

## Strong Bonds Fact Sheet: Parents : Drug and Alcohol Treatment

There are a number of different approaches to treating drug and alcohol problems. It may take some time for your young person to find the right treatment approach for them.

Some young people who are drug or alcohol dependent go through many treatment programs before they fully recover.

### Withdrawal programs

Withdrawal programs assist young people to safely reduce their drug or alcohol use. They are sometimes called 'detoxification' or 'detox' programs.

These programs can last up to 21 days in a treatment centre, a hospital or under supervision at home. They usually provide the following:

- Medication to relieve withdrawal symptoms.
- Emotional support and counselling.
- Information about long-term treatment.
- Some also provide massage, herbs or acupuncture to assist with withdrawal symptoms.

### Methadone and other 'substitution therapies'

These treatments, called 'substitution therapy', involve replacing an illegal drug such as heroin with a longer acting drug that is given under medical supervision, such as methadone or buprenorphine.

The aim of these treatments is to reduce the craving for drugs or alcohol and to assist the young person to stabilize their life.

These treatments will usually only be given if a young person has been using drugs heavily for some time and has had no success with other treatment programs.

Some local doctors are able to give these treatments or you can get them through local drug and alcohol treatment centres or hospitals.

### Residential rehabilitation programs

These programs provide long-term treatment in a house or units, often in country areas. They are for:

- young people who have severe addiction problems.
- who need to remove themselves from their day to day life to be able to start again.

Young people in these programs are expected to participate in work, physical fitness and recreational programs as well as intensive individual and group therapy.

The length of time for these programs varies with some lasting for up to two years. Most require people to have been through a withdrawal program before entering long-term treatment.

### Counselling

Counselling for drug and alcohol problems is provided by health professionals at drug and alcohol counselling centres, community health centres, some local councils and youth services.

Counsellors can work with people to help them:

- Learn how to use drugs safely.
- Decide on the best treatment programs for them if they want to stop using drugs or alcohol.
- Deal with the problems that may be contributing to their drug or alcohol use.
- Teach them ways to manage stress.
- Assist them to make and maintain changes in their lives.

### Dual diagnosis counselling and outreach services

Dual diagnosis workers provide advice and support to young people who have both mental health and drug and alcohol problems.

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### Self-help group support programs

Groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous provide group support for drug and alcohol users and are available in most areas throughout Australia.

Support and information is provided by people who have had problems with alcohol or drug use in the past. Some people find attending these groups helps them stay off drugs or alcohol.

### Services for families

In many areas there are also self-help groups for family members of drug users. These include Family Drug Help, Al-Anon and Parent Education programs.

Family counselling services for people affected by their children's drug or alcohol use are also available. See **Resources** below.

### Culturally appropriate services

It can be difficult for people from non-English speaking backgrounds to access culturally sensitive alcohol and drug treatment services. The government has been making efforts in recent years to change this.

Many treatment programs have now built strong partnerships with multicultural community agencies and some have employed staff from non-English speaking backgrounds who can speak more than one language.

Your local council should be able to advise you of treatment services that have workers employed from your cultural background or who have links to culturally appropriate support services.

### Recovery takes Time

If your child has been using drugs or alcohol heavily for some time, it may take a long time for them to stop using.

Some young people who are drug or alcohol dependent go through many treatment programs before they fully recover. Be patient. There is no quick fix for this problem.

Don't encourage your child to suddenly stop using drugs or alcohol altogether if they have been using heavily. Stopping heavy drug or alcohol use suddenly can be dangerous.

When your young person is ready to reduce or stop their drug use, make sure they get medical help and are assisted to come off drugs in the safest way possible.

### Emergencies

**You should always call '000' if you are concerned that your child may have taken an overdose, for example if they are having trouble breathing, they collapse or are unconscious.**

Learning First Aid for dealing with overdoses is a good idea if you feel your young person is at risk.

### → Tips from this Fact Sheet

- It is very common for people to make many attempts to stop using drugs. They will learn something from each experience.
- There is no quick fix for this problem.
- Stopping heavy drug or alcohol use suddenly can be dangerous. When your child is ready to reduce or to stop their drug use, make sure they get medical help.
- There are a number of different approaches to treating drug and alcohol problems. It may take some time for your young person to find the right treatment approach for them.
- Many treatment programs have strong partnerships with multicultural community agencies. Some programs employ staff from non-English speaking backgrounds who speak more than one language.

### → Related Fact Sheets

- [Drugs & Alcohol: What can parents do](#)
- [Getting the right help](#)
- [Adolescent Development](#)

## Strong Bonds Fact Sheet: Parents : Drug and Alcohol Treatment

### → Useful resources

#### Parents and Family - Victoria

##### Mary of the Cross Centre

Alcohol and other drug information, education and support group for Vietnamese families  
Tel: (03) 9495 6144  
Web: [www.maryofthecross.org.au](http://www.maryofthecross.org.au)  
Email: [moc@maryofthecross.org.au](mailto:moc@maryofthecross.org.au)

##### Family Drug Help

Support and information for parents and other family members in English and Italian.  
Tel: 1300 660 068  
Web: [www.familydrughelp.org.au](http://www.familydrughelp.org.au)

##### Australian Greek Welfare Society

Counselling for individuals and families; parenting information, education and training.  
Tel: (03) 9388 9998  
Web: [www.agws.com.au/](http://www.agws.com.au/)

##### Vietnamese Welfare Resource Centre

Information & referral and counselling for families and young people.  
Ground Floor, 58 Holland Court  
Flemington Victoria 3031  
Tel: (03) 9376 2033  
Web: [www.jss.org.au/content/view/56/86/](http://www.jss.org.au/content/view/56/86/)  
Email: [vwrc@jss.org.au](mailto:vwrc@jss.org.au)

##### Jewish Care

Tel: (03) 8517 5777  
Web: [www.jewishcare.org.au](http://www.jewishcare.org.au)

##### Cambodian Association of Australia

Information and support for parents and grandparents in the Cambodian community, on drug-related health problems and the legal system.  
Tel: (03) 9546 3466  
Web: [www.cambodianassociation.com.au](http://www.cambodianassociation.com.au)

### → Useful resources

#### Treatment and Support - Victoria

**North Richmond Community Health Centre**  
Drug Counselling and treatment services for Cambodian, Lao and Vietnamese young people.  
23 Lennox Street  
North Richmond Victoria 3121  
Tel 9429 5477  
Web [www.nrhc.com.au](http://www.nrhc.com.au)

##### Uniting Care Moreland Hall

Residential and non-residential withdrawal, counselling, education and support services.  
Tel 9386 2878  
Website [www.morelandhall.org/](http://www.morelandhall.org/)

##### Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre

Tel (03) 8413 8413  
Website [www.turningpoint.org.au](http://www.turningpoint.org.au)

##### Australian Vietnamese Women's Association

Drug treatment counselling, support and referral for the general Vietnamese community.  
Richmond Tel (03) 9428 9078  
Footscray Tel (03) 9396 1922  
Website <http://www.avwa.org.au>

##### Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese (CLV) Health and Drug Safety Program

A health and harm-reduction program working with injecting drug users from CLV communities in Melbourne's Western suburbs.  
Tel (03) 9387 5202

##### Connexions Dual Diagnosis Counselling & Outreach Program

Jesuit Social Services  
1 Langridge Street  
Collingwood Victoria 3066  
Tel (03) 9415 8700.

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### → Useful resources

#### Australia Wide Services & Information

##### DirectLine

24-hour counselling, advice and referral  
Tel 1800 888 236

##### Australian Drug Information Network List of Treatment Services

Website

[http://www.adin.com.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=38](http://www.adin.com.au/content.asp?Document_ID=38)

##### Multicultural Drug Information

Website <http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/>

##### Drug Education for Parents booklets Department of Education & Training

Available in 21 languages  
Tel (03) 9637 3752

##### HIV, AIDS and Hepatitis C

Accessible in 10 languages

Website [www.multiculturalhivhepc.net.au](http://www.multiculturalhivhepc.net.au)

##### Multicultural Services Database

Search by area, suburb/town or postcode

Web <http://www.eccv.org.au/>

##### Multicultural Access Unit

Pamphlets and other resources on a wide range of health-related topics, in many languages.

Website [www.health.wa.gov.au/home/](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/home/)

##### Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health

Health information for young people

Website <http://www.ceh.org.au>

#### Strong Bonds

Jesuit Social Services  
PO Box 1141  
COLLINGWOOD VIC 3066

Tel (03) 9415 8700  
Email [info@strongbonds.jss.org.au](mailto:info@strongbonds.jss.org.au)  
Web [www.strongbonds.jss.org.au](http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au)

