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WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY DRINKS TOO MUCH?

If you think someone in your family drinks too much or uses drugs, these suggestions are important, because drinking or drug use can affect everyone in the family - including the children. If you don't have this problem at home, you may have a friend whose family has a problem with alcohol or drugs - talk to your friend. Let him or her know that you care and show them this page of information.

- ◆ **DON'T** feel guilty or ashamed about the problem at home. Alcoholism and addiction is a disease and diseases are nobody's fault. Anybody who makes fun of alcohol-dependant people or addicts just doesn't understand the facts.
- ◆ **DON'T** try to convince your parent to stop drinking or using, or argue when he or she is drunk or stoned. He or she is not thinking clearly and may forget what you say.
- ◆ **DON'T** water down or pour away your parent's alcohol or hide drugs. It won't work. You have no control over someone else's drinking or using. You didn't make the problem start and you can't make it stop. It is up to your parent to get treatment. What your parent does is not your responsibility or fault.
- ◆ **DO** talk about your feelings with a close friend, relative or teacher. Call the **Nacoa helpline free on 0800 358 3456**. Other helplines are available too. Talking about your feelings is not about telling on your family - it's about taking care of yourself. Talking to someone about your feelings can help you feel less alone and that person might be able to help you.
- ◆ **DO** get involved in doing fun things at school or near where you live - school clubs or sports activities, Scouts or Guides, Youth Clubs etc. Sometimes children from homes with an alcohol-dependent parent worry so much that they forget how to have fun. If things are bad at home, you may not have anyone there who can help you have fun but that doesn't have to stop you. Doing outside activities can help you forget about the problems at home for a while and can help you feel better about yourself.
- ◆ **DO** remember that your thoughts and feelings are normal. It's ok to hate the problem of alcoholism or addiction and love the person who is drinking or using - both at the same time. All people have self-doubt and mixed-up feelings - it's part of growing up and being human.

◆ **DO** go to Alateen meetings if you can. You can call Al-Anon on 0207 403 0888. Meeting new friends who understand will help. There are at least 2 million adults in the UK who grew up with parental alcoholism. Imagine how many children are living with the problems that alcoholism and addiction can bring into the family today. Although it may sometimes feel that way, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE** .

People Who Can Help

Nacoa	0800 358 3456
ChildLine	0800 1111
Al-Anon + Alateen	020 7403 0888
NSPCC	0800 800 500
Healthwise Alcohol	0800 917 8282
Samaritans	0345 90 90 90

There are other helplines too. Call Nacoa to help you to find someone who can help you in the area where you live.

REMEMBER the Six “C”s

I didn't **CAUSE** it

I can't **CONTROL** it

I can't **CURE** it

I can take **CARE** of myself

I can **COMMUNICATE** my feelings

I can make healthy **CHOICES**