feeling.
- Remember that many young people experiment with alcohol and other drugs and remain recreational users without developing problematic use.
- Discuss substance use with your child or loved one, particularly health and safety issues. If your child or loved one is using alcohol or other drugs, encourage harm reduction (safer sex, not mixing drugs, eating properly, using clean needles, carrying a naloxone kit; see p. 42).
- When confronted with an intoxicated person, deal only with immediate safety issues.
- If you are worried or afraid, call a friend or the authorities for support.
- Let your child or loved one know how their substance use is affecting the rest of the family and what behaviours you are not prepared to accept.
- Decide whether you are willing to give or lend your child or loved one money. Some people are willing to give their child or loved one money, even when they know it will likely go to buying alcohol or other drugs. Other people are not.
- Avoid the “bad” label, and try to remember that your loved one is dealing with addiction and needs compassion and support.
- Consider joining From Grief to Action to add your voice to the movement for an evidence-based, easy to navigate substance use system in BC that provides timely treatment and support. Every member strengthens our Society’s voice when we speak out for public funding of addiction treatment resources in BC. All membership is kept in confidence unless you choose to go public.
- Stay connected, even if your child or loved one is not living in your home, through phone calls and care packages.
- Be supportive, maintain contact, and never give up hope.
- Try not to feel guilty. Get on with your own life.

