

DRUG ABUSE CONVERSATION TOOLKIT



STARTING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT DRUG ABUSE.

Many young people try drugs to experiment, have a good time, or even treat an existing medical condition. Unfortunately, recreational drugs like marijuana and cocaine, or even prescription drugs such as pain killers can become addictive and dangerous. As a young person, drugs can negatively impact the development of your brain, leading to a number of mental or physical issues. **TALKING TO JUST ONE TRUSTED PERSON** is a simple way to start understanding what you're going through and getting the help you deserve. If you're concerned about your substance use, now is the time to do something about it—before the issue gets worse. The longer you wait, the more likely you'll experience long-term damage, or risk getting into trouble

WARNING SIGNS OF DRUG ABUSE. Even if your friends do the same drugs, or a doctor prescribed you the pills, addiction is a serious problem. The sooner you recognize the signs of addiction, the sooner you can get treatment. **If you say "yes" to even a few of them, then it's a good idea to talk to someone.**

YES NO // Do I have a family history of substance abuse?

YES NO // Have I been experiencing low energy, bloodshot eyes, or slurred speech?

YES NO // Have I been having memory lapses, blackouts, or trouble concentrating?

YES NO // Have I lost interest in my favorite activities?

YES NO // Do I need to use drugs to have fun, relax, or feel normal?

YES NO // Have I been arguing more with family and friends?

YES NO // Do I need to use more drugs to feel buzzed or high?

YES NO // Do I need a dose to get through the day?

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT PERSON TO TALK TO.

No matter how alone or isolated you feel, there is always someone that is ready and willing to help. If you don't feel ready to talk to a substance abuse professional, that's perfectly fine. Start by telling one trusted person you feel comfortable with and you know will be a good listener.

The right person doesn't have to have personal experience with substance abuse—he or she just needs to take your thoughts, feelings, and concerns seriously, and help you take the next step.

YOUR TRUSTED PERSON MAY BE A:

FAMILY MEMBER

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

TEACHER

CHURCH LEADER

COACH

CLOSE FRIEND

HOW TO START THE CONVERSTION. There's no right or wrong way to tell someone that you have an issue with drug abuse. But there are steps you can take to make the conversation easier to start and more productive.

FIND A COMFORTABLE PLACE AND TIME. This could be a coffee shop, school, home, or anywhere that you can have some privacy away from distractions.

PLAN WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY. Write down how you're feeling or practice the conversation in front of a mirror.

BE READY FOR QUESTIONS. The person you're talking to will probably want more information on your situation. Be honest and share as much as you feel comfortable.

DON'T RUSH THE CONVERSATION. This topic may be challenging for the person you're talking to, so give them time to listen and process what you're saying.

DON'T TRY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM ALL AT ONCE. Remember, this is just the start of the process.

BE PROUD. It takes courage to tell someone about drug abuse or addiction.

WHAT YOU CAN SAY:

"I think my drug use is getting out of control, and I don't know what to do."

"This is hard for me to talk about, but I think I have a drug addiction."

"I'm worried that my substance use is getting worse."

"I can't get through my day without my drug. I think I may need help."

WHAT TO DO AFTER THE CONVERSATION. Hopefully after your first conversation, you'll feel a sense of relief and hopefulness. Be sure to keep things moving in a positive direction, even if dealing with feelings of remorse or regret.

1

Stay in touch with your trusted person and keep him or her updated on how you feel.

2

If the first conversation didn't go the way you had hoped, **don't worry or give up.** Try finding another trusted person that may be better suited to help.

3

Make healthy lifestyle choices such as diet, exercise, and sleep.

4

If you're ready to take the next step to receive a diagnosis and treatment, **talk to a substance abuse professional or organization.**

Visit [JustTellOne.org](https://www.JustTellOne.org) or call 716.245.6JT1 to find available services in your area.



Just Tell ONE.org